

Library Board Minutes

April 12, 2021

Bethlehem Area Public Library

Meeting conducted virtually via Zoom

President Anne Felker called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

ATTENDING: City – Anne Felker, Jane Gill, Joyce Hinnefeld, Rachel Leon, Emil Signes, Julie Zumas

Bethlehem Township – Randi Blauth, Dale Sourbeck

Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan

Hanover Township – Jay Finnigan

Staff – Josh Berk, Julia Brennan, Brenda Grow, Sarah Phillips, Erin Poore, Matthew Rothfuss, Janine Santoro, Sue Schirripa

Other – Terence Faul (King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul), Michael Prendeville (Hanover Township alternate)

ABSENT: City – Olga Negrón

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: Joyce Hinnefeld politely reminded everyone to please turn in their signed Board Member Agreements. Director Josh Berk previously sent on March 15. He will send out again.

Hanover Township Alternate Mike Prendeville shared he is getting good feedback from Hanover Township residents. Mostly good comments, with continued hope for greater library presence in the Township. People are only disappointed in the timeline. They want it sooner!

Janine Santoro gave an impressive presentation about a colloquium she attended, along with M. Rayah Levy and Matthew Rothfuss, on March 23 and 24. Titled “Diversity in Collections Care: Many Voices,” it encouraged consciously considering diversity in all decisions. They all expressed thanks to the Board and are very appreciative for the opportunity to attend this virtual event.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Jay Finnigan, seconded by Randi Blauth; abstention by Dale Sourbeck. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF OPERATING FUNDS: President Felker called for any further questions regarding financial documents. There were none. A motion to approve the February operating funds, subject to audit, was made by Jay Finnigan, seconded by Annamarie Jordan. The motion was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT:

1. Director Berk began by sharing some fun wedding pictures that a couple had shared with BAPL on social media.
2. Director Berk then provided an update on the Library's current level of response to COVID regulations. At the Main Library, some computers have been opened for usage for a 30-minute interval. Patrons may also browse the first floor collection for up to 30 minutes. The children's room continues with displays and bundled items, also on the first floor in the Cohen Room. Library staff qualifies for vaccinations beginning in phase 1C. This will help, hopefully, with the comfort level of opening further spaces indoors to the public and our patrons. After the weeks pass to develop vaccine protection, will consider how larger crowds and expanded gatherings will be managed at all locations.
3. Overdue fines and checked-out item limits have been reinstated. Fines encourage people to return their items in a timely fashion. Fine revenue does help operations, but some patrons were taking advantage of the ability to check out large numbers of items and keep them for long periods of time. Plan to be lenient with patrons during the initial period of readjustment to library policy. Complimentary reserves will continue, since the Youth Services Department does not have public access. We, also, decided to lower the overdue fine for DVDs and Blu-Rays to 20 cents, down from one dollar. With streaming video increasing in popularity, these are not the desirable items they once were. Pre-pandemic DVD/Blu-Ray overduees were often the root of restricted access for patrons. This change should help reduce that issue.
4. The Coolidge Building now has increased and upgraded shelving installed. People seem to love the vibe and location, but noted the small collection size. New shelving will allow Regina Kochmaruk to add many books to the collection. Director Berk praised how well Kochmaruk has been managing this location for BAPL.

REPORTS:

1. City of Bethlehem – none
2. Bethlehem Township – Randi Blauth expressed thanks for the new shelves at Coolidge.
3. Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan requested an update on the Fountain Hill Books on the Hill project. Director Berk shared there is no exact opening date, but we are getting close. Since the interior environment is now stabilized, carpet and shelves have been installed. Additionally, the lift has been repaired. Books are being loaded in. Regina Kochmaruk is also in

charge of this part of preparations to open. There is much excitement! Still some little, but imperative, fixes necessary on the physical plant. For example, the HVAC unit needs to be enclosed, so it is safe from kids and adults traversing nearby. Director Berk anticipates crowds, since it is near the pool, sports fields, and Wawa.

4. Hanover Township – none
5. Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library – Director Berk said that new hire Jennifer Khawam has started work in the marketing department. Kate Racculia will facilitate her transition and also remain as a member of the Friends herself. He feels it will be nice to have that connection continue with Ms. Racculia.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Finance Committee – none
2. Governance Committee – Randi Blauth reported that they have finished the By-laws and Mr. Faul will review them. May be able to present for approval at the May Board Meeting.
3. Human Resources Committee – none
4. Marketing and Advocacy Committee – none
5. Strategic Planning Committee – Julie Zumas is making progress going through the report. She is working with the strategic planning committee and strategic planner, Cathi Alloway. Once complete, it will be brought to the Board for a vote. Director Berk agrees there is “great progress” and thanked Ms. Zumas.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. For day-to-day management of the library, Director Berk needs an updated “Corporate Authorization Resolution for Investment Advisory Account” signed by Anne Felker, as Board President, Jane Gill, as Treasurer, and himself, as Director. This document states that any activity for the account requires signatures of two people. Jay Finnigan motioned to approve the needed officers signing the document, and Joyce Hinnefeld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Julia Brennan asked if the library was considering writing a grant request for COVID relief through a newly announced ALA emergency fund. Director Berk thinks BAPL is not the best fit for this. When he read it over, he thought it was intended for libraries in crisis for operating funds.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jay Finnigan. President Felker adjourned the meeting at 6:59 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Phillips, Staff