

Southfield Library Board
Wednesday, October 9, 2013
7:30 PM
Regular Meeting Minutes

Present: Bernard Cohen, Deborah Evans, Carole McCollough,

Staff: Mary Beall, Dave Ewick, Debby Wawrzyniak

Ex Officio: Irv Lowenberg

Guest: Dennis Cotton, Laura Mancini

I CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:36 by President Deborah Evans who acknowledged the lack of a quorum but noted that Mr. Cohen should be arriving soon.

She asked for, and received permission, to take the agenda out of order.

IX ALL OTHER BUSINESS

A. Programming: Upcoming programs on a variety of topics including Pewabic pottery and the fall Humanities program were discussed.

B. Correspondence: A letter to a patron explaining why the Library is not able to give him old issues of various subscription magazines was shared with the Board.

Julius Readus' resignation letter was reviewed by the Board.

Mr. Ewick was instructed to prepare and send a letter to Mr. Readus, on behalf of the Library Board, thanking him for his service to the community.

C. Other

Ms. Evans shared a "Let Us Know" form she received from a patron who is unhappy that she was unable to renew a book because a hold was placed on the title while it was in her possession. Ms. Evans noted that the policy is referenced on the Library's website, but that it could be made more visible.

Mr. Irv Lowenberg arrived at 7:43 p.m.

Mr. Ewick reported that he has not yet received a final year-end budget report. Preliminary findings indicate that rather than taking money from fund balance, the Library may be able to put a small amount back into the fund balance.

Ms. Mary Beall arrived at 7:49 p.m.

Mr. Ewick said that he was concerned that the start of Affordable Care Act sign-ups would result in a larger percentage of patrons needing computers but this was not the case. Staff put a link to ACA information on the Library's webpage.

VII OLD BUSINESS

- D. Revenue Updates –Mr. Ewick reported that he is working alone on this issue. Ms. Gogola is employed full time elsewhere and is no longer able to put in extra hours for this project. Mr. Ewick explained that he has used Ms. Gogola's initial research to identify areas that can be of financial benefit to the Library.

Mr. Ewick suggested focusing on a single project and look for the financial assistance to make it happen. He discussed, and showed samples, of several methods for donor recognition. It was determined that most would prove to be too expensive. Mr. Ewick will continue to explore other avenues.

Continuing to take the agenda out of order, the Board decided to move to the following item:

VI REPORTS

- E. Junior Library Board: No report. Ms. Haynes not in attendance.
- F. Deputy City Librarian:

- 1. Building Update:** Boilers: It was recommended by Bumler that the Library purchase new boilers. It was decided that time constraints made it unwise to proceed at this time as there was no guarantee that the boilers could be purchased and installed before cold weather set in. It was decided to start the bid process in the spring with installation planned during the summer when lack of heat will not be an issue.

Lighting: The Library's lights are on a computerized timing system that has recently crashed. The lights are not getting the correct information regarding when to turn on and off. The computer board must be replaced. Since the system is 12 years old, finding other Lutron board will be difficult. If it is not possible to replace the board, other solutions will have to be investigated.

2. **Staff Update:** Recently a few key staff members had to be off due to health issues. The remaining staff in those departments stepped up to the challenge and kept the departments running smoothly.

Continuing to take the agenda out of order the Board moved to the following item:

VII OLD BUSINESS

- G. ATM Machine: Mr. Ewick reported that he would like to re-establish ATM service for Library patrons. An ATM machine was available in the café. As there is no clear timetable for the space to be re-opened, he would like to move the ATM machine to the circulation lobby. The Board agreed that this would be a good idea.

Additionally, Library Administration is looking at ways to allow patrons to pay fines and fees with a credit card. Mr. Lowenberg is working on this same issue with other City Departments and will be glad to assist the Library with this process.

Mr. Cohen arrived at 8:09 p.m.

With Mr. Cohen's arrival a quorum is present and it was decided to return to the agenda.

II APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 10, 2013

Motion by Dr. McCollough, supported by Mr. Cohen:

13-26 RESOLVED: that the Minutes from the July 10, 2013 meeting be approved as submitted.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough

NAYS: None

MOTION APPROVED.

III REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Mr. Dennis Cotton was introduced to the Library Board. He wishes to present a proposal to revitalize the café space. He noted that other vendors before him have failed at this, but his plan to keep it small and keep it simple will ensure his success.

Mr. Cotton outlined two plans. The first is for a café offering just coffee, juice, cookies and small candies. The second option is to place 2 to 3 vending machines in the space.

He pointed out that if the Friends were to take over the space for their book sale the vending machine idea would be a win-win for both he and the Friends.

Mr. Cohen noted that Mr. Cotton has never run a café and asked if he knows what his estimated patronage would be and what is most likely to sell to those patrons.

Mr. Cotton said that he anticipates a minimum of 10% of visitors to the Library would stop by the café. Especially if it offered simple items like snacks, juice, coffee and water.

When asked about a timetable to begin, Mr. Cotton said that he was ready to move forward with either option in a couple of weeks. He would be able to open by December 1st if given the go-ahead by the next meeting.

Mrs. Beall asked how, if vending machines were used, would refunds be handled. Mr. Cotton said that he would be handling all aspects of café operation. With either plan, he anticipates treating the café as a full time job. He would also enjoy being a volunteer in the Library.

Mr. Cohen asked if Mr. Cotton realistically thought that maintaining 2 – 3 vending machines in a space shared with the Friends Book Store would generate enough income to compensate for the full time salary he would be giving up. Mr. Cotton said that he anticipates the operation as being successful and he will do what it takes to make it successful.

Mr. Cohen asked if Mr. Cotton would be willing to provide a security deposit or bond. He said that he would and is willing to create a partnership with the Board.

Ms. Evans said that Mr. Cotton's proposal will be reviewed by the Board and Mr. Ewick will be in touch with him soon.

Mr. Cotton thanked the Board for their time.

IV TREASURER'S REPORT

The executive summary was reviewed by the Board. Mr. Ewick was asked if he knows why the Library continues to experience declines in both circulation and patron visits. Mr. Ewick suggested it might be that more people have jobs. It was also pointed out that the availability of Netflix may have impacted the Library's circulation of visual media.

Mr. Cohen asked if it can be determined whether or not website hits have increased since the personal visits have declined.

Motion by Mr. Cohen, supported by Dr. McCollough:

13-27 RESOLVED: That the Executive Summary for September, 2013 be approved as submitted.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough
NAYS: None

MOTION APPROVED.

VII OLD BUSINESS:

- A. CanStrong Update: City Attorney Sue Ward-Witkowski has advised Mr. Ewick that continued litigation with CanStrong will cost more than the Library Board can ever hoped to recover.

Mr. Cohen recommended inviting the City Attorney to the next meeting to address this topic personally. The Board agreed that a telephone conference call is acceptable if she is unable to attend in person.

- B. Café Space Update: There was first a discussion on the existing space and whether or not to allow Mr. Cotton to attempt another café. While the Board felt he was genuinely enthusiastic about starting up a business in the café space, no one on the Board wished to revisit the situation. For 10 years no fewer than 5 different vendors have attempted to conduct business there with very limited success. The Board is going to keep with its previous decision to move the Friends of the Southfield Library's used book sales to the space.

Mr. Ewick pointed out that the book sale managers have expressed concern about moving to the café space. They feel sales will be negatively impacted by the move. As a result, they prefer to remain in the basement.

Reiterating past arguments, the current space in the basement is no longer suitable for volunteers and book sale visitors. There are safety issues as well as the issue of ADA compliance.

Mr. Ewick pointed out that Mary Beall, as a member of the Friends of Michigan Library's board has noted that many Board of Trustee organizations have started developing written agreements with their Friend's organizations to better delineate the responsibilities of each organization.

There was some discussion about allowing the Friends to continue to use the basement for book processing and storage. Mr. Ewick pointed out that with the removal of some of the shelves to the café space, the area would be ADA compliant.

The Board felt that if the basement is not safe and security for sales, it is not safe or secure for volunteers to work in. Ms. Beall pointed out that the auditorium is

underutilized and would make a convenient space for the Friends to use to process the books they receive.

In conclusion, the Board authorized Mr. Ewick to inform the Friends that they must move their book sale and processing space to the café area of the Library as soon as possible. The Board further suggested that any expenses incurred to the move can be split between the Library and the Friends.

VIII NEW BUSINESS

- A. Café / Auditorium space review: Mr. Ewick shared email he received from the original architect for re-purposing the auditorium and café spaces. There was much discussion about the plan and the need for changes to these locations.

Most agreed that the Auditorium would be more usable if there was a center aisle.

Suggestions were made to consult with Dennis Smith for estimates on leveling the auditorium floor. Once the floor is level, the room becomes much more usable.

- B. Meeting date and time: At the last meeting a request was made to change the regular date/time of the Library Board meetings. The current meeting date/time conflicts with the Friends' monthly Jazz & Blues program. After some discussion it was decided to change to the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm.

Motion by Dr. McCollough, supported by Mr. Cohen,

13-28 RESOLVED: That the regular meetings of the Library Board now be convened on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough
NAYS: None

MOTION APPROVED.

The appropriate notice will be posted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act of Michigan.

- C. Damaged Items: Ms. Evans called for a review of the Library's damaged items policy. Ms. Beall explained the current policy in detail.

Ms. Evans said it had been explained to her that there was no damaged item policy as staff was too busy to implement the policy. She was pleased to learn that this was not the case

In conclusion it was felt that the existing policy is fine. It was suggested that staff make sure the policy is easily seen on the website. Additionally, it was felt that every effort should be made to insure that only books in good repair are returned to the shelves. This is part of good collection management.

- D. Street Lit: There was a great deal of discussion about this topic. Mr. Ewick also distributed a summary of a program staff librarians Anne Kabel and Katie Ester presented in support of including Street Lit in library collections.

A great deal of the discussion focused on the literary merit of the genre and its explicit depiction of African American life. It is one of the most heavily circulation collections in the Library.

There was a brief discussion about the appropriateness of allowing minors to check out the books. Adult parents/guardians must sign the library card application for minors. The application clearly places the responsibility for checked out materials on the parent/guardian. The collection is housed among adult fiction but that does not preclude young teens from browsing the shelves.

- E. ATM Machine (continued): There was brief discussion about the ATM machine still located in the Café. Mr. Ewick pointed out that patrons are still asking about access to an ATM Machine. He recommends reactivating the machine and placing it in the circulation lobby to give patrons easier access.

Motion by Mr. Cohen, supported by Dr. McCollough,

13-29 RESOLVED, That the Library Board authorizes Mr. Ewick to retain and reactivate the ATM machine currently in the café space. Additionally, Mr. Ewick is authorized to move the unit to the circulation lobby to provide patrons with easier access.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough

NAYS: None

MOTION APPROVED.

X PUBLIC COMMENTS

Laura Mancini said that she had a very nice time this evening. She gave a brief history about her work experience and her life in Southfield. She concluded by saying she is looking forward to being able to be an active part of future discussions.

XI ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Dr. McCollough, supported by Mr. Cohen,

13-30 RESOLVED, that the Library Board meeting for October 9, 2013 be adjourned.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough

NAYS: NONE

MOTION APPROVED.

There being no further business to discuss the Library Board meeting for Wednesday, October 9, 2013 was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 at 7:30 pm in the Southfield Room located on the 3rd floor of the Southfield Public Library, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield, MI 48076.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Ewick
City Librarian