

## **Library Board Minutes**

May 10, 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, Olga Negrón, Emil Signes, Julie Zumas  
Bethlehem Township – Randi Blauth, Dale Sourbeck  
Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan (joined meeting at 6:45)  
Hanover Township – Michael Prendeville (Hanover Township alternate)

Staff – Josh Berk, Dana Hoy, Regina Kochmaruk, Sarah Phillips, Erin Poore, Sue Schirripa

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

**ABSENT:** City – Rachel Leon  
Hanover Township – Jay Finnigan

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR:** Randi Blauth recently signed up for Libby and Kanopy. She is now a fan and encourages others to try these virtual library services. President Felker also enjoys Kanopy. She plugged the library's monthly film club featuring a chosen Kanopy movie.

Director Berk explained how Kanopy's cost fluctuates based on how many views occur in each month and may find other options to provide more streaming services. Even though there is a generational and technological shift occurring, DVDs still have high usage among our patrons.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion to approve the April minutes was made by Dale Sourbeck, seconded by Randi Blauth, with Olga Negrón abstaining. The motion approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF OPERATING FUNDS:** A motion to approve the March operating funds, subject to audit, was made by Olga Negrón, seconded by Emil Signes. The motion approved unanimously.

### **DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT:**

1. Director Berk began with an addition to his written report. He explained how the Governor's announcement about keeping masks indoors, but lifting other restrictions in June 2021, surprised us. He will consider guidance from the City and the Office of Commonwealth Libraries when making specific plans for the Library's locations and patron interaction. At this time, there is no clear reason why we could not allow people with masks to sit inside. He also noted that we have stopped quarantining returned items.

2. From his written report, he highlighted how library events were held online and that comparing numbers from 2021 to 2020 may make some of the data appear odd. For example, books were not able to be checked out last year at this time. However, numbers for withdrawal of e-resources were higher. A more accurate comparison would be to look at the numbers from 2019 in considering numbers going forward. Also, since last year, Kanopy use is down, but that is because we began to limit use to only our library home patrons. It was too expensive to continue offering it to Access card holders.
3. President Felker asked about opening up the children's room at the Main Library without children being able to be vaccinated. Director Berk replied that while we want to avoid becoming a hotspot, we could look at something similar to how we have opened the adult collection. Could begin with allowing browsing, limit the time of a visit with no areas to hang out. Would plan to continue holding youth events outdoors. This could potentially begin on June 1.
4. Mike Prendeville, the alternate from Hanover Township, asked about selling book sale items on the Bookmobile. He also had questions about the monthly expense of the Bookmobile and what the cost per unit borrowed calculates to. President Felker wondered why Mr. Prendeville inquired. Mr. Prendeville replied that he is a numbers person. Director Berk felt the potential money made by selling items on the Bookmobile would likely not be worth the effort involved. He also pointed out how the limited space is already consumed with Library materials. The monthly expense for the Bookmobile is included in the financial report. It is about \$7,000 per year, which does not include the salary and benefits for the driver. Director Berk then pointed out that this service is more focused on the value it provides our patrons, not simply a dollar figure. Dale Sourbeck asked about how many items are checked out from the Bookmobile. Director Berk replied that these figures are available in the Annual Report (and the secretary notes they are also included in the Director's monthly reports to the Board). He reminded everyone that numbers are down because pandemic restrictions have been in place. Currently the Bookmobile is functioning as more of a delivery service and one that patrons really appreciate.

## **REPORTS:**

1. City of Bethlehem – none
2. Bethlehem Township – none
3. Fountain Hill – none
4. Hanover Township – Mike Prendeville (alternate) reported positive community comments about planned satellite location.

5. Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library – No one present to report from this group, but Director Berk noted that BAPL Marketing/Development Specialist Jennifer Khawam had met with them the previous week. She is making updates to the membership file.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. Finance Committee – No report, but Director Berk mentioned there is a community volunteer interested in serving on the committee.
2. Governance Committee – Randi Blauth reported on updating the By-laws. She began by saying these had last been updated in 2018. President Felker clarified that this update began in 2018, but was put on hold to incorporate any changes made necessary by the strategic planning process. Emil Signes confirmed. Randi Blauth went on to say a draft of the document has been shared with all Board members. The current By-laws needed condensing and clarification. The Committee will ask Terence Faul, solicitor, to review the By-laws from a legal standpoint.

President Felker proposed adding term limits for both directors and officers. All the participating municipalities would need to agree and the By-laws would include a clause that the current Board members would be grandfathered in through the end of their service, regardless of their tenure on the Board. She started the discussion suggesting a 12-year limit for directors. Mike Prendeville, the alternate for Hanover Township at this meeting, said he could not comment on this at this time. President Felker noted that Jay Finnigan, the board member from Hanover Township, is a member of the Governance Committee and has been involved in these discussions. She went on to say the idea of term limits would be to bring in some fresh ideas and encourage more community members' participation on the BAPL Board. Solicitor Faul said to be sure to define the terms regarding serving as a Board member and serving as an officer of the board. Blauth clarified that an officer's term would be two years. Under the new By-laws a Board member's term would be three years, so a 12-year limit would mean serving for four terms.

There were general comments of support and agreement. Olga Negrón thought 12 years was too long for a limit. In her opinion, two or three terms is more common. Also we need to consider if a person does not serve consecutive terms. Would the limit apply for total years of service or consecutive terms only?

Director Berk's opinion was requested. He shared that things vary across the board, no pun intended, based on how libraries are structured. So there is really not a standard, reliable model to consider. The practical aspect of longer officer terms is desirable, because, for example, changing required signers (particular board officers) for official business can be cumbersome

and time-consuming and currently often needs to be done each year as officers change.

President Felker suggested an option of term limits for the President and Vice President, but not for Treasurer and Secretary, because the latter require a certain skill set.

“Termed Out” members would be encouraged to stay involved with the library as volunteers.

Joyce Hinnefeld asked about the placement of nominating committee details in the document. Could they be moved to earlier on, before the information on election of officers? Suggested moving section 9 and section 2.

Jane Gill gave some historical context for adding others off the slate. Director Berk pointed out Robert’s Rules of Order has a method to handle this situation, also.

President Felker proposed tabling discussion for now and allowing the Governance Committee to revise the document before voting on it next month.

Randi Blauth was fine with this timing. She summed up the discussion with three definite changes to be made: Section 9 will replace section 12, will move section 2 ahead of section 9, and will add no officer term limits for Treasurer and Secretary.

Terence Faul again encouraged clear definitions of terminology with what terms are being referenced to in the document, i.e. a term of three years.

3. Human Resources Committee – none
4. Marketing and Advocacy Committee – Annamarie Jordan and Joyce Hinnefeld met with Jennifer Khawam. Things are getting back on track. They discussed how the pending strategic plan will affect their committee’s work.
5. Strategic Planning Committee – Julie Zumas’s status update focused on two changes made to the current draft. First, the proposed plan was edited to make action items more clear and measurable. Second, a clause was added about diversity and inclusion. President Felker recommended clarifying the line to read “increase staff diversity to reflect the community.” It was also noted that this strategic planning process was a gift to BAPL, with \$3,000 paid out of the Yoshida Fund. It was more affordable than expected, since Zoom meetings eliminated travel and resulted in lower costs. Emil Signes moved to approve this draft and Dale Sourbeck seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. Next step will be to add in time frames before reporting back to the group.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. President Felker suggested that the Board meet in person next month. Olga Negrón said if everyone is fully vaccinated then she is comfortable with it. If not, she felt it was better to continue on Zoom. After some discussion, it was decided that next month's meeting would be planned as a combination of Zoom and in person.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Emil Signes and seconded by Dale Sourbeck. President Felker adjourned the meeting at 7:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Phillips, Staff