

## **Library Board Minutes**

June 13, 2022

Bethlehem Area Public Library

President Anne Felker called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

ATTENDING: City of Bethlehem – Anne Felker, Jane Gill, Joyce Hinnefeld,  
G. Christopher Hunt (virtual), Delia Marrero  
Bethlehem Township – Randi Blauth, Dale Sourbeck  
Hanover Township – Jeff Warren

Staff – Amresse Farrow, Sarah Phillips, Erin Poore  
Other – Terence Faul (King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul),  
Rachel Leon (City Council Liaison for City of Bethlehem)

ABSENT: City of Bethlehem – Emil Signes, one open seat  
Fountain Hill – Will Rufe

### **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR:**

1. Ms. Blauth heard there had been some contact with the landlord of the property neighboring the South Side Branch. She asked for an update about the on-going issues with trash and water run-off. No one present could speak to any new developments for that situation.
2. Ms. Hinnefeld shared that the Chimney Swift mural unveiling was a lovely event. Ms. Farrow added that the Mayor of Bethlehem attended along with many other notables including members of City Council as well as Jenny Gilrain, who recognized the need for the birds' protection. Ms. Blauth mentioned how children had written charming poems from the swift's point of view.
3. Ms. Gill praised the WLVR article about Studio11. Ms. Farrow shared that there has been increased public interest since then.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the May minutes, as amended, was made by Dale Sourbeck, seconded by Delia Marrero; motion approved unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF OPERATING FUNDS:**

President Felker called for a motion to approve the operating funds subject to audit. Motion to approve the April operating funds, subject to audit, made by Jane Gill, seconded by Dale Sourbeck; motion approved unanimously.

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

Director Josh Berk was on vacation.

Ms. Farrow shared two topics he requested for the Board's consideration: Formation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and a decision about using \$6,000 from the Yoshida Endowment to begin work with Faces International. Both topics were discussed during the meeting.

## **COMMUNITY REPORTS:**

1. City of Bethlehem – Ms. Leon had two updates. First, about the proposed development of property adjacent to the South Side Branch, the developer's meeting with Zoning was postponed. She believes there will be a revised proposal for the Historic Conservation Commission to consider. Second, the usage of ARPA funds continues to be under review by the City administration. Instead of directing funds to particular groups, they want to use funding to support services. The City wants to encourage community members to take a survey about what services are most important to them. The library could help spread the word to community members about the survey. BAPL should also highlight all the services the library provides for the community.
2. Bethlehem Township – Mr. Sourbeck reported that Bethlehem Township's Community Days are scheduled for June 15-18. President Felker thought it would be fun to have the Book Bike there. Ms. Farrow will try to bring it along with her on June 17. Ms. Blauth encouraged library card applications to be part of the library's outreach display.
3. Fountain Hill – none
4. Hanover Township – Mr. Warren reported that their Township Manager has rescinded his retirement notice.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Before beginning committee reports, President Felker asked Dr. Hunt and Ms. Marrero about committees they would like to be involved in. Dr. Hunt explained that he would like to see a committee formed to focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Mr. Warren and Ms. Blauth thought such a committee would help keep the strategic plan goals moving forward. Other Board members voiced support. Mr. Faul encouraged defining the focus of the committee. Ms. Hinnefeld agreed, noting a "job description" should be written. Ms. Blauth read from the strategic plan, which provides clearly stated goals for DEI improvement work. She also requested to serve on the DEI committee and be removed from the Governance committee. Ms. Farrow reported that she had met with Director Berk, Dr. Hunt, Ms. Marrero, and Assistant Director Poore about releasing the strategic plan in both Spanish and English. Dr. Hunt reminded everyone that DEI is about diversity of many kinds, but at this time and in this place, it needs to be

focused particularly on race. Ms. Marrero agreed, noting that DEI needs to have an anti-racist component. She would also like to serve on the DEI committee and, if time allows, she has interest in Human Resources. Ms. Hinnefeld offered to serve anywhere help is needed. She agreed to come off of the Marketing and Advocacy committee, since there are enough people serving there now.

The remainder of discussion regarding DEI Training is recorded under the Old Business section.

Mr. Warren moved to establish a DEI Committee comprised of Board members and community members. Ms. Blauth seconded the motion; motion approved unanimously.

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee – Board members on the new committee are Ms. Blauth, Dr. Hunt and Ms. Marrero. They were charged with writing a job description and to continue the vetting of potential DEI Training providers.
2. Finance Committee – Ms. Gill reported that she is setting up a meeting to go over quarterly financial numbers and the budget.
3. Governance Committee – President Felker welcomed Ms. Hinnefeld to this committee and thanked Ms. Blauth for her past work in this area. Mr. Sourbeck would also like to serve on this committee. They will find a time to meet.
4. Human Resources Committee – Ms. Gill reported they are working on a draft for Director Berk's evaluation.
5. Marketing and Advocacy Committee – Ms. Farrow reported a "Regency Ball," an event inspired by the Bridgerton series, has been scheduled for September 17. Planning has begun for a silent auction, costumes, and sponsorships are currently available.
6. Strategic Planning Committee – Ms. Blauth reported that they continue tracking how BAPL is doing with objectives laid out in the strategic plan. She noted that Director Berk provided some updates in his written report. The committee plans to check in with Director Berk and Assistant Director Poore more frequently.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Ms. Marrero updated the Board about her investigation of other Lehigh Valley companies to provide DEI training. She learned that most local companies providing this training in the valley have a non-compete agreement with each other. Many Board members expressed that they were uncomfortable with not having other options to consider. Lengthy discussion followed covering concerns such as due diligence in hiring, local versus non-local providers,

and being cognizant about the sensitivity of the emotional work involved for trainers and Library Staff. President Felker requested the DEI Committee gather more information before the next meeting, so the Board could vote on the proposal in July. Mr. Faul recommended clarification of details for approving the requested \$6,000. Ms. Farrow will send the proposal again and requested a timely decision. The Board tabled the topic of hiring DEI Training professionals until July's meeting, agreeing to continue to seek other bids to assure the best service for the library.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

President Felker updated the Board about Emil Signes' board membership. He wants to be here and participate, but recently, personal circumstances have prevented attendance. She asked Mr. Signes for a decision about his resignation from the Board by June.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jane Gill and seconded by Joyce Hinnefeld. President Felker adjourned the meeting at 7:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Phillips (BAPL Staff) and Joyce Hinnefeld (Vice President)