

Library Board Minutes

June 14, 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

Bethlehem Township – Randi Blauth, Dale Sourbeck

Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan

Hanover Township – Jay Finnigan

Staff – Josh Berk, Dana Hoy, Sarah Phillips, Erin Poore, Sue Schirripa, Stephanie Steinly

Other – Attorney Brian Taylor (King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul), Mike Prendeville (Hanover Township alternate)

ABSENT: City – Olga Negrón, Julie Zumas

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR:

1. Stephanie Steinly, a Youth Services Technician at the South Side Branch, spoke about summer plans for youth.

Ms. Steinly described their theme as “Taking it on the Road.” Before opening the building, they planned for summer programming outdoors. Because the South Side Branch is challenged for outdoor space, they are able to use space on the Greenway. There are many volunteers supporting them and a lot of community support. For example, PBS39 will be visiting twice and *TUG*, along with our own Catherine McCafferty, will be making a story time appearance.

Additionally, staff can be found at the Farmer’s Market on the Southside on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings. They support food distribution with the school district. Bethlehem families experiencing food insecurity are able to stop by the library’s booth to pick up provisions for breakfasts and lunches.

In July the focus will be on teaching early reading skills. Again, partnering with the Bethlehem Area School District and utilizing spaces at Donegan Elementary and Broughal Middle School.

2. Dale Sourbeck mentioned that the Bookmobile experienced a minor relocation to one of its stop locations in Bethlehem Township after a resident complained about engine noise. So now it has moved about one block away from there and closer to a church. The church seems happy to have it closer to them.

3. Mike Prendeville, a Hanover Township resident and Board alternate, asked for an update on children from the Bethlehem Area School District getting library cards. Director Josh Berk reminded everyone that this has been an ongoing partnership with the Bethlehem Area School District. Typically, BAPL has people at kindergarten registration and also gives a presentation about the Summer Reading Programs at the library. Since the pandemic started in 2020, the library has not been able to be on location but plans to resume these outreach opportunities when we can have library staff inside the schools again.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Randi Blauth corrected a detail from the Governance committee's May report. It should read "change the term from 12 years to 9 years" instead.
2. Joyce Hinnefeld noted that future minutes will have both her name and Sarah Phillips listed after "respectfully submitted."
3. Motion to approve the May minutes, as amended, made by Annamarie Jordan, seconded by Dale Sourbeck; motion approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF OPERATING FUNDS: President Felker called for a motion to approve the operating funds subject to audit from April. Motion to approve the April operating funds, subject to audit, made by Jay Finnigan, seconded by Dale Sourbeck; motion approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT:

1. Director Berk began by noting that the Library's current COVID Protocol and Procedures are posted at each physical location and on the website, bapl.org. These are more than the State's restrictions, because we have so many children visiting who are not eligible for vaccination. There are no capacity limits, more computers are available at each location, and patrons are asked to keep their visits to under two hours. At the Main Library, the second floor Youth Department has re-opened and all programming will continue to occur outside. While we are being cautious, we are happy to have more people back in the building.

REPORTS:

1. City of Bethlehem – Bike borrowing is back! Maybe there will be more organized rides beginning at the library again. Director Berk contacted Scott Slingerland from CAT (Coalition for Appropriate Transportation) to inquire about this possibility.

2. Bethlehem Township – Dale Sourbeck plans to check with the Commissioners about adding bike borrowing at the Coolidge location, also. Director Berk supports this effort, adding that insurance details would need to be figured out with the Township.
3. Fountain Hill – Still excitedly waiting for the new Books on the Hill site to open! Director Berk assured everyone that things are getting closer. Technology was added inside and cataloging of items is in process. Still need to determine hours for that location, along with staffing. Annamarie Jordan says the Borough will be happy for a “soft opening” as soon as BAPL is ready. Director Berk also mentioned that there has been an unusual amount of library staff turnover and new hires recently. President Felker inquired as to why, and Director Berk explained it has been for various reasons, including retirement, a health issue, family moving out of the area, and current staff moving into new responsibilities.
4. Hanover Township – The Township Community Center will probably be opening again next month. Staffing has been an issue for them, also.
5. Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library – Director Berk and Joyce Hinnefeld reported Jennifer Khawam has been working with them for an upcoming summer event on July 21: a Virtual Literary Salon focused on local writers. They joked that there will probably be wine involved, but only as “Bring Your Own.” The plan is to sell sponsorships, have a form of silent auction, and solicit donations. Will hope to host future events in person, also with wine.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Finance Committee (Gill) – none
2. Governance Committee (Blauth) – Randi Blauth shared her screen to cover the updated copy of the By-laws. In summary, changes were made to:
 1. Article 3, section 3: Terms were changed from 12 years to 9 years, and Solicitor Faul confirmed definitions are clear.
 2. Article 4: Order of sections will remain the same. Solicitor Faul said any order was fine.
 3. Article 2, section 2: Language changed to note that President and Vice President cannot serve two consecutive terms. Wording calls for limits for President and Vice President only, thus allowing for Secretary and Treasurer to serve more than two consecutive terms.
 4. Article 8 about Robert’s Rules of Order: the committee chose to leave it as it was previously (“Absent another designation...”).

Ms. Blauth wants to send this version to Solicitor Faul or Attorney Brian Taylor, who attended tonight's meeting, for a legal check. She is ready to *be done* and especially thanks Jay Finnigan for his contribution. The Board was grateful for the presentation, and thanked the committee for all their good work.

3. Human Resources Committee (Gill) – none
4. Marketing and Advocacy Committee (Jordan) – Next committee meeting is scheduled for August 19, at 3:30 P.M.
5. Strategic Planning Committee (Blauth) – There will be a committee meeting coming up about how to move the plan into action.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. There was discussion about meeting in person, with some talk about a hybrid option. Some members are still comfortable on the Zoom platform, but others want to return to in-person meetings. A decision was made to meet at the library for July's meeting on Monday, July 12, at 6 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

At 6:45 P.M., President Felker excused staff and members of the public from the meeting in order to begin an Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Phillips (BAPL Staff) and Joyce Hinnefeld (Board Secretary)