



BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

February 25th, 2020

CALL TO ORDER – Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees meeting, of the Peru Public Library, was held on Thursday, February 25th, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM and was presided over by President Alison Paul.

ATTENDEES

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Bryan Maggart, Leslie Murphy, Austina Reed, Deb Swihart, and President Alison Paul.*

MEMBER APOLOGIES: *Regine Brindle*

DIRECTOR PRESENT: *Maryann Farnham and Assistant Director, Michelle Spangler, were present.*

GUESTS: *Staff member Lisa Rummel was also present, to take the minutes.*

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

January Minutes

The secretary, Reed, had not yet looked over the minutes due to a death in the family, but Paul had a few corrections. On page 2, first paragraph, "collection" was changed to "collecting". On page 2, paragraph 3, as well as throughout the rest of the minutes wherever it appears, "story walk" needed to be changed to one word. On the same page, an "h" had been missed in "thought". And Miamisfort needed to be corrected so that it was all one word and had no apostrophe. There was a missing "s" after "lightbulb" and on page 3 under new business, a missing "d" in "fund". There were no other corrections.

Maggart motioned to accept the January minutes as corrected and Swihart seconded. The vote was as follows: Maggart – Aye, Murphy – Aye, Paul – Aye, Reed – Aye, Swihart – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Swihart, the treasurer, had reviewed the financials and did not see any errors. She commented that she had asked Farnham about the refunded and voided checks being listed under desk receipts, but that that was simply the way the state wanted them done.

Farnham wanted to mention that after the claims, the board will see a complete list of the repairs and maintenance done last year. The good news is that there had not been any elevator issues recently, as unfortunately, the elevator is something we cannot fix ourselves. About 1/3 of the 2020 maintenance costs was for the new video security system.

Maggart motioned to accept the financial statements, approval of claims, approval of bank and deposit systems and Swihart seconded. The vote was as follows: Maggart – Aye, Murphy – Aye, Paul – Aye, Reed – Aye, Swihart – Aye. The motion passed with all ayes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The library had received a US Census Thank You certificate, so that was very nice.

AGENDA

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Farnham opened her report by saying that the security cameras installation was complete. She had included several screen shots of the camera views in the board packets, so that the board could get an idea for what is shown and how clear the view is. She mentioned that she'd even used them to see if our sidewalks had been cleared off yet, from home and on her phone. The library got 7 cameras instead of 6 with the money set aside for them, and there is still a credit of \$400 even. She has asked them how much 3 more cameras would be. The reason for the credit is because they didn't have to put in the DVR rack system and instead, just used what we already had as there was plenty of space. She is hoping they will send a quote soon so the board can discuss this next month. She is hoping it would only be \$1000 to add those extra 3 cameras and have complete coverage of the library. The cost depends on installation, but the cameras would all be in the same general area which would help. It was asked if we needed to have any policy updates, now that we have a camera system. Farnham said we would be reviewing that this year, in the employee handbook. The signs about the cameras need to be put up but haven't come in yet. Farnham mentioned that the cameras are not very noticeable as is.

Next, Farnham told the board about the telephone system upgrade that is in process. The new phones are being ordered. The phone bill is going down and upgrading the phone system will cost about \$100 more. The library staff will then be able to have an app on their phone that ties into the library's phone system.

The library received another 2021 CARES mini grant, bringing our grant total from them up to \$3,400. She is not sure if we will use all of it but will see. It can be used for everything from paper towels to hotspots to PPE and is a reimbursement program that ends in April. This is a federal grant that the state library approves.

Farnham had nothing major to report on the Employee Handbook, as everything else from the month has taken up the time to work on that. The delay in getting the necessary statistics for the Library Annual Report made that project take more time than usual, but since that is now submitted, hopefully the handbook can be worked on soon. Paul did not need to sign the Annual reports this year, which through Farnham off, but both the Library Annual Report and the SBOA Annual Report are submitted now. The latter has also been posted in the newspaper, as required.

Spangler reported on the storywalk. She had not heard anything yet, as the grant committee had to postpone their meeting due to technical issues.

Spangler also reported on the Summer Reading Program and said its theme is Tails and Tales. Other libraries either are not planning on doing in-person programs or are having them outside. So, the library has been approved by the park to have our Wednesday programs at the amphitheater this summer. The programs will be sponsored by the library and the parks board. The park will be bringing some activities for the people to do as they wait and Farnham and Spangler plan for the library to bring laptops out there as well. Spangler ran through a list of the performers she has booked for the summer. We are going to try and build it up in the community to make it a true community event. In addition, they are going to try to move the Summer Reading Program (the tracking of the reading portion) online, as attendance was down so much last year. She gave an overview of Beanstack next, and mentioned people can still submit their reading via paper as well. Beanstack will hook to our catalog and be able to give reader recommendations that way as well. It can also be customized for each age group, and can

be used to give people points for going to programs as well. Even with vaccination numbers rising, they are trying to make the Summer Reading Program safer for those without them. With Beanstack, the patrons can also scan a barcode to enter a book into it, so they do not have to type everything out. The cost is a little under \$1000 a year. This would be paid for out of the Summer Reading Program fund, which still has funds from other years in it. Hopefully, this will pull other users in as well, including e-readers. Paul asked what other libraries use it, and Spangler and Farnham said that locally, Kokomo does, and listed off several others as well. We would simply be the first Evergreen Indiana library to have it connected to our catalog, not the first Evergreen Library to use Beanstack. Murphy asked how they had heard about this. Spangler said that Allen County (Ft. Wayne) library had talked about it a lot in 2020 and that she was in a webinar that talked about another, similar program but which was web only. She wanted one that was phone accessible so started looking at this app/website instead. She then explained how it would work for those without smart phones. The family friendly features were discussed, including the ability to add family read-aloud books to multiple kids' accounts at once. Using Beanstack will streamline the whole process. Spangler and Farnham then clarified for Murphy that this was not for e-books only, it was for any and all books. Spangler commented that Beanstack was actually a Shark Tank company. It has good dashboard functionality and people will be able to use either the app or the website, based on their preferences. They know some kids will lie, they always do. Reed asked if there needed to be any policy updates for this. Farnham replied probably, but Beanstack will probably have most of that for us – the contact person assigned to us is simply on vacation currently. Tutorials will also be posted. Reed mentioned that she is reassured hearing that other libraries use it and that the company will walk us through it. It was discussed that normally, when getting an app, there is a user agreement that takes care of information gathering permissions and such. We can also decide what information we specifically ask for from the users, but haven't yet. The success manager will be walking through everything with Michelle on Monday. Swihart asked about the amphitheater so Paul described it and everyone was assured that there was plenty of parking there. It's also already been reserved for us at no charge and if we end up needing them, there will be funds to pay for porta-potties at no charge for us. Reed asked if we will need volunteers for the size of crowd we're hoping to have. Farnham said yes, she's hoping to have board members come, and will be going to the city and seeing if they can provide a police officer out there every Wednesday, and possibly a medic. We will also have as many staff members as we can out there. Reed then asked about insurance. Farnham said she would check on that. The board asked what other sorts of outdoor programming with done in the past, so Farnham gave a short list of some of the things over the years, concluding by saying that they were always held on our own property, just in the parking lot or on the sidewalk or yard. She thinks, due to less size restrictions, this will be bigger. Swihart reiterated that insurance is a good thing to check on. Maggart asked if the performers carry insurance for their act. Farnham said that is probably in the contract. Paul said she would ask at the next park meeting and see how that works when the park is used. Maggart mentioned everything that they thought should be checked on in regards to insurance and the like, and that if all of that is good, we should be all set. Reed said those were the questions they had to answer for the courthouse parade.

On the new board member, there was no news as the last meeting was canceled due to snow. We are now looking at March before we hear if a new board member has been appointed.

After all the snow and ice, the library roof is now leaking apparently, in the join between the two building sections. The roof may still be under warranty or it may just need to be resealed. Farnham's husband thought it might be due to snow and ice buildup. There are no future renovation projects, as we're just trying to get through January and February at this point.

OLD (UNFINISHED) BUSINESS

Paul said that she and Maggart have not been able to meet regarding the discussion of township service, but she wrote a small draft of her thoughts and will read it aloud to see what the rest of the board is thinking. She reiterated that this was just provisionally written for herself and is just her thoughts about what we might say:

To whom it may concern,

As you know the county does not have a library system. In order for individual townships to become part of the Peru Public Library the state has a detailed timed mechanism for this to take place. The Township Trustee Board will need to be in favor and be responsible for the process.

This involves gathering signatures in favor or against a proposal to become part of the Peru Public Library Taxing District. If the petition succeeded, a library tax would need to be calculated then added to the property tax form.

If you would be in favor of this proposal please let me know and we can set up further discussions to explain the process.

Swihart asked if the letter should say something about how no one from the library can get signatures or if that should be in the talks. Paul thought there was no point in including it in the letter if they are not interested at all anyway. Murphy asked if the letter could be shared to each board member for notes and the like. Paul said that they cannot do business over email, so next time we meet in person, it can be on the agenda. It is also now in the minutes, she pointed out, so they could read it there as well. She also repeatedly commented that this was just her thoughts. She asked if anyone wanted her to read it again and if Maggart had any comments. It was asked if she was thinking of sending them a memo or a letter, if we were sending it to everyone or just targeted ones. Paul said that when it had been discussed before, the board talked about targeting Peru Township and a couple of others. She does not want to send a long letter if they are not interested in a tax. Paul just is not sure we'll have any takers. Swihart thinks they need to know how much work it is upfront, so include some details, even if not all of them. Paul said that was perfectly valid, this was just something to get the board started and moving forward, what she read was just her thoughts. Paul mentioned again that this will now be in the next month's board packets and if the board wants to discuss it, it can be on the March agenda.

Reed spoke up saying she was confused. She mentioned Robert's Rules of Order and that she wasn't sure what this discussion is and what it counted as in there. Paul clarified that there was not going to be a vote today, just discussion. It was put under Old Business due to the board saying we would discuss this topic in the spring. Reed still thought we had missed a step somewhere, in terms of parliamentary procedure, and that discussing what we wanted to send in the letter was premature and the board probably shouldn't even be deliberating on any of this. She asked what the action item was. Farnham said that this was discussed back when the county denied the contract, back when McKaig was president. The board had said then that they would discuss and work on putting forth a way to expand library service. So, now that it's spring, she thinks President Paul was just putting forth her thoughts so the board members could start thinking about what they wanted to do, what the next step would be. Maggart said that discussion was in April 2020, and that the board had thought they would wait to see what the numbers looked like from the census. If the numbers from the census were as expected then the other contract would not work, so it would leave the issue as a "what next?" thing. Peru, Pipe Creek, and Jefferson township were our biggest non-resident use areas, so those were the ones the board had discussed approaching first. If all three of them said no, then there would be no point in approaching the other townships.

Reed said she got all that, and it sounds like that came out of committee, so what she is asking now is if they had a vote that this is our approach back in April of last year, if there is a record of a motion to proceed this way. Murphy agreed with her, as Reed said that because of the legal implications, this is what she'd concerned about. Paul stated that she didn't recall the board minutes from April. Murphy said she didn't remember ever making a motion or voting on anything like that back then. No one else seemed to remember, although Farnham said it was discussed and agreed to wait till after the elections to do anything. She asked if a committee should be appointed then. Swihart asked what the vote would even be on. Reed said that it has to be put into motion before they even discuss it. Paul said she didn't recall if McKaig had made a motion about this topic or simply tabled it. Maggart thought it had been tabled.

That being the case, Paul said she would now make a motion that they, as a board, consider how to proceed with bringing townships into the taxing district of our library. Maggart commented that he thought they should use the word explore. Paul said he could go ahead and reword it if he wanted to. Reed said she would give it a try. Reed moved that the Peru Public Library board move forward with discussions with – here she asked which townships it was, and Farnham listed off the surrounding townships: Peru, Pipe Creek, Washington, and Jefferson. Paul and Murphy both commented that they didn't have to list the townships, thus limiting it to only those.

Swihart then asked if everyone would like to hear what was in the April minutes from 2020. Several board members said yes, so she read the relevant section aloud. So, as Swihart commented, it was a committee report that didn't officially get tabled, but the board had said they would wait. Reed said they could thus make a motion that the committee explore options with the township trustees, so kick it back to committee and vote on it that way. Farnham pointed out that it needs to be with the township boards, as they are the ones making the decision. Paul thought that, since this is such a big decision for the library board as a whole, this is something that they should all discuss and not just come out of a committee recommendation. Murphy asked if they could make a motion then, that they want to move forward, exploring their options as a board to increase the taxing base district for the library to all township trustee boards. Paul said that sounded perfect, Reed seconded, and Murphy restated the motion thusly: that we explore, as a board, the options to expanding our library within those taxing districts to all county trustee township boards. The vote was as follows: Magart – Aye, Murphy – Aye, Paul – Aye, Reed – Aye, Swihart – Aye. The motion passed with all ayes.

Paul offered to read her thoughts again, but they are already in the minutes. It was agreed to move the discussion March, when everyone on the board could read what she'd written. Paul encouraged the board to think about how to say this without making it too complicated, because if they're willing to take part, that's when it gets really complicated because the onus is on the township to take charge of this, not on us. We merely supply the paperwork. It is a timed event that they need to accomplish, and it can be yes or no. It was clarified that the discussion doesn't have to happen tonight, especially as they all need to think about it. Whether or not it needed to be officially tabled due to the wording was discussed and it ended with Paul making a motion to table the discussion till next month. Maggart seconded and the vote was as follows: Magart – Aye, Murphy – Aye, Paul – Aye, Reed – Aye, Swihart – Aye. The motion to discuss options about explaining library service and the taxing district was tabled till next month.

NEW BUSINESS

While there was nothing on the agenda, it was discussed whether March's meeting should be in person or on zoom. Everyone preferred in-person with Reed stipulating that masks would need to be worn. So it was agreed to have it in-person. It was pointed out that extra time will need to be allotted due to the backlog of items needing to be signed but already voted on. The procedure for that was discussed and the board was informed to come between 6:15 and 6:30 to take care of the signing and to bring their own pens. The next meeting date was confirmed as being March 26th. It was also confirmed that Maggart and Murphy could come.

There being no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned by President Paul at 7:57 PM.

MINUTES PREPARED BY: Lisa Rummel, Peru Public Library staff member

APPROVAL:

(Signature & Date)

Peru Public Library
