

SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY December 9, 2020, 6 PM
TELECONFERENCE CALL 248-796-5052

Present: Staff: Dave Ewick, Mary Beall. Trustees: Joyce Johnson, Bruce Collins II, Laura Mancini, Irv Lowenberg. Guests: Fred Zorn, Jay Reid

- I. CALL TO ORDER – City Librarian Ewick called the meeting to order at 6:05 and Introduced/welcome new board member Joyce Johnson

- II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA – **Motion to approve the agenda as presented: Mancini. Support: Collins. Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.**

- III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS - **Motion to approve the agenda as presented: Collins. Support: Johnson. Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.**
 - A. Minutes from last meeting
 - B. Financial reports for OCT 2020

- IV. FORMAL REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – none received

- V. REPORTS
 - A. Director’s Report: Ewick shared the following information to keep board members up to date on library efforts; including the current situation and staff efforts to meet/foresee future community needs.

PERSONNEL: The past few months have been exceedingly difficult for everyone here at the library. Like other area libraries, we have had cases of staff members testing positive for COVID, requiring some staff members to quarantine if they had contact with the covid positive person. Due to the skyrocketing number of cases in Michigan, we stopped the computer access service in the building (more info below). The service will resume once the virus percentages drop to a lower level again. We did not want to expose ourselves or patrons with the service as it allowed patrons to enter the building. Thankfully, everyone has recovered.

The continued strain & stress of the pandemic is causing the occasional bit of friction and fear; but our folks have been amazing; keeping up with requests, delivering exceptional service, rolling with the punches, devising new ways to do their jobs; and doing so with terrific attitudes! I cannot thank them enough!!

The Admin team of Mary Beall, Pat Kidd, and Lori Harris-Glore have been there to catch me each time I stumble; and have taken virus safety precautions seriously. They all

stepped up again and again. Mary covered for me when I had to take FMLA leave with flying colors. She developed great connections with Fred Zorn and the City. The team works well together and has my gratitude!

We suspended allowing patrons into the building for computer use when the City suspended all “in-person” services about a month ago. We agreed with that decision, but it places several staff members in a precarious position. Many of our part time staff basically became unemployed until we call them back.

DIRECTOR’s REQUEST: *Could the board make a resolution to pay those persons who cannot work during pandemic shutdowns? Such an action may not result in the City approving this pay but would increase the possibility of it. No additional hours have been added to the COVID pay in months. Staff members have run out of health bank hours, and unless they are furloughed or laid off by the City they do not qualify for unemployment pay. City Administrator Zorn supported such an action and noted that it will assist him in his discussions with City Council on it. He noted that the Library and Courts have the greatest number of non-career workers.*

MOTION that the library continue to pay all staff members during COVID shutdowns, even if they are unable to work from home due to their specific duties: Mancini. Support: Collins. Discussion: Mancini noted that the library invests much time & money in seeking out and training individuals; and should support them throughout the pandemic. Vote: Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.

COVID Safety: steps enacted to protect staff members (and the public), including:

- We are communicating consistently with other libraries and the City, participating in COVID related webinars, and following safety protocols.
- Installation of Plexiglas barriers between staff members in their work rooms and at public service desks (including the drive-up window).
- Created a computer lab in the large meeting room with a maximum of 8 patrons at any one time to provide ample space between people (with Plexiglas there also).
- All returned materials are quarantined for 72 hours before being handled by staff.
- We conduct daily temperature checks on each staff member before they go to work, with a City sanctioned daily survey asking questions to ensure safety.
- Posters throughout the library remind us to wash our hands frequently, keep social distance, etc.
- Hand sanitizer is placed all over the building.
- Toilets & sinks have been retro-fit to be touchless.
- Masks are required while inside.
- Gloves are provided to staff who need them.
- Work schedules have been revised to reduce the number of staff in each area at all times.
- Those who can work from home are encouraged to do so (with approval and appropriate supervision/reporting).

CARES ACT Update: The City request for reimbursement of COVID-19 expenditures at the library was approved by Oakland County in the amount of \$539,294.13. Reimbursed costs include: Health & Safety Hours (inc. benefits) from March-June; installation of touchless plumbing fixtures, and Plexiglas safety barriers.

SERVICES: Currently Support division has the drive-up window going full steam, with InterLibrary Loan available through MeL. We have beefed up the online offerings we provide. We're investigating tutoring services with the plan to add one soon. Both the Adult & Youth divisions have librarians scheduled at the desk to answer phone reference questions and fill material requests. Our Wi-Fi is available 24/7 for patron use – we often see cars in the parking lot sitting there to take advantage of the free Wi-Fi. We continue to expand the collection with new materials. Outreach division has continually updated our online social media, converted the paper newsletter to online, and has maintained communication within & outside the library as changes to services, programs, & hours change.

PROGRAMS: Our Adult & Youth divisions have used their creativity to put together online offerings at a good clip; and the Tech division is the network glue making sure everything works well. They've put together online Storytime and Book Discussion Groups; and added Book Chats, to name a few. We have partnered more than ever with the City Parks & Recreation Dept. for programs throughout the pandemic. It's been a very creative time despite the limitations!

IDEAS for FUTURE: The managerial team is always looking at ways we can serve the community in new and/or improved ways. We felt that one way to expand our reach would be to take the library outside our doors in some way. Each idea is being researched by librarians, but I wanted to share some ideas.

1. Delivery - there are people who can/will not journey to the building itself. While it isn't far, it still may be out of reach for some...so we identified a variety of possible ways to bring our materials closer to people. Each of these identified options would require a sizable investment and much planning. Board approval would be sought prior to implementation.

- A. Bookmobile – this would bring a small collection (and requests) to various parts of the community. We could set up a schedule and have it wait in different locations for several hours on different days.
- B. Books by Mail – this service would use the USPS to send materials directly to those who sign up for the service, starting with the homebound.
- C. Lockers – such a service would see the library purchase and install specially designed lockers in locations around the City that patrons could access 24/7. We'd have to get permissions from property owners whose locations we wanted to use; and add electricity.

2. Expansion of online services & materials – while this has been our plan for years, the pandemic has accelerated the need tremendously.

- A. WiFi hotspots – many libraries are now loaning portable Wi-Fi hotspots to their patrons, especially in rural areas where no for-profit options exist. We could purchase and loan these. There is a cost for the hardware, and the library would have to enter into a contract with a provider such as ATT or Comcast at a monthly/annual cost.
- B. Databases in additional areas of knowledge exist that we could purchase to provide more information to those online.
- C. Broaden e-content – this is a problem because the major publishers have decided to license eBooks & eAudio to libraries for a limited amount of time or loans. We can't purchase them. Also, libraries are fighting with Amazon because Amazon will not sell to libraries.

- B. Recently retired board members Terry Selman & Carole McCollough – Ewick noted that books will be plated in honor of these Trustees, and that certificates of thanks are being created. (draft in Board packet)
- C. New interns – Wes Schumacher in Adult & Tess McLean in Youth have joined the library staff. We are pleased that these great future librarians have chosen to learn the profession with Southfield Public Library.

VI. BUSINESS

- A. Policy changes, revisions and additions – none this month
- B. New Officers for 2021 – Ewick asked Board members to be prepared to nominate and vote on new officers at the next Board meeting.
- C. Approval of 2021 Board Calendar - **Motion to approve the calendar as presented: Collins. Support: Johnson. Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.**
- D. Approval: purchase of eBooks & eAudiobooks –City Admin. Request - **Motion to approve purchasing an additional \$100,000 in materials including eBooks/eAudio: Collins. Support: Johnson. Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.**

- IX. COMMENTS – Mancini requested that meetings return to the 7:00 pm start time; and that staff investigate using a web-based meeting format. Ewick will proceed.

- X. ADJOURNMENT – **Motion to adjourn: 7:39 pm: Collins. Support: Johnson. Vote: Collins – Aye; Mancini – Aye; Johnson – Aye. Motion carried.**

Next Southfield Public Library Board meeting JAN 13, 2020