

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held January 27, 2020

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, January 27, 2020, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Nicole Bryant, President.

Oaths of Office

Nicole Bryant administered the Oath of Office to Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Incoming President. Mary “Lisa” Minnich then administered the Oath of Office to Tom Mandeville and Liz DeFonce as reappointed trustees, representing Franklin and Clinton Counties, respectively, followed by Nicole Bryant as Vice President, Scott McDonald as Treasurer, Gayla LePage as Secretary and Tom Mandeville as Member-at-Large.

Roll Call

Present: Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Linda Crosby, Liz DeFonce, Margot Gold, Gayla LePage, Andrew Lomanto, Tom Mandeville, Scott McDonald, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Steve Novacich, Doreece “Darcy” Purick and Tim Rowland

Excused Absence: Mary Abendroth

Unexcused Absences: Dorothy Latta

Staff Present: Steve Kenworthy, Director; Michael Spofford, Finance Manager; Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant and Betsy Brooks, Librarian/Consultant (departed 4:45 p.m.)

Others Present: Sarah Spanburgh, Librarian at Plattsburgh Public Library (departed 4:55 p.m.) and Chris Drennan

Consent Agenda

Gayla LePage motioned approval of Consent Agenda. Margot Gold requested that the spelling of her name be corrected in the November minutes, and with that amendment, she seconded the motion.

Consent Agenda includes:

- Approval of absences
- Approval of today’s agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the November 25, 2019 meeting, with noted correction
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Health Plan, Personnel and Property

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Betsy Brooks, Librarian/Consultant, addressed the Board, saying that she will be retiring shortly after a lengthy employment and that it has been a privilege to work at CEFLS. She has handled a variety of duties, among them the automation of libraries, the satellite dish on the bookmobile, e-books and downloadable audiobooks. In 2018, she was flattered and honored when the Board asked her to serve as Interim Director for a few months, and relieved when Steve Kenworthy came to CEFLS to take the helm. She feels she is leaving when CEFLS is at a high point. The staff works together very well and the Board is exemplary. She noted that when funding is threatened, their action is kicked up a notch. Betsy departed the meeting amid a hearty round of applause.

Communications

A letter from Kip Thompson was received. Kip retired from the CEFLS Board of Trustees at the end of 2019, after 10-plus years of service. His letter was read by Dawn Recore. He thanked everyone for the November retirement party/celebration. He is deeply grateful for the seriousness of purpose of the Board. He asked that in choosing future successors, the Board looks for diversity of talents with the experience of many leadership roles in other organizations yet primarily having a love and appreciation of libraries as essential institutions of democracy, community, coherence and equality.

Margot Gold commented that she ran into Kip in Lake Placid and he expressed that for him the little reception at CEFLS in November was the highlight of his holidays, if not the year.

President's Remarks

Lisa Minnich offered a reminder that members of the Board are asked to contribute to the leadership campaign, in any amount. What is wanted is 100 percent participation. The Sunshine Fund is doing quite well right now. If that changes, donations will be requested.

Lisa asked everyone to look at the list of committees and let her know of any desired changes. She noted that as President of the Board, she will not be serving as a voting member of the Negotiating Committee. She will be a Member Pro-Tem and will not have significant input.

Plattsburgh Public Library Report

Sarah Spanburgh, Outreach Librarian, reported for PPL.

- They are currently looking for a new page.
- They are going through the process of looking for a new librarian, as Colleen Pelletier is retiring after over 30 years at PPL.
- They have computers coming in.
- The pipes have been fixed so there are no leaks.
- The coffee bar, Chapter One Coffee & Tea, has changed its hours and is now closing at 4:30.
- The Reading Challenge list was passed for all to see. Info on the Reading Challenge is available as a LibGuide, which is provided by CEFLS.
- PPL's February event calendar was passed for all to see.
- In February, PPL is doing a public information session on the Census, celebrating World Read Aloud Day and kicking off an Americana Film Series.

In response to Gayla LePage's request for a status update on the Census, Sarah Spanburgh responded that there was a big census workshop that CEFLS hosted at PPL in the auditorium and they are working with an IT to get the kiosk set up. On February 7th, Sarah is going to meet with the League of Women Voters, after which she will be handing out a flyer for a public information session where people can get their questions answered. Nicky Jordan, a local Census Bureau worker, will be coming over to handle any extra questions that Sarah can't answer. PPL is working on a Census LibGuide to help the public.

Director's Report

Steve Kenworthy stated that Sarah Spanburgh did a good job at catching up with the Census status. NYS will be giving counties funding after they present a plan to use it. It is not yet known when it will be awarded. The amount of money for each county is based on population, so Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties will each receive different amounts.

MacMillan is still persisting on their experiment with downloadable audiobooks. CEFLS also subscribes to RB Digital. RB Digital has a different and really nice plan - any book in their collection for as many concurrent sessions as you want. However, RB Digital is costly and we didn't have enough in our budget to renew it. Soon, we were hearing from patrons who were missing it and libraries realized how much their patrons used it, so we appealed to our libraries for more money. They responded and we were able to renew with RB Digital.

We are preparing for personnel changes that will come with Betsy's retirement. She does so much that her work will be spread out among three staff members. David Fuller will do the technical and computer work, Anne Jobin-Picoult will handle cataloging questions, and Steve, with his background with Sirsi Dynix, will take over Horizon questions. David's current job title is Senior Library Clerk, which is limiting and the Union doesn't want him to do some of the technical responsibilities under this title. A new job description will have to be created, maybe Library Technology Specialist. Civil Service is willing to work with us. The Board provided a nod of approval to rewrite David's job title and responsibilities.

There has been a strong suggestion that we look for a children's and youth services librarian. Right now Karen Batchelder does a great job with that and we wouldn't want to take anything away from her, but Karen is going to retire in a couple of years and it would be nice to have someone to slide into that role.

We would also like to start recruiting for Betsy's position, a process that can take 3 or 4 months, so by getting a head start we will be further ahead.

We would like to create a pilot program for a substitute pool of 4 or 5 trained individuals, probably at the Senior Library Clerk level, for member libraries. A lot of the libraries are one-person shops where directors can't get away to come for training and they can't go away for vacation without closing their libraries. The subs would be CEFLS part-time on-call employees. When a library wants a sub, CEFLS would arrange it. We would bill the library for those hours, so we would pay the subs. We would charge the libraries not only the individuals' wage but also what it takes to administer the program. We might pay the person \$18/hour but charge the library \$30/hour. We would watch hours so as to not exceed part-time limitations. This would be a lot easier than for a library to go through the hiring process. We realize that some libraries will financially be able to take advantage of this,

while smaller ones will not. As a pilot program we would see what the issues are when the subs go out to libraries and reevaluate the program after we have some data.

Lisa Minnich asked, if the subs are employees of CEFLS, would that affect our budget, taxes and benefits. Steve responded yes, we would have to pay their portion of social security and Medicare, track their hours and do their payroll, but we would be compensated for it. This program could fill short-term gaps because there is a cap on the number of hours that a part-time employee can work. Civil Service is on board with this, as the title Senior Library Clerk is noncompetitive. Discussions with the Union will take place.

A second pilot program that we would like to develop is serving the homebound. Two methods are being considered. One is to collaborate with Meals on Wheels. Their director is very interested. Anja Bouchard would pick out books, they'd go into a bag, the van driver would drop them off at Meals on Wheels and pick up whatever is returned. Meals on Wheels drivers would do the actual home delivery and pick up. The second idea for serving the homebound is to consider them sight-impaired which would enable us to use mailing packets that require no postage. Large-print books, audiobooks and DVDs all qualify to be mailed in this manner. Steve stated that if this pilot program really works well, we may need another staff person, so the counties whose underserved population would benefit would have to support us. When we see how well the pilot program goes and what interest there is, we will talk further about how to make it a regular feature.

Finance Report

Scott McDonald motioned approval of the November financial reports as presented by Michael Spofford and distributed before this meeting, seconded by Margot Gold.

Michael stated that with this month's Board packet most of November's reports were included, but not December's. December preliminary reports and January reports will be provided in February. Michael is implementing a different way of doing the accounting that will make reporting easier, especially end-of-year reporting and audit preparation. The extra time that the changes are requiring now will begin to show benefits soon.

Margot Gold asked if CEFLS has a line of credit, to which Michael responded that it was renewed in November and he is working with the bank to renew it again.

Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Scott McDonald reported that the committee met with the auditors from Abbott, Frenyea & Russell before this meeting. He reported that the audit went well. There were only two issues. One is that we still have not determined our post-retirement obligations, which has been a carryover issue for many years. It hasn't been done because of the expected expense. Michael will check into it. The auditor said that since we have so few employees, it may not be that expensive. The other issue is that we have inadequate segregation of duties, which is also very common with small employers. Steve Kenworthy stated that he sits on the Board of NNYLN, and they were told the same thing. Their

audit was clean except for division of duties. Their auditors said it is unreasonable for small companies to do that, but accounting standards require this advisement.

Margot Gold asked if the auditors made any recommendations for how we might do things better. Lisa Minnich stated that basically what they are talking about by division of duties is one person picks up the mail, another person opens it, a third person checks that they opened it and it says what they say it says, a fourth person checks how much money came in, and a fifth person checks how much money came in. She further stated that it does not make sense for CEFLS to do anything more than we are doing. Gayla LePage added that there are steps that the Board oversees that do take care of those problems and if we continue to function the way we do, we are fine.

Scott McDonald motioned approval of the audit report, seconded by Andrew Lomanto. Motion carried unanimously.

Nominating Committee

Gayla LePage presented the resumé of Christopher Drennan for consideration as a CEFLS trustee. Tom Mandeville motioned approval of sending Mr. Drennan's name to the Essex County Board of Supervisors requesting his appointment, seconded by Margot Gold. Motion carried unanimously.

Negotiating Committee:

As Chair, Tom Mandeville has recruited new committee members to round out the team – Darcy Purick, Nicky Bryant and Andrew Lomanto. Darcy has negotiating experience and is presently president of one of the unions at Clinton Community College. Nicky served on this committee during the negotiations of the last Union contract. Andrew will provide his financial expertise. An electronic copy of the current CSEA Contract will be sent to Tom so he and the committee can review it and begin preparing for negotiations.

Old Business

Presentation by Steve Kenworthy: Protecting yourself from fraud - Steve's 20-minute Power Point presentation was entitled "A Fool and His Money" and focused on modern electronic scams and how to avoid them.

New Business

MacMillan Embargo Resolution – At the Board's direction, Steve adapted a resolution that a couple of other Systems' Boards have used that addresses some of the MacMillan issues.

Nicky Bryant motioned acceptance of the MacMillan Embargo Resolution, seconded by Gayla LePage. Motion carried unanimously.

Gayla LePage then asked to address the Board to let them know of a NYSRTA travel opportunity entitled Discover Canyon Country. You do not have to be a member of the Retired Teachers Association to travel with them. The trip will be September 16 – 23, 2020. For more information, contact Gayla.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayla LePage
Secretary