

MAHOMET PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING JULY 12, 2021 6:15PM AT THE LIBRARY

Members Present: Susie Baker, Jeanne Campion, Carrie Heimann, Kevin Kelsey, Chris Moore, Rebekah Rhode, Kristen Streeter

Not Present: N/A **Also present:** John Howard, Kate Smith, Maura Stutzman

Approval of the Minutes for June 14, 2021

Rebekah Rhode moved to approve the minutes from June 14, 2021. Kristen Streeter seconded; the motion passed by general consent. There was no discussion.

Treasurer's Report

Jeanne Campion moved to approve the preliminary financial report for June 2021. Kevin Kelsey seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

John Howard had several comments for the board regarding the financials:

- He pointed out that some things had changed since the report was sent to the board and reminded the board that the numbers would not be final until after the audit.
- He shared a document with the board that showed a projected surplus of \$50,709, with most of that coming from higher TIF and Per Capita Grant revenue and some of it due to decreased expenses because of the pandemic.
- He pointed out that the furnishing line item in Building and Maintenance expenses is approximately \$19,000 over budget and that there were several extenuating circumstances:
 - Grants or donations covered approximately \$9,000 of the expenses. One of these grants (for recovering the furniture in the children's area) was received in FY 18-19, but the final bill from the contractor was received in FY 20-21.
 - The help desk cost of approximately \$6,000 was agreed to by the board, since the library already expected a surplus for FY 20-21.

Chris Moore asked if the FY 21-22 budget for TIF revenue was higher. John told him that it was, but that he had just learned from the village to expect even more TIF revenue than the budget plans for. He told the board that library staff was already discussing this and that they may be asking the board to amend the budget.

Jeanne Campion moved to approve the check register for June 2021. Kevin Kelsey seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Rebekah Rhode asked about lawn mowing costs, since there were two checks in the June check register. John told the board that the contractor charges \$995 per month for all landscape maintenance. Kate Smith explained that there were two checks because the contractor invoices always cover the previous month and the library needed to ensure that June's expenses were included in the FY 20-21 financial report.

Jeanne Campion pointed out the check written to Fred Schlipf and told the board that John Howard had covered this topic in his director's report, but she wanted the trustees to know that she had discussed this with John before signing the check. Rebekah Rhode asked how much the library had paid Fred Schlipf in total and John told her it was \$10,640. He added that paying Fred Schlipf an hourly rate was inefficient and he hoped to negotiate a flat fee for any remaining work.

Rebekah Rhode commented that she had hoped to see a more detailed, customized result from the work with Fred Schlipf. John Howard explained that the approach used by Fred Schlipf, having trustees and staff tell him everything they want and then cutting later, can be hard to follow. He added that he had gone through the cutting process once with Fred Schlipf and the next draft of the document is tighter. He told the board that he planned to show it to the Building and Grounds committee at the upcoming meeting and it would then pass to the full board. Jeanne Campion commented that she didn't like the approach used by Fred Schlipf, but that she has done some research and learned that this is the way it is usually done.

Director's Report

John Howard submitted the director's report before the meeting.

Rebekah Rhode asked if it is still John's goal to apply for the Best Small Library award. John said that it is still his intention, but that it was pushed back a bit by the pandemic.

Responding to the statement in John Howard's report regarding the departure of Sherry Waldrep to take the library director position at the Allerton Public Library in Monticello, Chris Moore told the board that he would write a congratulatory letter to her on behalf of the board. Rebekah Rhode commented that she is proud of the library, because in the short time John Howard has been here, the library

has launched two new library directors from the staff. John responded that his goal is to help all staff members grow as professionals. Carrie Heimann said that she loved that approach and that the library can be a feeder to other libraries and may also help the Mahomet Library attract talent who want to grow and learn.

John Howard pointed out that the statistics are still hard to compare with the previous year because of the pandemic, so he shared a set of graphs comparing the FY 20-21 circulation numbers to the previous two years. He noted that there is reason to be optimistic, because the library is relatively close in statistics to the last “normal” year (FY 18-19), given how much ground has been lost due to the pandemic. He also noted that people counts in FY 18-19 and the first 9 months of FY 19-20 were strong due to the significant increase in programming and the library just isn’t able to be back to that yet.

John Howard also told the board that that day [July 12] was the opening day for online registration for the schools and that, thanks to the link to the library’s page on the district registration site, the library had already received 10 online applications for library cards.

Audience Comments – no comments

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Jeanne Campion told the board that the finance committee met June 30 to review the tax-related ordinances, which will be presented at future meetings. She also reported that the committee reviewed the updated financial policy as proposed by library staff and that this policy will next go to the policy committee.

Jeanne Campion also thanked Kevin Kelsey and Chris Moore for their efforts to get signing authority at both of the library’s banks.

Other Committees

John Howard reported that, based on members’ responses to Doodle polls, the policy committee will be meeting at 6:15pm on Wednesday, July 28 and the building and grounds committee will be meeting at 7pm on the same night.

New Business

A. Status of the IGA with Champaign County for Ballot Drop Box

John Howard reported that the library’s attorney returned the agreement with minor edits and the IGA was now waiting for the county’s attorney to review these changes.

Strategic Plan Update

John Howard sent an update on the 2018-2021 strategic plan to the board ahead of the meeting. Jeanne Campion said that she was happy to hear the library had restarted the “We had to say no list,” because sometimes the library can turn a “no” into a “yes.” Chris Moore observed that it had been a pretty positive quarter and the report shows how important the strategic plan is as the board ramps up for the new plan. Kristen Streeter commented that this year the library has added offsite shelving and other big projects and also kept things going during a hard year, so the staff should be very proud.

Chris Moore told the board that they would be updating the mission statement this year and encouraged them all to think about wording for this statement, as well as goals and objectives they’d like to see in the new plan.

John Howard presented a document that outlined the broad steps and timeline for developing the next strategic plan. Kevin Kelsey noted the planned ½ day meeting for the board in September and asked for that date to be set soon. John promised that library staff would send a Doodle poll that week.

Carrie Heimann asked if there had been much community input. John Howard said the library had received about 30 responses, but the quality was good.

Board Advocacy

John Howard told the board the library would once again have a booth at the Mahomet Music Festival in August and he encouraged board members to help staff it, noting that it is a great opportunity for trustees to be out in the community. He passed around a sheet with shifts. Chris Moore added that he didn’t want to see this downloaded to library staff and encouraged everyone to sign up and bring spouses and teens to help. Maura Stutzman commented that the library booth will close at 8pm each evening because it gets dark and the crowds aren’t focused on booths at that point.

Chris Moore reminded the board to attend library programs if possible to provide moral support and he encouraged them to wear their library shirts and name tags. Maura Stutzman told the board that there would be an outdoor movie night that coming Saturday.

John Howard reminded the board that he had promised them at the June meeting that library staff would come up with ideas for an event at the library. He reported that they had some ideas, but were still gathering more and would report back at a later date.

Trustee Comments

Rebekah Rhode asked if there was anywhere in Mahomet where active duty military members were honored, because she thought it might be nice to do this at the library. Chris Moore and Jeanne Campion told her there was a list posted on Main Street, by the American Legion.

Kevin Kelsey said that he didn't remember noticing if there was signage at the help desk and that it should be noticeable. John Howard told him there was a small sign and that he intends to get "real" signage when the new desk arrives.

Jeanne Campion commented that, just as the library will miss Sherry Waldrep, there are also so many other staff members whom the library would miss if they were to leave and she wanted them to know that.

Chris Moore asked Kate Smith for letterhead and envelopes to send letters on behalf of the board and he also asked if the FY 20-21 minutes were ready for him and Rebekah Rhode to review. Kate told them she would place the minutes binder in the trustee mailbox.

Chris Moore read a thank you letter from Brian Paragi to the board, thanking them for the parting gift and stating how he had enjoyed serving on the board.

Adjournment

Carrie Heimann moved to adjourn the meeting. Kristen Streeter seconded; the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Kate Smith, Business Manager