

# MAHOMET PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING NOVEMBER 9, 2020 6:15PM VIA ZOOM

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**Members Present:** Jeanne Campion, Chris Moore, Rebekah Rhode, Carrie Heimann, Kevin Kelsey, Brian Paragi, Kristen Streeter

**Also present:** John Howard, Kate Smith

Chris Moore opened the meeting with the following statement:

“For the record, the Mahomet Public Library District is able to conduct this electronic meeting because of Governor Pritzker’s Executive Orders #2020-07 (March 16th, 2020) and #2020-08 (April 1st, 2020). These orders suspend the Open Meetings Act provision relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body. Specifically, they suspend the requirement that members of a public body must be physically present and they also suspend the limitations on when remote participation is allowed.

- An in-person meeting is not prudent due to the COVID 19 disaster.
- All members and guests must be able to hear all discussion to satisfy the Open Meeting portions.
- One member is physically present at the library (Mr. John Howard).
- All votes will be roll call.
- This meeting will be recorded.
- A quorum is still required.
- Trustees will refrain from using the chat feature in order to comply fully with the Open Meetings Act.”

### Approval of the Minutes for October 12, 2020

Chris Moore pointed out three typos in the minutes and asked that a bullet point about not using the chat feature be added to the opening statement.

Rebekah Rhode moved to approve the minutes from October 12, 2020 as amended. Kevin Kelsey seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

### Treasurer's Report

Jeanne Campion moved to approve the financial report for October 2020. Brian Paragi seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Jeanne moved to approve the check register for October 2020. Brian seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

John Howard pointed out the payment to the Mahomet-Seymour School District and reminded the board that this was the contribution to the tents that the board agreed to pay earlier in the year. Carrie Heimann asked about the payment to All Your Needs Consulting and John reminded the board that this is the library’s IT contractor.

### Director’s Report

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

He pointed out some of the October statistics, commenting that the fact that print circulation was down only 7% from the previous year was amazing, given the circumstances. He added that much of this is due to pick up locker use. John also pointed out the spike in people counts on Saturdays due to the successful Book or Treat program. He praised the staff working that day for handling the crowds safely.

Jeanne Campion commented that she was glad the library was able to use its video footage to help the police with an accident investigation. She added that the victim, Dr. Shuh, wrote the book “Gathering Pearls” and said that if the library doesn’t already have a copy of this book, perhaps it should.

Brian Paragi commented that he liked the fact that the library is considering circulating laptops. John told the board that the laptops are adequate and that, while they won’t astound users with speed, they are useful.

Chris Moore commented that he agreed with Jeanne about the cooperation between the library and law enforcement.

### Audience Comments – no comments

### Committee Reports – no reports

### New Business

#### A. Minor Change to Temporary COVID-19 Policy

John Howard presented a draft of an updated policy for board approval and highlighted the three changes:

- Changing special hours for high-risk patrons from “will” to “may.” John told the board that he talked with the health

department about no longer having these hours and the health department approved the change.

- Changing specific visit duration from “will” to “may.” John told the board he also discussed this with the health department, including the fact that the library would like to allow patrons to work at tables in the periphery of the room, and the health department approved this.
- Addition of a note about extending Wi-Fi in the parking lot. John pointed out that he added this information as an accommodation for those who cannot wear masks.

Brian Paragi asked if, when determining the appropriate visit duration, if John was looking at specific metrics or going with a gut feel. John told the board that, depending on how things go, he may limit visit duration again if the region goes to Tier 2 or Tier 3.

Chris Moore pointed out that this policy change did not go through the policy committee first in the interest of time and because the changes are minor.

Carrie Heimann moved to approve the updates to the Temporary COVID-19 Policy. Brian Paragi seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

## **B. Discussion of Library Response to IL COVID-19 Mitigation Procedures**

John Howard submitted a summary report on this topic to the board before the meeting.

John told the board that the region was currently under Tier 1 mitigations and he expected to enter Tier 2 by November 16, based on the state’s plan to proceed to Tier 2 fourteen days after entering Tier 1 if numbers don’t improve. He noted that the emphasis under Tier 1 is more on bars and restaurants than on nonessential retail.

He stated that it is not as clear when the region might proceed from Tier 2 to Tier 3. He told the board that he discussed this with staff and there was a general consensus to remain open if the region proceeds to Tier 2, but to talk more about what to do if we move to Tier 3.

Chris Moore commented that he agreed with John’s comments in the report about the library being essential for the mental health of the community. The rest of the board agreed. Kristen Streeter stated that she would support staying open if staff members are comfortable, especially with pick up options for patrons who are not comfortable coming in. Brian Paragi agreed that the staff must be comfortable. Kevin Kelsey added that the board must be willing to accommodate staff concerns as much as possible.

John reminded the board that it is not necessarily an either/or situation, but that the library could remain open with reduced hours, depending on how many staff members are comfortable working.

Chris stated that he likes John’s definition of essential because it offers ways to serve the public even if the library needs to close its doors. He noted that the library has a lot of options.

Chris closed the discussion by telling John that the general consensus of the board appeared to be to follow John’s plan at this time and call a special board meeting if needed.

## **C. Proposal for Offsite Storage of Library Materials**

Before the meeting, John Howard sent a proposal to the board to store some library materials in an offsite location, to alleviate crowded shelves in the library and reduce the need to continually weed materials that could still circulate. John pointed out that this would solve several problems identified in the strategic plan that would have been solved by a building expansion. He noted that it would be a big project to set it up, but not a big project to manage.

Kevin Kelsey asked if there were concerns about temperature or humidity damaging materials. John replied that the location he was considering is heated and has window air conditioners.

Brian Paragi asked how many items would be in the room. John estimated that he could store as many as 10,000 – 12,000 items in the location.

Rebekah Rhode ask about insurance expenses, for both the collection and for staff members using their own cars to transfer items. John told the board he still needed to speak with the insurance agent.

Rebekah asked if this would increase circulation and be a convenience. John responded that crowded collections are known to discourage browsing and circulation, and that his goal is to make the collection more browsable and attractive to patrons. He added that he can accomplish this with weeding, but that what he is weeding still has a lot of useful life.

Carrie Heimann commented that this is a really creative idea with a lot of benefits, since one of the board’s goals is to increase the collection. Rebekah agreed that it is a creative solution.

Jeanne Campion asked if John had considered other options, such as a trailer on library grounds. John responded that he would look into that.

Rebekah asked if there were other unknowns besides the cost of shelving and insurance questions and John replied there were not.

All board members agreed that this was a good idea, but that they would like more specific information before proceeding. John agreed to get more details and request a special board meeting if he needed a decision from the board before the December meeting.

## **D. Per Capita Grant Requirements – Discussion of Reading Assignment from *Serving our Public 4.0*, Chapters 5-8**

Chris Moore reminded board members that they are to review the entire *Serving Our Public 4.0* document as part of the Per Capita grant application process. He asked for comments from trustees based on what they read in chapters 5-8.

### **Building and Grounds**

Rebekah Rhode observed that it is an interesting point that when the facility looks good, it increases the trust the public has in the library.

Chris noted that recommendation for a capital asset plan. John Howard commented that he noted the same thing and that the library needs to have one.

### **Safety**

Jeanne Campion asked if the library has a defibrillator and John told the board it is located near the public restrooms.

Kevin Kelsey asked if the library has a Narcan kit and John told him the library does not have one.

Chris Moore asked if the library provided periodic safety training for staff. John told the board that the staff last had some training on Martin Luther King Day, when the library closed so staff could discuss the building plan.

Chris asked if the library has a disaster plan and John told the board that it was created before he started the job and it is pretty up to date.

### **Collection Management**

Jeanne Campion asked how library staff ensure the library has a wide range of materials. John explained his purchasing process, noting that knowing the community is also important. For example, mysteries circulate well in Mahomet, so he purchases more of them, but science fiction is not as popular, so he focuses on high quality and low numbers there.

Carrie Heimann asked if it is possible to do an analysis on what people search for in the catalog, but don't find. John replied that this isn't possible, but he does browse the holds shelf and study the holds lists to see what patrons are requesting.

### **System Resource Sharing**

There was no discussion on this topic. Chris Moore commented that the library is doing a good job with library interconnectedness.

## **E. Discussion of Trustees Election in April**

John Howard told the board that Kevin Kelsey, Kristen Streeter, and Carrie Heimann are all running in April, leaving one empty spot. He encouraged everyone to think about who they know in the community who might like to serve on the library board.

## **Strategic Plan Update—No Update**

### **Board Advocacy – no discussion**

### **Trustee Comments**

Brian Paragi asked if the board would have a December meeting. Chris Moore stated that a December meeting is needed, especially given the conditions in the community and the need to give John support and insight in case he needs to make decisions with respect to COVID.

Jeanne Campion stated that she will be quarantining and then visiting her new grandchild and that she needs Chris or Brian to sign checks on November 24, December 8, and December 22. Chris volunteered to do this and Brian will serve as a backup.

Chris thanked trustees and library staff for the thoughtful, insightful comments on the director evaluation. He added that, if you know a veteran, thank them for their service this week.

### **Closed Session**

Kevin Kelsey moved to enter closed session in order to discuss approval of minutes of a meeting lawfully closed under this Act. [ILCS 120/2(c)(21)]. Carrie Heimann seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion. The board entered closed session at 7:24pm.

### **Adjournment**

Rebekah Rhode moved to adjourn the meeting. Brian Paragi seconded; the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:42pm.