



BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

September 24th, 2021

CALL TO ORDER – Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees meeting, of the Peru Public Library, was held on Thursday, September 24th, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM and was presided over by President Alison Paul.

ATTENDEES

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Bryan Maggart, Deb Swihart, Regine Brindle, and President Alison Paul.*

MEMBER APOLOGIES: *Leslie Murphy, Ellen Harvey, and Regina McDowell.*

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

GUESTS: *Brenda Weaver was present, and staff member Lisa Rummel was also present, to take the minutes.*

2022 BUDGET HEARING

The 2022 budget hearing was held at 6:30 PM.

The budget hearing is for the proposed 2022 budget of \$518,544. There being no remonstrative, the first hearing is accepted.

The regular September board of trustees meeting was then called to order, at 6:31 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paul asked if Weaver would like to talk now or later. Maggart motioned that the board amend the agenda to hear the county service discussion now, rather than later. Swihart seconded and the roll was as follows: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion passed and the meeting passed to old business.

OLD BUSINESS

County service was the only item on the agenda under old business. Weaver, currently one of 3 County commissioners said that they were very open to doing something. She talked with the other two commissioners yesterday about what she would like to see happen, including negotiating a three year agreement that would be reviewed annually. She is in favor of contributing \$75,000 for library cards, but the amount has not been confirmed yet. Farnham clarified the money would go to card service and Weaver replied that she thought so. The commissioners actually support the library programs. Paul asked if the commissioners would be voting on this at their next meeting. Weaver answered that yes, voting would take place on October 4th. No one knows for certain what will happen, but it needs to be in the minutes. An additional appropriation may be needed in January, since the budget for 2022 was already accepted. The funding would come out of the CEDIT funds. If all goes well, they would expect us to get this all done ASAP in the new year. Maggart asked for clarification that the county contribution amount decided on would be per year, rather than all three years together.

Paul said she believes in libraries and access to all. However, it is not what the state mandates. Paul feels it would be better for the library and the commissioners to figure out the details and come to an understanding. Maggart said it was a win/win for the commissioners and the library. Farnham commented that even though it is not a perfect program, it does work. Paul enquired about having a big signing event or something to bring attention to the agreement. Weaver did not have an answer for that. She did reiterate that if it went through, it could be signed this year, with the appropriation happening in January.

Weaver said the commissioners were willing to sign the old contract. The library board just needs something official on paper to vote on, which means the county needs to decide on something and have it be official. Farnham thanked Weaver for her work on this. Maggart also made a few more comments before the discussion came to a close and the board returned to the original agenda.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

July Minutes

A correction to the spelling of Brindle's name was brought up, but no one else had that typo on his or her copy of the minutes. On page 3, paragraph 4, "who's" was corrected to "whose". Maggart motioned to accept the July minutes with the changes, and Brindle seconded. Brindle called the roll for the vote: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion passed unanimously.

August Minutes

No corrections to the minutes being necessary, Swihart moved to accept the August board minutes and Maggart seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

July financials were first. Swihart, the treasurer, had looked over them after returning from her trip and everything looked good. There were no other comments about the financials. Maggart motioned to accept the July financials and Paul seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion to accept the July financials passed with all ayes.

Next were the claims for August. Swihart had looked over them and there were no concerns or questions about them. Maggart motioned to accept the August claims and Brindle seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion to accept the August claims was approved unanimously.

August financials followed. Swihart had reviewed them on Monday, and it all looked good. Farnham made a few comments about the claims, but there were no other comments or concerns. Paul motioned to accept the financials for August and Maggart seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion to accept the August financials passed unanimously.

Finally, there were the September claims. Maggart had a QPH question. He wondered if the amount listed meant line items on the budget would need to be adjusted. Farnham said it probably would, but it would take a few months to see by how much. 42% of the budget remains, which is good. Swihart moved to approve the September claims and Brindle seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion to approve the September claims passed with all ayes.

Maggart asked a quick question about what a certain claim was. Farnham briefly explained it was a court ordered garnishment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

AGENDA

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Farnham opened with an update on the Marie Stuart Edwards statue; firstly, the statue is up! The unveiling day was hot but cloudy, and the event went well. The insurance coverage is provided by the city, and that has been confirmed. The city covered the cost of the security lights, and the Peru Utilities will cover the other lights. She was told that the state does not want to pay for the streetlights on 19 anymore, so we could end up with the only one. There was a discussion with the Mayor about establishing ground rules to register events at the pocket park. He is going to talk to the City lawyer, but Farnham had not heard anything back yet. She explained how the topic came up. Paul said it seemed like common courtesy for people wanting to use the area, to let the library know ahead of time. The library's own official programs and use of its parking took priority after all. We need to know who is in charge of scheduling the use of the pocket park to avoid eventual double bookings. Brindle mentioned being asked if Farnham was planning to attend the city meeting on the 26th. Farnham was not aware of it and Brindle did not know what it was about either. Swihart commented that the statue looked very pretty, followed by a few other comments and questions regarding the lighting for the statue.

The ERATE documents signed in July have been submitted.

Spangler mentioned the funds on the story walk are still short, but the board would be informed later on in the agenda about a gift that should cover the difference. The story walk should be up and in place next spring. Spangler did not submit an application for the Boomerang grant, since there were other options. That grant cannot be won two years in a row, so she wanted to retain the option for other projects next year.

Spangler next went over the Summer Reading Program statistics. Paul clarified that there were nine (9) Wednesday programs in all. Attendance was bad at the final one. It is not unusual with school starting up. Attendance did drop overall in the second month, so there is a possibility of cutting some of the July programs. If not, Spangler may go for more of an experience than a program. A local person offered to help, including being able to do a foam party. The petting zoo program also has the option of pony rides, so they would like to do that circus week. Spangler is wanting to do more come-and-go events in July, especially due to the heat. She wants to continue having it out at the park – people liked it there and we had more space.

In-person programming started up in September. "Movers and Shakers" and the after-school programs are growing slowly. Spangler also told the board some of the special events she had planned for October and later, including the reindeer she is hoping to have come for Christmas. This led to some discussion about reindeer indoors, etc.

Farnham reminded the board that the budget adoption will be at the next board meeting, on Thursday, October 28th, at 6:30 pm, so a quorum is needed at that meeting. The 2022 budget is \$518,544.

The salary classification schedule is listed under new business, not the director's report. It simply was missed being changed over.

The ARPA funds have been coming in through the county, state, etc., so the State Library offered grants to Indiana libraries. We were awarded \$23,360.64 of the \$87,000 requested. Farnham and Spangler

had to resubmit for approval a proposal list of how we would spend the money, focusing on the priority items only. The funds for the initial purchases were discussed.

Purchases have to be made by July of 2022. Farnham and Spangler don't have a start date yet, but it will be this year. Further discussion followed on the submitted priority list, including new chairs for the auditorium. Farnham suggested we offer the old ones to another library since they came from a donation. The main issue with the ARPA funds would be if the re-imbursement does not come in quickly. The library could end up in a deficit and need an appropriation. Shipping also complicates trying to get everything paid for quickly.

Farnham then explained about the John and Julie Schwartz donation for Children and a Sharon Edwards Memorial. There are a few stipulations that have to be met for this gift, but it is for a lot of money. She already met with Betsy Edwards Wolfe Smith and Missy Edwards Ward, as Sharon Edwards family has to work with us and approve anything for which we use that portion of the gift. She wants to use some of the money for programming, to free up the budget a bit. Farnham reported on what she had discussed with Sharon Edwards' two daughters so far, and said that we just need the rest of the children to get together and sign off on the plans. The plans included finishing off the program room with locking cabinets and a kid-friendly sink. If John and Julie Schwartz like what we do with the funds, the gift could become annual. Science focused anything is a good option with the funds, as John Schwartz loves anything related to science. The board asked if the library had been in contact with any teachers, as they often have themes we could tie in with, and Farnham responded that no one had contacted us, so no, we have not been. Farnham doesn't have a complete plan for the Schwartz gift yet, just because there hasn't been time yet. The check came the week before the statue unveiling. Farnham confirmed that she already had the check, but that she is waiting to deposit it until getting the approval of the Edwards, for the plans using the Sharon Edwards memorial portion of the gift. There was further discussion over what the plans were for each portion of the gift. The Edwards girls love the idea of using some of the funds to finish the story walk and giving it Sharon's name. The board agreed. Farnham also commented that the Schwartz's aren't doing it for the accolades, they just love helping. Technology was also discussed, as was Farnham's reluctance to use the funds for that purpose. She thinks many parents bring their kids to the library to disconnect from tech. That will be re-evaluated periodically, however. Technology options for blind kids were discussed. Farnham reiterated that she just hasn't had time to create a full plan for the funds.

The SBOA examination, or audit, is still in progress and still a lot of work. There are two more pages to handle. The library was not yet using a digital system in 2016, so there is a lot of typing stuff up for that year. The library now has to submit paperwork monthly online, so this should be the last time Farnham has to do the examination this way, as they should already have everything in the future.

Farnham told the board that the AC is currently jerry-rigged. It sort of works. She and Spangler know how to restart it, but no one else does. Farnham spoke with one of the people who worked on the AC. She was told it probably would not last until next summer. According to another repairperson, the library needs to find an objective, independent engineer to study our system and air ducts and see what we can do. Farnham has been asking local officials, city and county, if they could help us pay for a new AC using the ARPA grants. The mayor suggested we fundraise. Farnham is hoping that Kathleen Plohow, who is working on the ARPA committee, we might still be able to get some of those funds.

Friday, September 24th is the last day for OCRA checking on how the remodel using their grant went, so Farnham may also ask them about the possibility of a planning grant. Farnham also went over a few other options. She was told to expect to pay an engineer \$75,000. We also need to make sure that any

engineer or anyone else doing the work for us is working for us, not for someone else. If we need to replace the ductwork, it will be even more expensive. The upstairs' AC was overworked when it tried to compensate for the other units being down. Water spurted out from them, so they had had to be repaired as well. The library will have to take bids for the work, as the line for that is \$50,000. However, more research needs to be done before then, including finding an engineer to look at the system. The current one is overly complex. Simplifying would be great.

NEW BUSINESS

The salary classification schedule is done yearly. It is in the budget that was passed in committee. Farnham is trying to get staff up to \$10, as the minimum hourly wage here at the library, as a way to edge them up towards a potentially required-in-future \$15 minimum. Swihart had said the library could swing it. Swihart commented that she hadn't really had time to run the numbers, but that she thought it would probably work. There was a discussion here about which of the staff is in each class, what duties are included with each successive class, and so on. Benefits were also discussed, as was who got paid for the time we were closed, due to the AC shutdown. Maggart also asked about longevity bonuses, and if a day could be added to the time off each year the person has worked here. The library does not offer that, but he thought that should be considered. It was pointed out that the staff members only get cost-of-living increases and a monetary "bonus". Since the staff have a performance review, they should also have a performance bonus. Swihart asked if we could give people more time off, while still staffing the library. Farnham said that this week, no. Spangler pointed out that many of the part-time staff work multiple jobs, so if they already have to work the other job, they cannot pick up hours.

Paul motioned that the board accept the Salary Classification Schedule and Swihart seconded. Brindle called the roll: Brindle – aye, Maggart – aye, Paul – aye, Swihart – aye. The motion to accept the Salary Classification Schedule passed with all ayes.

There being no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned by President Paul at 8:25 PM.

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

SECRETARY APPROVAL:

(Signature & Date)

Peru Public Library
