

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held February 24, 2020

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2020, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President.

Roll Call

Present: Mary Abendroth, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Linda Crosby, Liz DeFonce, Margot Gold, Dorothy Latta, Tom Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich and Steve Novacich

Excused Absence: Gayla LePage, Andrew Lomanto, Scott McDonald, Doreece “Darcy” Purick and Tim Rowland

Staff Present: Michael Spofford, Finance Manager

Consent Agenda

Margot Gold motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Liz DeFonce. Consent agenda includes:

- Approval of absences
- Approval of today’s agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the January 27, 2020 meeting
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating, Nominating, Personnel and Property

Discussion revealed that the following corrections to the January 27, 2020 Minutes are necessary:

- Under Oaths of Office, Nicole Bryant first administered the Oath of Office to Mary “Lisa” Minnich as Incoming President, then Mary “Lisa” Minnich administered the remaining Oaths of Office.
- Mary Abendroth’s absence on January 27, 2020 was an excused absence.
- Under Finance Committee, paragraph one, the sentence beginning with *The other issue* ...should read *The other issue is that we have an inadequate segregation of duties, which is also very common with small employers.*

A new motion to approve Consent Agenda with the corrections listed above was made by Steve Novacich, seconded by Mary Abendroth. Margot Gold and Liz DeFonce were in agreement with the corrections to the January 27, 2020 Minutes.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda carried, with Dorothy Latta who was not present for the January 27, 2020 meeting, abstaining.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Communications

There were no communications.

President's Remarks

Lisa Minnich commented on the balloons hanging from the ceiling of the Board room, stating that the staff had a retirement party for Betsy Brooks last week. Lisa credited Betsy for being a very positive force for the Board, the Library System and all of the member libraries. She has always been there when needed. She has shepherded all the member libraries into the age of computers and through automation. Lisa is certain that it doesn't matter how good David Fuller is at his job or who comes in as the new librarian, the Board will be hearing how much Betsy is missed. You always knew that if you needed her, she would be there.

A copy of the auditor's report was distributed prior to the meeting. Lisa suggested that Board members insert it into their Trustee Binders.

Two trustees have made donations to the Leadership Campaign. Lisa reminded the Board that full participation in any amount is the goal. When writing checks to CEFLS, Leadership should be written on the memo line.

Mary Abendroth has volunteered to be on the Advocacy Committee.

It is time to think about the "away" Board meetings for 2020. Of the libraries that have not been visited in the last 10 years, there are several that are too small to accommodate us or they have no parking. Dawn Recore will be in contact with the directors of West Chazy Dodge (Clinton County) and Keeseville (Essex County) to see if they feel they can accommodate us. In Franklin County, it's been six years since Wead Library has been visited. If we visit Wead this year, it would give us one meeting in each county. If West Chazy or Keeseville do no work out, Dawn will check with Dannemora (Clinton County) and Upper Jay (Essex County). The away meetings will be scheduled for earlier times than regular meetings to better accommodate travel time.

Plattsburgh Public Library Report

From Anne de la Chappelle's written report that was distributed prior to this meeting, Michael Spofford read:

- One page left PPL and two new pages have been hired.
- Jennifer Stone is the new Public Services Librarian and will begin work on February 27, 2020.
- The City's Public Works department has kept the sidewalks and driveway clear this winter.
- PPL closed at 2:30 p.m. on February 7th due to the snowstorm.
- The French Conversation Group continues to grow with an average of 11 attendees per week.
- The Scavenger Hunt for Snowball Week (Winter Break) was well received.
- Jamie Parrotte and Anne completed the 2019 NYS Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries. It will be reviewed by CEFLS and at the state level before being fully accepted.
- In 2019 PPL circulated 42,986 children's items, in addition to the countless items used in the library.

Director's Report

Steve Kenworthy was not present to report, as he was traveling to PLA's Conference in Nashville.

Finance Report

Tom Mandeville motioned approval of the Finance Reports as presented by Michael Spofford, seconded by Nicky Bryant.

Michael reported that:

- He was able to provide several of the monthly reports that were missing in last month's Board packet. Still outstanding are the December Over and Under Report, the December Grant Status Report, and the January reports. Starting in 2020, the Grant Status Report will be provided on a quarterly basis, unless it is requested on a monthly basis.
- Member libraries' Annual Reports were due to Michael on February 21 to allow some time for him to review them before sending them on to the State. He has received over 50 percent of them, which is better than usual at this point. He attributes that to the System's consultants helping with the program side of their reports, so Michael basically reviews the accounting side.
- Steve Kenworthy is working on the large narratives of the CEFLS Annual Report. He is away for a few weeks, so submission of our Annual Report to the State will be delayed until after his return.
- With Betsy retiring soon, the libraries for whom she is the consultant will be divided among the other three librarians until a new librarian is hired and gets up-to-speed.
- Steve Kenworthy and Michael would like to streamline the accounting system by adding a human resource/timesheet module at an estimated cost of \$3500. The cost of each module would add \$800, or \$1600 total, and maintenance would be \$800/year. Unfortunately, we are not able to get only the timesheet module, we have to get the HR module also. Discussion ensued regarding the expense, after which Michael stated that it will be helpful when we know the carryover amount from the 2019 budget to the 2020 budget.
- A letter was sent to the contractor who is doing our railings, MBC LLC, asking for a start date because within 120 days after the notification of the award, construction is supposed to commence. The letter seems to have helped, since the contractor showed up today and said that by the end of the week the railings will be in and done.

Questions Directed to Michael Spofford:

Steve Novacich asked if there is any way to tap into the County's payroll system. Michael responded that before he came to CEFLS, the County did CEFLS's payroll and payables, but the State intervened, saying that since they give CEFLS funding, CEFLS is an agency of theirs so the county could no longer do it. CEFLS then had ADP do it for a long time, and for a while after that it was done by Michael's predecessor.

Steve Novacich stated that he is not a finance person so when he looks at the Finance Reports, he does not understand them. He is wondering if the Board is meeting its fiduciary responsibilities. He said that in the past he relied on Kip Thompson's knowledge of finances and Kip is no longer on the Board. Michael responded that he communicates with the members of the Finance Committee, particularly with Scott McDonald, the Committee's Chair, often and meets with them as needed. Tom Mandeville pointed out that Trustee Andy Lomanto (not present at this meeting) is a stock

broker with a good understanding of finances, and Andy reviews the reports and asks specific questions. Lisa Minnich added that she and Dorothy Latta also have a good understanding so they know when to red flag things.

Nicky Bryant suggested that it would be good for the Finance Committee to meet quarterly, and that could coincide with the Grant Status Report being done quarterly.

Nicky Bryant then stated that Michael Spofford is overworked. With talk of adding a librarian to staff and expansion of services, she feels it's time to look at things administratively, particularly in keeping up with anything new. Michael stated that he, Steve Kenworthy and Dawn Recore have talked about trying to get a part-time person to help Management Confidential staff. Discussion ensued, ending with the consensus of the Board that help is needed for Management Confidential staff. Lisa Minnich expressed that Michael should let the Board know if the new accounting programs will be of enough help, though she thinks that is not the case and additional help should be hired. At the next meeting, Steve Novacich would like to see some numbers in terms of financing this. Dorothy Latta added it would also be helpful to see a list of what Michael, Steve and Dawn do.

Margot Gold and Mary Abendroth would like to better understand their fiduciary responsibilities and asked if Michael could provide tutorials. By consensus it was agreed that Michael could break things into small topics and provide short training sessions before Board meetings.

Motion to approve the Finance Reports as presented carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2020 and Individuals to Conduct Business in 2020:

Lisa Minnich asked trustees to sign the yearly Conflict of Interest Statement and return them to Michael. Basically this document says that you don't work for any of the entities that we do business with and if you do you will recuse yourself from any Board business involving that entity.

Lisa explained that Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2020 is a list of the people with whom CEFLS does business. With it you can tell if you have any potential conflict of interest. Nicky Bryant motioned approval of Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2020 and Individuals to Conduct Business in 2020, seconded by Mary Abendroth. Motion carried unanimously.

Lawn Care: Although we have always spent a lot of time seeking quotes for lawn care, it has historically been hard to get quotes, in part because we require Certificates of Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation. Small Jobs is the business that did the lawn care in 2019 and the owner is interested in doing it again in 2020. He is a sole proprietor, so he can get an exemption from the NYS

Worker's Compensation requirement. Small Jobs' pricing for this year is around \$1600, an amount that falls within the Director's realm of approval (under \$2000), so Steve Kenworthy would like to enter into an agreement again with Small Jobs. By consensus, the Board was in agreement and expressed appreciation of being informed.

Advocacy: Margot Gold has volunteered to attend Library Advocacy Day in Albany tomorrow, after which she will call a meeting of the Advocacy Committee to share what she has learned.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayla LePage
Secretary