

Library Board Minutes

July 8, 2019

Bethlehem Area Public Library

President Sharon Yoshida called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. at the Coolidge Building, in the almost-completed library space.

ATTENDING: City – Anne Felker, Jane Gill, Joyce Hinnefeld, Emil Signes, Sharon Yoshida, Julie Zumas
Bethlehem Township – Malissa Davis, John Merhottein

Staff – Josh Berk

Other – Terence Faul (King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul)

Public – Randi Blauth

ABSENT: City – Olga Negrón
Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan
Hanover Township – Jamie Paxton

Staff – Erin Poore

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: Malissa Davis will be resigning from the Board and Bethlehem Township resident Randi Blauth will be back on the Board in her place. In Malissa's judgment, there is no need for two Township Commissioners on the Library Board; one is sufficient, and John Merhottein will continue.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Jane Gill made a motion to accept the June minutes, seconded by Joyce Hinnefeld. The motion was passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF OPERATING FUNDS: Malissa Davis made a motion to approve the May Operating Funds, subject to audit, seconded by Joyce Hinnefeld. The motion was passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT:

1. Director Berk brought up an item for consideration. There has been talk about the possibility of divesting from fossil fuel holdings at Philadelphia Trust. Apparently there is hardly anything at all involved, and it could be very easily done. Shall the Board resolve to approve taking that step? The question of divesting from fossil fuels was added to tonight's agenda.
2. Director Berk received a call from a reporter asking about an increase in State funding to libraries. The reporter said it has been years since there has been an increase and said this year's increase will be 9%. If that is correct, it would be about \$30k increase.

3. Director Berk said, in addition to the stats for May, June was a really busy month as usual. There was a big author event covered by the blog “Shelf Awareness” and lots of good things going on.
4. At the Coolidge building, the public internet will not be available for a little while, but the staff will have access. We are waiting on some new hardware from E-rate (needed to wait until July 1, start of new fiscal year, to order).
5. There is no grand opening date yet for Coolidge Building, but the soft opening is July 16. The hours will be Tuesday 10am-3pm, Wednesday 3am-8pm, and alternating Fridays and Saturdays 10am-3pm.

REPORTS:

1. City of Bethlehem – none
2. Bethlehem Township – The Bethlehem Township maintenance staff have been very good and extremely good-natured to work with. Outreach Librarian Regina Kochmaruk put a lot of care and consideration into how things should be. They all went above and beyond the call of duty. Director Berk will send a thank you to Steve Hunsberger and his staff. Thanks, as well, to Malissa Davis and John Merhottein for their leadership. The furniture for the Coolidge space was purchased from Lower Macungie Library and is coming together very nicely. So far everyone has gotten excellent feedback from the residents in the township. Farmersville and Governor Wolf Elementary Schools might also be good places to publish the news of the library presence in the Coolidge Building.
3. Fountain Hill – none
4. Hanover Township – none
5. Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library – Did not meet in the last month. Friends should rethink how to include Bethlehem Township, Fountain Hill, Hanover Township, etc.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Finance Committee – The earlier question of whether or not to divest from fossil fuel holdings was put into motion. The motion was to divest financial holdings of the Bethlehem Area Public Library of fossil fuels. Emil Signes moves, seconded by Malissa Davis. Motion passes 5-1 with Anne Felker and President Yoshida abstaining and John Merhottein “no.”
2. Governance and Strategic Planning Committee – Julie Zumas said the committee met on July 2 and reviewed Cathi Alloway’s latest proposal for strategic planning with a tentative start date in August. An add-on was

discussed, which would cost \$6-8k. This may not be necessary because Muhlenberg College students are crunching our numbers and will present findings. Will move forward with the strategic planning process. Julie moved that the library move forward with the contract for Cathi Alloway to provide strategic planning services. Jane Gill seconds motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Malissa Davis mentioned that the committee met regarding the By-laws a couple of times and are in the process of simplifying and revising them.

3. Human Resources Committee – A meeting was held on July 1 to go over a staff survey, which was sent out today to the Board members. Hoping to send it out in October. Send any comments to Jamie Paxton.
4. Marketing and Advocacy Committee – Malissa Davis reports that flyers were worked on. The Committee plans to promote ancestry and local history, focusing on outreach to senior citizens and a trip to Bridle Path and Country Meadows is planned.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. We received a \$3,000 bequest from Alma Hoch. Money to be spent on books and other materials. Jane Gill suggests using bookplates to reference the bequest for any materials purchased.

Went into Executive session at 6:48 p.m. and ended at 6:50 p.m. Back into session, and a motion was made to adjourn by Malissa Davis, seconded by Anne Felker, at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Felker