

**Southfield Library Board**  
**Wednesday, January 8, 2014**  
**7:30 pm**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Bernard Cohen, Deb Evans, Carole McCollough, Eunice Rose

**Staff:** Mary Beall, Dave Ewick, Debby Wawrzyniak

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:29 pm by Board president, Deborah Evans. She stated that the agenda was going to be taking out of order to allow the Board's guest an opportunity to speak at this time.

**II. REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

Mr. Durell Williams, a patron recently banned from the Library, was present to appeal his banning from the Southfield Public Library.

Mr. Ewick gave a brief summary of the issues which lead up to Mr. Williams' banning in December of 2013. The main issue concerned a verbal threat of physical harm by Mr. Williams toward the Library staff.

Mr. Williams addressed the Board and presented letters of reference from friends and members of the religious community for the Board's review.

He further indicated that he has the right to use the Library without being harassed by staff. When asked to explain how staff harasses him, Mr. Williams explained that the Library's safety officers follow him around the building. These officers spread rumors about him and have even followed him into the restroom. At one point, Mr. Williams stated, the safety officers crawled on the floor of the restroom to peer at him from under the bathroom door to see what he was doing.

Mr. Williams said that when this happened he brought the issue to the attention of Mr. Ewick. He further claimed that Mr. Ewick never reprimanded the safety officers for their harassing behavior or require them to stop harassing him. Mr. Williams further indicated that the safety officers are now enlisting Library patrons to follow him around the building.

Finally, Mr. Williams said that he does not recall ever mentioning to Mr. Ewick that he would bring a firearm to the Library and take matters in his own hands. He said that he did have a firearm at one time, but he sold it to a friend. He could only assume he mentioned this sale to Mr. Ewick and Mr. Ewick misunderstood him.

Mr. Ewick indicated that he discussed the alleged harassment with the safety officers who denied the incidents ever happened. The safety officers said that they had never heard of Mr. Williams until Mr. Ewick reported on his claim of harassment to the safety officers.

Mr. Cohen arrived at 7:44 pm

In response to a follow-up question by the Board, Mr. Williams indicated that the harassment began in June or July of last year. He further indicated that he never received the notice that he had been banned. Mr. Ewick reported that the registered letter was returned to the Library after 3 attempts to deliver it.

Mr. Cohen asked if Mr. Williams could suggest a compromise to his banning. Mr. Williams repeated that he lives close to the Southfield Public Library and wants to, as a resident and taxpayer, be allowed to use the Library.

The Board thanked Mr. Williams for his time. He was told that his appeal would be discussed and that Mr. Ewick would notify him of the Board's decision in a timely manner.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Dr. McCollough, supported by Mrs. Rose,

14-01      RESOLVED: that the minutes from the Library Board meeting of December 8, 2013 be approved as submitted.

AYES:      Cohen, Evans, McCollough, Rose

NAYS:      None

#### **MOTION APPROVED.**

The discussion on Mr. William's appeal resumed. The Board discussed Mr. Williams' situation at length considering a number of alternatives rather than permanently banning Mr. Williams from the Library.

Ms. Beall arrived at 8:11 pm

Ultimately, the Board noted that their primary responsibility is the safety and security of all staff and patrons. Anyone suggesting that using violence to resolve issues that

are not being addressed to their satisfaction, should not be allowed to utilize services to the possible detriment of others.

Motion by Mr. Cohen, supported by Mrs. Rose,

14-02 RESOLVED: That the Library Board does hereby deny Mr. Durrell William's appeal and affirms his permanent banning from the Southfield Public Library. Mr. Ewick is authorized to prepare a letter to be sent to Mr. Williams, regarding this decision as soon as possible.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough, Rose

NAYS: None

**MOTION APPROVED.**

On the same topic, Ms. Beall asked about the change in procedure regarding Mr. Williams' wish to appeal his banning. According to the existing procedure, a banned patron is to notify the Board, in writing, that they wish to appeal the City Librarian's decision to be banned. After discussing the request, the Library Board puts the issue on the agenda and notifies the patron of the date/time of his appeal hearing. In this instance, Mr. Williams called and was immediately put on the agenda. This left little time to prepare staff / security for his appearance at the Library.

Mr. Ewick indicated that he wanted this issue addressed quickly. The process can take months and he wanted this dealt with as soon as possible.

It was suggested that there could be different procedures for different issues. Ms. Wawrzyniak was asked to add "Banning / Appeal Process Review" to next month's agenda.

**IV. TREASURER'S REPORT**

- A. The Executive Summary was distributed to the Board and discussed. Additionally, the complete fiscal year 2013/14 expenditure report to date was distributed for the Board's review.
- B. Mr. Ewick distributed a fiscal year 2012/2013 summary. The report also included anticipated budget figures for the 2014/2015 budget which will be completed later this month.

Mr. Ewick noted that bond refinancing can take place next year at this time. The potential savings could come to as much as \$1 million eliminating the need to use fund balance monies. The Mayor has been asking when hours will be restored at the Library. Mr. Ewick has informed her that hours cannot be increased until the Library is operating under a balanced budget.

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

14-03 RESOLVED: that the Treasurer's Report of expenditures through December, 2013 be approved as submitted.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough, Rose

NAYS: None

**MOTION APPROVED.**

## V. REPORTS

A. Jr. Library Board Report: No report due to the absence of Ms. Haynes

Mr. Ewick has asked Ms. Fesko to provide a list of Library Board Student Representative candidates. The list will be forwarded to the Mayor for her consideration.

B. Deputy Librarian's Report:

- Building Update: These will be discussed by Mr. Ewick later in the meeting.
- Staffing Update: Five substitute librarians have been hired from a wonderful pool of enthusiastic candidates.
  - The newly promoted Librarian IIs will soon begin Librarian-in-Charge training joining the rotation for this important task.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. CanStrong: Mr. Ewick reported that Sue Ward has not received a response from CanStrong regarding the Library Board's request for a donation to the Friends of the Library as a final settlement of accounts.

B. Lutron System Update: Quotes for the equipment have been received and evaluated. The order of the equipment will be placed soon and once received, the installation date will be scheduled.

Mr. Ewick gave an update on the Library's HVAC system noting that the Library was closed to the public on Friday due to lack of heat in the building. It was discovered to be a problem with the gas line to the Library and a Consumers Energy issue. This was resolved, but another problem was discovered on Tuesday morning when again, there was no heat to the building. Again, the Library was closed to both the public

and staff. Additionally, City of Southfield, including the Library was closed to both public and staff on Monday as a result of Sunday's snow storm.

There was a brief discussion about warming centers in the City. The Board asked if the Library is used as a warming center and Ms. Beall pointed out that a number of regular library users are in fact homeless. These folks do not cause problems and have, on occasion, acted as additional "eyes and ears" alerting staff to patrons damaging or stealing library materials.

The Board asked Mr. Ewick to find out if the pavilion is ever used in this capacity during the winter. The Board noted that the Librarians are not social workers and will not be asked to provide social services. Mr. Ewick disagreed noting that many of the services the Library provides relating to literacy fall under the category of social services.

- C. Friends of the Library – Move to Café Space: Mr. Ewick is trying to establish a time line for moving the Friends. He is receiving input from the Coordinators to assist with this process.

Mr. Ewick asked the Board if they would prefer to allow him to allocate money from the Library's gift funds to pay for the remodeling or if they would prefer to have the Friends pay for it themselves. It was suggested that offering to pay for the necessary remodeling may help encourage the Friends to move.

Ms. Beall said that she has suggested that the Friends load their book carts with books and move them into the Café space to create a temporary sales location right away. She felt that only by actually using the space as they intend it to be used can realistic decisions be made about remodeling. To her thinking it would be foolish to invest money in major remodeling until the Friends know exactly how they need the space to be remodeled. The only way they will know what needs to be done to the space is to actually use the space as they wish it to be used. Additionally, the Friends may see the success of using the space and gain a greater sense of ownership to the idea.

The Board agreed and endorsed the idea of encouraging the Friends to set up temporary sales in the former café space.

## **VII NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Meeting with Mr. Scharret regarding staff vacancies: Due to Mr. Scharret's hospitalization, Mr. Ewick has talked about this issue with Mr. Zorn. Mr. Zorn is aware of his, and other department heads, concern related to diminished staffing and is looking to address the issue in the near future.
- B. 2014/2015 Budget preparation is moving forward.

- C. Long Range Plan: Mr. Ewick said that the Library's last long range plan was developed shortly after he started working here and took the Library through 2013. He would like to develop a new long range plan. Furthermore, Mr. Ewick said that he would like to have a consultant come in and lead the staff through the plan's development. Additionally he would like to ask for the Board's permission to use gift funds to pay for the expense.

In response to a question from the Board he said that he does not have a specific consultant in mind for the work but is getting suggestions from other librarians. He also did not have a firm quote but estimated it would cost as much as \$20,000.

Dr. McCollough thought it was an excellent idea to get someone from the outside to assist with this project. She also felt any money spent to complete this is the cost of doing business. Ms. Evans asked what Mr. Ewick would be asking or expecting from the consultant that was not done during the development of the last long range plan.

Mr. Ewick said the consultant can spend time looking at the Library's history as a place to start. He would like the consultant to direct management through a visualization process to determine where the Library should go in the future.

Mr. Cohen asked if he felt any of this would lead to fundraising and Mr. Ewick said once the project identifies the typical Library user, marketing and public relation issues would lead to the subject of fundraising.

Mr. Cohen said that the Board would need to see more specific numbers before agreeing to spend funds from the Library's trusts. He also hopes for a focus on corporate gift giving from local businesses.

Ms. Beall also pointed out that the Library needs to establish a succession plan among the staff and a long-range plan will address this as well.

Ms. Evans said to bring additional information on vendors, plans and pricing to the Board so that a process can be created for approval.

## **VII ALL OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Programming: There are many good things on the schedule related to Black History month.
- B. Correspondence: The unsigned fax from Mrs. Campbell was read and discussed. The Board felt that it was not necessary to speak with Mrs. Campbell any further and instructed Mr. Ewick to prepare a letter to that effect for her.
- C. Other: Regarding last months' security breach, the City's locksmith is being consulted on ways to prevent the breach from re-occurring.

## **VIII PUBLIC COMMENTS**

NONE.

## **IX ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Cohen, supported by Mrs. Rose,

14-04 RESOLVED: That the Library Board meeting for January 8, 2014 be adjourned.

AYES: Cohen, Evans, McCollough, Rose

NAYS: None

MOTION APPROVED.

There being no further business to discuss the Library Board Meeting for January 8, 2014 was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

The next meeting of the Southfield Library Board will take place on Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 7:30 pm in the Southfield Room located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Library at 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield, MI 48076

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Ewick  
City Librarian