

LIBRARY BOARD OF THE BOROUGH OF OAKMONT

Minutes

November 10, 2021

Present: Jeanette Eleff, Wendy Emery, Ann Galm, Katie Lascola, Beth Mellor, Shane Michael, Heather Pletcher, Laurie Sliben

Guests: Karen Crowell, Stephanie Zimble

Chair Laurie Sliben called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

The Board reviewed the minutes from the October meeting. Ann moved the minutes be approved; Heather seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were approved.

The Board reviewed the staff reports. The Big Bag Book Sale was very successful along with participating in Oakmont's Halloween Parade. It was mentioned that the people who participated in the Big Bag Book Sale are not the same as the normal library patrons.

Much discussion arose pertaining to the difference between college programs revolving around Library and Information Science. Karen mentioned she is learning a great deal from her courses and also, how different and focused the intern Nia's courses are.

Beth reported on the conference she attended with the staff in September, Barriers to Service. Beth asked Stephanie and Karen to share their feedback on the conference and becoming Fine Free.

Stephanie discussed the importance of the statistics of becoming a Fine Free library. She shared her major takeaway from the conference was to make sure we are considering all barriers for patrons as a library. There are things besides the common barriers we may miss or not think of, mainly money. She also stated that on our Library building it states "Free to the People." Penn Hills Library just moved to being Fine Free, we do not want to lose business because financial barriers and want to instill civic trust to the community. Stephanie has a wealth of knowledge in the history of libraries.

Karen added to the discussion and talked about the socioeconomic disadvantages some people in the community and in Verona may have. The library needs to be a safe space and we need to erode barriers. There were great discussions around these topics.

Karen and Stephanie were excused from the meeting.

Beth presented her report. She mentioned one thing that was not on her report sent out was that the State is asking the Library redo their collections policies. They have not been redone since 2002. The Board will vote on this in December.

Beth stated that we have received a 5% increase in RAD funding because the ACLA membership voted to increase funding to communities that serve at least one at risk community in their area, and in our case that is Verona. Shane brought up the idea of our Board having a voting member from Verona. Much discussion arose and Beth suggested adding this to our Strategic Plan if we really want to move forward with it.

Beth informed the Board that herself, Laurie, and the Borough had a meeting with Dave from the HVAC company regarding our system. Shane passed around a summarized report that he made from the report sent out. He said he would email it to the Board.

There were steps discussed with the Borough regarding our HVAC system. Replacing the valves, getting a bid for a second boiler, Beth creating an Emergency Response Plan (perhaps a generator), replacing the control panel, and in Spring of 2022 applying for a Keystone Grant to fund our HVAC plan.

Laurie presented the Chair's report. She discussed the Library's staff luncheon was being held December 5th and whoever was willing to contribute could do so to her. Beth stated that the staff was very excited for it this year and it was going to be held at Hoffstots.

Laurie mentioned that she had emailed the Board a Performance Evaluation for Beth and if everyone could please fill it out and send back to her. She also mentioned that she had reviews for the Board members to do of themselves and of the Board as a whole. We are to bring them to the December meeting. They will be discussion points only to make sure we are all on track.

The next council meeting is December 7th. It will be the Library's quarterly reporting. Beth will bring forms to the new councils members to update them on the Library.

Wendy reviewed the Financial report. She mentioned again that our RAD funds were increased by 5%. Our contributions for the LYL campaign are over \$21,000 which is the highest ever. We are on par for the year and for budget.

Laurie mentioned that Beth had the Strategic Plan all together. The staff was very positive about the Strategic Plan and had no comments or suggestions. We will vote at the December meeting on the Strategic Plan. After it is voted on and approved, Beth will post the plan on the library's website.

The Board nominated the officers for 2022:

Chair - Shane

Co-Chair - Laurie

Treasurer - Wendy

Secretary - Heather

The officers will be voted on at the December meeting.

Laurie discussed new candidates for the Board. We had three applications and they were all wonderful. We have interviewed all three applicants. We have one position to

fill for 2022 but 2 more to fill in 2023. We will begin solicitations for 2023 in the Spring. It was a unanimous decision to elect Rebecca Panza as our new Board member for 2022.

Laurie began to talk about the Library becoming Fine Free. Shane questioned whether this was a suggestion or a requirement from the State. Beth stated that it is just a suggestion. The process would be the same, except no fees would be charged for not returning the book. You would still have an automatic renewal every three weeks, and if the book was not returned after your renewal period, then you would receive a bill for the book or item after three notices. Beth stated that other libraries who have gone fine free are still getting books returned. The Board was unanimous in voting to become Fine Free.

There being no further business to discuss, Katie moved the meeting be adjourned; Ann seconded the motion. The motion was carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Secretary,

Heather Pletcher