

MAHOMET PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023, 6:15PM AT THE LIBRARY

Members Present: Susie Baker, Mike Cunningham, Carrie Heimann, Scott Schaumann, Kristen Streeter, Stevi Stutzman

Not Present: Kevin Kelsey **Also present:** John Howard, Kate Smith

Susie Baker opened the meeting by reading the library's mission statement: "Together we create a welcoming community that empowers everyone to learn, connect, create, and grow."

Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes for August 14, 2023

Mike Cunningham pointed out that he had attended the meeting in person, not via Zoom as the minutes recorded.

Kristen Streeter moved to approve the minutes for August 14, 2023 as amended. Scott Schaumann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Carrie Heimann moved to approve the preliminary financial report for August 2023. Stevi Stutzman seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Carrie Heimann moved to approve the check register for August 2023. Stevi Stutzman seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Kristen Streeter asked if the rate for renting space at Sangamon on Main was locked in. John Howard said that the contract will expire in December, and he is setting up an appointment with the management company to discuss the new contract. He said he is anticipating that the cost will go up, but he will negotiate to keep it as low as possible. Scott Schaumann pointed out that even if the rate increases, this is a fairly minimal expense for the library's budget and a good rate per square foot.

Carrie Heimann pointed out that the IMRF expense was higher than usual, because this was a month with three paychecks.

Director's Report

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

He added that he and Kate Smith brought the year-end statistics report, which had been inadvertently omitted from the previous month's board report. Scott Schaumann noted that locker use was the only statistic that had declined from the previous year. John explained that more people are coming into the library again (post-COVID) and that the library did not have locker use numbers for the very end of the year. John showed the trustees the difference between digital and physical circulation statistics, which affects how much he spends for each.

Audience Comments – No Audience

Committee Reports – Policy Committee

Susie Baker told the board the policy committee met August 30 to review several policies. John Howard said they would be reviewing these under New Business.

Unfinished Business

A. Reminder about Staff Bios for Website

Susie Baker reminded the board that trustee bios are due by September 15, according to an email from [Marketing Coordinator] Heather Murphy.

New Business

A. Adopt Ordinance 2023-4 Tax Levy

John Howard reminded the board that this ordinance was approved and submitted by the finance committee, so no motion is needed. He said the ordinance was also reviewed and approved by the library's attorney and that it does not include a large enough increase to require a Truth in Taxation hearing.

Roll call vote; all trustees voted to approve Ordinance 2023-4.

B. Review and Consider Approval of Changes to the Following Policies

Policy III. Library Cards

John Howard pointed out the recommended changes, which he said were mostly minor. He explained that the goal is to always make

it easier for people to get cards. Scott Schaumann asked what the library uses for proof of address. John explained that library staff members use the address on a photo ID or a piece of mail and if that is not possible, they issue a 2-week card, which gives the patron time to receive the welcome letter mailed with each new card. They can bring that letter in as proof of address and receive the full 3-years on the card.

The board approved the policy changes unanimously.

Policy X. Use of Public Rooms

John Howard reviewed the proposed changes to this policy. Carrie Heimann pointed out the rule about not using the rooms for private parties and asked what constituted a “private party.” The trustees discussed this at length and several agreed that clarifying language is needed to differentiate between group events and private parties. John said that at the policy committee meeting, Kevin Kelsey was particularly interested in this point, so Stevie Stutzman suggested tabling further discussion on this policy until the October meeting, when Kevin would be in attendance.

Stevi Stutzman moved to table discussion of the Use of Public Rooms policy until the October 9 board meeting. Scott Schaumann seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Policy XI. Public Materials for Display

John Howard told the board that the literature rack is no longer available for non-library materials, and the proposed changes to this policy reflect that.

The board approved the policy changes unanimously.

Bylaws of the Mahomet Public Library District

John Howard reviewed the proposed changes, explaining that most were minor adjustments to reflect changes in regular practice. He pointed out that the biggest change was the addition of the Building and Grounds Committee as a standing committee, which reflects the fact that this committee has already existed for many years.

The board approved the policy changes unanimously.

C. Review and Consider Approval of Changes to the Following Policies

John Howard reminded the board that he sent them information about the QSEHRA early so new board members could review and understand it.

Scott Schaumann said the information was helpful, but he was still unclear on the pros and cons section. John said that the biggest pro is that there are full-time staff who don't take advantage of the health insurance, and this gives them a benefit that helps retain them.

John explained that the board considered the QSEHRA when determining what percentage of the health insurance premiums the library should pay. At this time, the library pays only 70% of the health insurance premiums; if the board drops the QSEHRA, they will need to revisit this percentage.

Carrie Heimann said that health insurance is a good, broad strategy to attract and retain employees and it would also be a good strategy to not take away the QSEHRA from current staff. Scott Schaumann said he agreed with that, but he was concerned the QSEHRA will never go away. There was a lot of discussion, with board members agreeing that eventually the library would need to drop the QSEHRA and only offer health insurance, but there was concern about taking a benefit away from current employees.

John Howard said it will be important when hiring new employees to explain to them that the QSEHRA would likely be a short-term benefit that will eventually end. Stevi Stutzman said that it is a good idea to be transparent with new hires.

Stevi Stutzman moved to renew the QSEHRA for 2024. Kristen Streeter seconded. Roll call vote; all trustees voted in favor of the motion.

D. Plan for Review of Library Standards for 2024 Per Capita Grant

John Howard explained to the board that every year the trustees have homework they must complete in order to apply for the per capita grant, which brings about \$20,000 to the library. He told the board that for many years, the homework consisted of reviewing specific sections of **Serving our Public, Standards for Illinois Public Libraries**, but in recent years, trustees have been asked to review the entire publication every year.

John told the board that he proposed they review a group of chapters each month until the end of the year: chapters 1-5 in October, chapters 6-10 in November, and chapters 11-14 in December. He explained there is a checklist at the end of each chapter and the board will discuss those checklists at the meetings.

John will send a pdf of the document to board members.

Strategic Plan – No Report

Board Advocacy

Review Mahomet Music Festival

John Howard asked for feedback on this event from board members who served in the library's booth.

Kristen Streeter said the location directly across from the music was too loud to talk to people.

Stevi Stutzman said the Plinko board needs to be repaired and John said the staff is discussing new ideas for an activity in next year's booth. Stevi said she had a lot of fun and talked to a lot of people new to Mahomet.

Kristen said the [make your own] buttons went over well and other trustees agreed.

Mike Cunningham said the buttons were awesome, like a magic trick, but the books were the real prize. He said they need the ability to refresh the supply when running low.

Kristen suggested the library have plastic bags for people to carry their books around the festival. Stevi said that was a good idea and suggested pre-packing the bags with library information because it can be difficult to draw people into conversation at the booth about all the library does.

John thanked the trustees for serving and said it was great having a trustee at every shift.

Scott Schaumann asked how much this cost the library and John said it was mostly the giveaway books and staff time. Scott asked about the ROI on this investment and John said the ROI was getting people to know about the library and its programs – getting the library in front of as many people as possible. Stevi added that they also get feedback from the community.

Date for Murder Mystery in February

John Howard reminded the board that this event is usually held around Valentines Day, which means the best dates this year are February 10 or February 17. He said it is nice to get it on the calendar as soon as possible.

There was some discussion about the venue. Carrie Heimann said that she loved the Methodist Church venue, but she would like to be able to serve alcohol. Several others agreed. John said that the Catholic church might work this year and, if so, they might be able to serve alcohol there. Board members agreed that the next step is for John to check with the Catholic church about availability on the different dates.

Trustee Comments

Mike Cunningham said his company wanted to have a library at work and Mike got to curate books for it and get a taste of what John does.

Carrie Heimann said she needed library services a couple of times recently and library staff have always gone one step beyond what she asked. She sent kudos to the staff for going above and beyond.

Carrie also said the new website is very well done.

Susie Baker said the storywalk ribbon cutting was a successful event.

Adjournment

Kristen Streeter moved to adjourn the meeting. Stevi Stutzman seconded; the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Kate Smith, Business Manager