

**CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**  
**Held September 25, 2015**

**Call to Order**

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, September, 2015 at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Charles “Kip” Thompson, President.

**Roll Call**

Present: James “Jim” Bennett, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Emily Castine, Fran Filshie, Donna Fulkerson, Dorothy Latta, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Rita Quinn, and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Present at Saranac Lake Free Library via video conferencing: Gary Alexander

Absent: Wallace “Wally” Day and Barbara Stowe

Staff Present: Ewa Jankowska, Executive Director; Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant; and Michael Spofford, Finance Manager

Others Present: Anne de la Chappelle, Director of Plattsburgh Public Library

**Consent Agenda**

**Approval of Excused Absences**

**Approval of Agenda**

**Approval of Minutes of August 24, 2015 Meeting**

**Committee Reports** - Advocacy, Development, Executive, Health Plan, Negotiating, Nominating, Personnel, Property and Strategic Planning Committees have no reports at this time.

**CEFDA Report**

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Motion carried unanimously.

**Communications**

Dawn Recore read a letter appreciation from Lora Langston, Director, Elizabethtown Library Association, for assistance received pertaining to the submission of their 2015-2016 Construction Grant. She complimented Julie Wever’s professionalism that made the experience much more favorable for them.

Fran Filshie expressed appreciation for the flowers she received from the trustees following her recent hospitalization.

## **Financial Reports**

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the Financial Reports prepared by Michael Spofford as presented, seconded by Fran Filshie.

The following Financial Reports were provided for review prior to this meeting:

- Preliminary Over and Under Report for period ending August 2015
- Budget-To-Date as of August 2015
- Revenues vs. Expenditures Comparison Report as of August 31, 2015
- Grants/Non-Current Aid Status Report as of August 31, 2015
- Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2015

Michael Spofford reported that as of this report, CEFLS received two statutory aids thus on page 34 of the Board packet it can be seen that in August, we received \$782,000 in State aid which was 90 percent of our Local Service Support Aid and Basic Aid. We were within a few days of having to use our line-of-credit. Michael is starting the time consuming process of clearing up some accounts for next year's audit.

CEFLS' funding requests were prepared and submitted to each of the three counties for their recent deadlines. A five percent increase was requested of each county.

Kip Thompson asked about line item 5303, Capital Equipment – Physical Plant; there is \$45,000 in the budget with nothing spent. Michael responded that this is reserve/savings fund for future projects such as repaving the driveway and securing of the tunnel. Next, Kip inquired about two State Correctional Aid grants, one of which ended in 2013. Michael stated that a purchase order was just received, thus the funds will be encumbered from the 2013 grant, clearing up this account in the next month or so. With regard to a similar situation for a State Correctional Aid grant that ended in 2014, Ewa explained that it sometimes takes a long time to plan and deliver a program.

Rita Quinn asked that in light of lack of knowledge of when State funding will be received and how quickly we might have to access reserve funding or line-of-credit, would it be prudent to have a standing resolution to authorize expenditures, perhaps up to a certain amount, from one or both of those accounts. She added that the cycle could be untimely for a meeting, and this might eliminate the likelihood that we would be unable to pay for something. Kip responded that thanks to Michael's accounting skills, we really have a good feel for the timing of expenses but it's not a bad idea to suggest that the Board make a resolution to use these alternative funds two months ahead of time rather than one month. His real fear is that we might not have a quorum or might have bad weather and won't be able to pass a resolution in a timely manner.

Lisa Minnich stated that Rita's suggestion makes a lot of sense so if it becomes necessary, a new resolution would not be needed to use the line-of-credit. To this Ewa responded that using reserve funds would be less costly.

Kip would like to revisit this in the future to prepare a plan before the next cycle of State funding comes along.

Motion to approve the Financial Reports as presented carried unanimously.

## **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

## **President's Remarks**

Kip Thompson reminded Board members that the November meeting is the week of Thanksgiving. If anyone is going to go out of town, bear in mind that our meeting is that Monday, so please let us know in advance if you will be missing the meeting.

The October meeting will be in Schroon Lake on October 27, which is a Tuesday, not a Monday, and it will begin at 3:00, not 4:30. Emily Castine will not be able to attend as she will be away at a State Retired Teacher's Convention, and Jim Bennett would like to do video conferencing from CEFLS. Dawn Recore will check with Betsy Brooks to ask if that will be possible.

Kip has communicated a little bit with Cali Brooks by e-mail but has not been able to have a conversation as of yet. His understanding is that the Adirondack Foundation is only interested in serving non-profits that want to do a permanent endowment. At this time, he is thinking that is not a good idea for CEFLS because Adirondack Foundation would have a say in how the funds are utilized, so if our wording is not specific or proper, we might be stopped from using our own money. He will continue his attempts to speak with Cali to learn more.

Kip made a suggestion for which he didn't want action taken right way, but would like trustees to consider this topic for a future meeting. He would like to work with CEFDA with regard to our difficulty meeting quorums and filling the CEFLS Board. He would like to work out a way that we could use the bigger system in a more effective way. Each individual library has a set of trustees made up of community members who are already interested in libraries. He suggested asking them, when we aren't able to find someone to fill a vacancy, to rotate the responsibility among the member libraries to seed our list with a volunteer from the appropriate county who is willing to serve on our Board as well as their Board. This discussion will be slated for an upcoming Board meeting.

Fran Filshie stated that for some time now we have wanted to get the trustees of member libraries together for trustee instruction and to explain how CEFLS works with their libraries. She wondered if providing a training, following it with some sort of social networking event, would entice trustees to attend. Dorothy Latta added that such an event would increase advocacy for what CEFLS does. Ewa announced that there is a new 2015 edition of Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State and we are getting 300 copies at NYLA next month. She would like to have a trustee training and give a printed copy to each person who attends. Ewa explained that years ago before her arrival at CEFLS, funds were used to pay for travel and lunch for member library trustees who attended trainings; however, it was a negative expense, so the practice had to be discontinued. Since then it has been difficult to attract trustees and directors to attend trainings, in part due to travel expenses. Training is important, so with Julie Wever's help, we have received some funds from Lake Placid Education Foundation that will be used for a trustee training.

Kip suggested that Anne de la Chappelle share this information with CEFDA members and perhaps those who have active Friends of the Library groups could provide contact information to us. From that, we could provide trustee-search flyers.

## **Director's Report**

Referring to a document that Ewa Jankowska handed out, she explained that Julie Wever prepared a ranking of all the construction grant applications, adding that the System has been allotted \$318,512. The construction grant is a 75 percent match, with libraries providing 25 percent. The rating handout lists how much libraries requested and how much we are suggesting they receive. Ewa requested

Board approval of the recommendations as provided. Emily Castine motioned approval, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Ewa explained that recommendations were made after looking at fund balances and construction grants that have been awarded in the recent past. Emily Castine commented that she didn't see Mooers Public Library on the list. Ewa responded that they didn't apply, and with constructions grants you have to declare that after receiving construction grant funds, the library will be in operation for the next ten years. Mooers Library was closed, due to lack of funds, for about six weeks this summer. Right now they are open, with additional hours so maybe they can make up the difference. Julie Wever and Ewa went to their Board meeting to offer help but the Mooers Board seems to be reluctant to accept. Julie and Ewa had a conference call with our State Library consultant, who is going to visit Mooers Library when she is in the area for NYLA's conference in Lake Placid on October 21 to 24. Motion to approve the recommendations for construction grant funding carried unanimously.

We are currently distributing funds from a Betty Little Grant whereby every member library and reading center received \$2,500. Unfortunately, CEFLS did not receive anything, and fortunately, this grant might allow Mooers Library to stay open. This grant did not require any paperwork on our part and final reports are not required. It is actually called a bullet aid and is provided by the Senate. Last year's bullet aid went to libraries to the south of our System. Ewa has been calling Senator Little's office, and in March she visited her so she has been keeping the Senator informed as to our funding situation. Ewa reminded trustees of how very important contact with the Senator is, and that it is even more important for her to hear from trustees.

Ewa did a presentation at the Senior Center in Plattsburgh. She is hoping that we can have more partners, like the Office for the Aging, particularly because there are increasingly more and more older people that we could serve. It is interesting to Ewa that there are so many people and service organizations that do not think of libraries as a natural partner.

Several CEFLS staff members and Trustees Nicky Bryant and Emily Castine traveled to the Grande Bibliothèque in Montreal last Friday. It is a relatively new library comprising the National Archives, what used to be the National Library of Quebec and a large lending library. It is a tremendous resource for their city and surrounding area. Ewa was interested in their genealogy collection because she knows how many people from our area have French Canadian roots. Their automatic book return was impressive: a book drop with a conveyor belt that circulates throughout the library, returning books to their points of origin. It is also very interesting that they have Metro access within their building.

We have learned that Jesse Feiler has resigned as President of the Board of Trustees of Plattsburgh Public Library, so there is a vacancy there.

### **Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska**

Referring to Interlibrary Loan, Kip asked about total items requested and total items received in the months of March and June when there were more items received than were requested. Ewa responded that materials may have been requested earlier with lag time until they were received.

Dorothy Latta commented that looking at the percent of usage of non-digital vs. digital, the digital seems very, very small but she noticed that usage of downloadable e-books has increased about 50 percent over the same month a year ago, even though the numbers seem small. Ewa stated that more people are getting used to that particular medium and we have considerably more e-books now. Ewa finds it interesting that actually the usage of e-books is decreasing a little, showing that people are

going back to traditional books. Rita Quinn stated that the director at Goff-Nelson in Tupper Lake hands out bookmarks with printed instructions for downloading e-books and she finds that very helpful. Ewa stated that we would like to have a web page to explain why some things are not available. One reason is that some publishers end the lease after one year. She and the director of PPL are considering buying more traditional books from publishers such as Penguin and Simon and Schuster, especially in the area of adult nonfiction.

### **Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report**

Anne de la Chappelle reported:

PPL's Librarian I, the children's librarian, resigned in August so they will be opening the search for a new youth services librarian. Services for the preteen and teenage ranges will be emphasized more.

PPL is hosting an open house on November 7 which ties into their marketing plan. The Smart Room will be set up with their Smart Board. They are hoping their front steps will be done by then.

Anne is encouraging her Board to attend the NYLA Conference in Lake Placid, October 21 to 24. There will be a lot of good workshops specifically geared for trustees, and to encourage them to attend, PPL will be offering reimbursement for registration fees out of their professional development line. The Friends of PPL will be doing a poster session on Saturday and a couple of member library directors will be doing a session on small fund raising. Anne will provide Ewa Jankowska with a schedule for the local presentations so that she can share it with the CEFLS trustees.

### **Clinton-Essex-Franklin Directors Association (CEFDA) Report**

Anne de la Chappelle reported that ten members of CEFDA met in Keene Valley. Topics discussed were:

**Attendance:** There is a core group of directors who attend meetings. Many directors work part time, they don't necessarily get reimbursed for mileage, and they have many other priorities.

**Trustees:** Discussion touched on trying to help find trustees for the CEFLS Board and encouraging trustees to participate in trustee training.

**Take a Bite Out of Books (TABOB):** This is a very successful youth campaign that has taken place for many years and has new coordinators.

**Members Advisory Council (MAC):** This comes out of CEFLS and is a group of member library directors together recommending book titles and serving as a consulting group. Among other things, they encourage participation in more cooperative library development and reiterate the types of resources, data bases and book collections that we have as a system. Newer directors look to MAC and CEFLS for guidance.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee met just prior to this Board meeting.

**Tentative 2015-02 Budget:** Lisa Minnich reported that they discussed the proposed amended budget 2015-02 that was distributed for review prior to this meeting. It shows the funding actually received from New York State and the money that has actually been spent to date. The only big changes are where funds were moved around. Lisa pointed out that Central Book Aid is increased 322.17 percent in the e-books category because so little was previously spent. It is all money that came out of other line items so it is not actually a change in the bottom line but does reflect the actual revenue from the State. Nicky Bryant motioned approval of the Tentative 2015-02 Budget, seconded by Fran Filshie. Michael Spofford stated that CEFLS received about \$65,511 in increased aid, but some of that is Local Library Service Aid, Central Book Aid and Central Library Development Aid. Those are funds that pass through the System to the member libraries. CEFLS is still funded a little over 10 percent below what State Education Law states, which is about \$100,000 that we are not getting on a yearly basis. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

**Tentative Draft 2016 Budget:** The proposed draft 2016 budget was distributed for review prior to this meeting. Amendments were made to allow for savings for the eventual purchase of a new van. The van in question is approaching 300,000 miles. Lisa Minnich explained that we want to be ready when it is time to make the purchase. To make this amendment, Michael Spofford moved some money from the building repair reserve. Other items that are being saved for are building repair and a new phone system. The current phone system is from 1997 and is antiquated. The proposed draft budget is based upon best guestimate of New York State Aid, county contributions and other indefinite factors. Nicky Bryant motioned to accept the Tentative Draft 2016 Budget with the new amendments, seconded by Fran Filshie. Dorothy Latta asked about saving for a telephone system, to which Lisa responded that plans are being made for its purchase. Kip stated that a new van won't be purchased in 2016, but money is being set aside to purchase it with NYS pricing. Motion carried unanimously.

**Monthly Finance Reports:** In the monthly financial reports there are categories, such as with grants and pass-through State aid for member libraries, where money comes in and goes out, with the Board having really no say about how it is spent. Grant money is already earmarked for plan x, y or z and is not really part of the CEFLS operating budget. Michael Spofford would like to clarify things by removing these items from the monthly reports to show a true picture of the operating budget without the pass-through funds. This money comes to CEFLS for CEFLS to administer it. Lisa motioned for Michael Spofford to try to set up his reports that way to see what the Board thinks, seconded by Rita Quinn. If this doesn't provide the desired outcome, it can be changed back. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

**Family Literacy Grant Year Two Final Report:** Ewa explained that this is a yearly overview of summer reading. Libraries have to plan a program then submit a report to CEFLS. After implementation, participating libraries receive \$200. Lisa Minnich moved to approve the Family Literacy Grant Year Two Final Report, seconded by Emily Castine. Motion carried unanimously.

**Variance Request for Elizabethtown Library Association:** Ewa Jankowska explained that libraries have to have certain standards. Libraries in communities with up to 2,499 residents are to be open for 20 hours per week. Those with 2,500 residents, have to be open 25 hours. Elizabethtown

Library was reporting on their Annual Report that they were open 25 hours but they were actually open 20. Their new librarian noticed this and is requesting variance approval. Beginning July 1, 2015, they have been open for 25 hours. Nicky Bryant motioned approval of the variance request as received for review, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Library Association Conference, April 5-9, 2016 and Abila Accounting Software Conference, March 3-5, 2016:** Ewa Jankowska would like to attend the PLA Conference in Denver, Colorado April 5-9, 2016 and Michael Spofford would like to attend the Abila Accounting Software Conference March 3-5, 2016. If they preregister soon, CEFLS will save about \$400. Emily Castine motioned approval of preregistration for both conferences, seconded by Rita Quinn. Motion carried unanimously.

**Executive Session**

Rita Quinn motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter for a particular person, seconded by Fran Filshie. Executive Session was entered at 5:36 p.m.

**Return to Regular Session**

Nicky Bryant motioned to return to Regular Session at 5:40 p.m., seconded by Rita Quinn. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board unanimously approved an unpaid two week leave of absence for a particular employee, to take place adjacent to the Thanksgiving holiday.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the trustees, Kip Thompson adjourned the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Gary Alexander  
Secretary