

Library Board Minutes

April 8, 2024

Bethlehem Area Public Library

Meeting conducted in a hybrid form of in-person and virtual attendance via Zoom.

President Jane Gill called the meeting discussion at 6:13 P.M.

ATTENDING: City of Bethlehem – Anne Felker, Jane Gill, Joyce Hinnefeld
Hanover Township – Telly Diacogiannis

Staff – Josh Berk, Amresse Farrow, Regina Kochmaruk, Sarah Phillips, Erin Poore, Susan Schirripa

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

ABSENT: City of Bethlehem – Joanne Garcia, G. Christopher Hunt, Rachel Leon, Delia Marrero
Bethlehem Township – two open seats
Fountain Hill – Will Rufe

A quorum was not established in order for any official business to be conducted. Four Board members were present and five Board members were not able to attend. An informal meeting was held to discuss the following issues.

Solicitor Faul shared that the title search for the South Side Branch has not clarified property line location. Property line information was sought with regards to the leaks in the basement of the Branch and a desire to determine if the Library could repair cracked concrete adjacent to the building, which may be the source of some of the water. Title information from 1910 and 1913 only showed detail down to the city block level, not individual property lines. Solicitor Faul estimated the cost to hire a surveyor would be \$2,500 to \$3,000. He also wondered if the City of Bethlehem would agree to fill the crack. Director Berk reported that the City encouraged the Library to hire a contractor for repairs.

Board discussion included: If BAPL covered the costs for repair, would the neighboring property agree to the work without knowing for certain who owns the property? Director Berk reminded members that this building is student housing and the building owner is difficult to contact.

Would temporary berms help control or redirect the water?

And finally, could sealant be applied to the outside of the building immediately? Follow-up repairs could include a raised lip to route the water away from the building.

Ms. Felker shared how she had communicated with the Bethlehem Township Manager, Doug Bruce, regarding the open seats on the Library Board from Bethlehem Township. She asked if Library Board members might speak at a Township meeting regarding the open seats. She reported that Mr. Bruce

confirmed that BAPL Board members would not need to be on the agenda, in order to speak at a Township meeting. Mr. Bruce also shared with her that they do not have any appointees in mind for the open seats at this time. Ms. Felker plans to attend the May 6 Township meeting.

Mr. Diacogiannis shared that the new Hanover Township Manager, Mark Hudson, began work today. BAPL should continue with the current, regular contact information for correspondence. Mr. Diacogiannis will update this information as needed.

Director Berk shared that there is staff training scheduled for April 23 with the Bethlehem Police Department. The topic will cover ideas for dealing with active threats. The Main Library will be opening late that day to accommodate staff attendance. The training will also be available on live Zoom for any staff that cannot attend in person. He also reported that a representative from the Bethlehem Health Bureau reached out to him about a new community health initiative that would distribute condoms at community organizations such as the library. He wanted to bring this to the Board for discussion; a vote will be taken at a future meeting.

Ms. Farrow shared her plan for a press release to be sent out tomorrow to update the public on fundraising initiatives for a new bookmobile. She encouraged Board members to share contacts directly with her if they have leads on donors. Ms. Farrow is looking to contact LVHN Children's Hospital, St. Luke's Children's Hospital, Wind Creek Casino, and potentially Mack Trucks for possible donations. There will be opportunity for donor sponsor's logos to be tastefully displayed on a designated area of the new bookmobile.

Discussion questions and answers included: What is the replacement cost range? It is estimated to be between \$200,000 and \$700,000. There are many cost variables involved. For example if a new vehicle is purchased versus an older model or if electrically powered versus other options. Electric power may help with fundraising efforts due to bringing good public relations. All options for the new bookmobile will be more energy efficient than the old one. If an EV bookmobile is considered, that proposal must include the additional expense of adding an EV charging station in the Bethlehem parking garage.

Ms. Farrow ended the update by sharing how BAPL has re-joined the Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Library now has a seat on the Chamber's board. Ms. Farrow thinks this will be beneficial.

The meeting ended at 6:53 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Phillips (BAPL Staff)