

MOUNT  VERNON  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
the CENTRAL LIBRARY OF WESTCHESTER

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~~BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING~~

December 18, 2013

6:30 PM

MINUTES

Na'im Tyson, who presided, called the meeting to order at 6:47 pm.

Present were: Dawn Cancellieri, Marcia Dupree,

Absent was: Julie Mills Worthey.

Also present: Libby Post, Communication Services Inc.; Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Tamara Stewart, Library Patron; Scott Griffith and Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Carolyn Karwoski, Library Director, Juan Jaramillo, Chief Account Clerk, and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting of November 26, 2013 were approved as amended upon a motion by Marcia Dupree, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Cheryl Thomas complained that several months of minutes were missing from the library website.

Na'im Tyson said that a draft copy of the minutes that were not yet approved should have been placed on the website.

Tamara Stewart said that the board has four members, but the revised charter says a minimum of five. She asked what the board is doing to rectify being out of compliance.

Dr. Tyson said if we get another person they will only serve for ninety days and no more than 120 days. There are issues with getting someone to serve for that amount of time. He said that he has vetted people in the past, but they did not come through. He said that you are asking someone to agree to an extraordinary circumstance.

Dr. Tyson said even the recommendation from the Mayor did not pan out.

He said if Ms. Stewart had any recommendations to let the board know.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Library Director Carolyn Karwoski reported the following:

The condition of the library has been a big concern for her since she has been working at the library. This past month she has continued working to improve areas of the library. Her area of concentration has been on the administrative offices as well as the children's library. The administrative offices are an ongoing project. For the children's library the question becomes "how can it look more welcoming and appealing for the children and caregivers who spend time in the library". What has always looked non-professional is the layout of the children's information desks. The 3 old wooden desks pushed together did not make an attractive area. The former director's office suite was just taking up space within the old bookmobile office and she decided that it could become the children's information desk. Also she has been using the return of that desk, which is too small, as a regular desk. Putting that piece back on the desk and moving it into the children's library seemed to really fit the bill. The new desk looks really nice and creates a space for one or two librarians to staff the floor. Also added was some portable shelves that created more space for the picture books as well as display space by the children's check-out desk. Other improvements were the purchase of new seating for story hours and the new wooden chairs that we acquired from Larchmont Library.

Children's staff has also been working very hard to evaluate the collection and make space for some wonderful materials that have been stored in the closed stacks. Staff is working on more changes and plans to improve overall services and programs to the youth of the community.

Also as part of the update of the public spaces, maintenance has put up the 3 stacks donated from the Rye Library. Mrs. Karwoski has also had new stacks put up to replace the display wall, opposite cyber corner, to accommodate a variety of new materials. She hopes to use some of the display wall in the children's library.

On December 9<sup>th</sup> our new Youth Service Coordinator began work. Denise Lyles comes to Mount Vernon from the New York Public Library, where she managed a branch library in the Bronx. Denise has already begun to work on the display of collections and initiate change in the library.

Carolyn Karwoski attended the PLDA meeting in November. The discussion centered around committee recommendations for database renewals which is considering the renewal of Literary Resource Center which expires at the end of December and Lexis-Nexus, which we have through March, 2014. This inspired many opinions but concluded without a decision being voted upon. Also discussed were the WLS budget and a department report from IT.

Mrs. Fitch from Literacy Volunteers will be taking time off during the winter months. She is 96 years old and although she still drives, it is better if she does not come in during icy winter months. Mrs. Fitch has sold her home in Mount Vernon and is living in White Plains in her childhood home. She will return at the end of March to resume running the office. The literacy office will be closed until she returns to work. Any questions or concerns that come up can be addressed to Pat Rajala at the Literacy Volunteers office.

At the management meeting Carolyn Karwoski discussed her plans for creating our new five-year strategic plan. She has asked department heads to prepare a thoughtful and analytic report on their departments. What is working, what is not and what is needed to turn Mount Vernon Public Library into the library of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Reports are due in mid-January and she asked that all take their time to really consider the different aspects of their respective areas.

Carolyn Karwoski said that Denise Lyles will coordinate programming with Cathy Webb and collections with Cheryl Berent.

Mrs. Karwoski said that there is also new signage. She said that we are trying to improve services.

Na'im Tyson said that a few years ago the city officials were concerned about the absence of a legal database. The Lexis Nexis subscription is uncertain and may expire in March.

Dr. Tyson asked was Mount Vernon's central library status mentioned at PLDA.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had spoken to Terry Kirchner about the maintenance of effort waiver. She said it had not been approved or disapproved.

Dr. Tyson said that it would be a year in February since it had been submitted. He said that he would like the strategic plan to be an agenda item for next month's meeting.

Tamara Stewart said that Westchester Community College had Lexis Nexis available in the main campus library. She asked if WLS had looked into some sort of partnership with the county.

Carolyn Karwoski said that there is an ongoing discussion. She said that she does not know if there was any discussion of a partnership. She said she thinks the main concern is the cost per search.

Mrs. Karwoski said that \$150,000 in e-rate money has been lost. She said that she needs to find out where people can access Lexis Nexis.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the database committee's work will be ongoing. She said that the same goes for the literacy research center. A vote was not taken on either one. Perhaps there will be a vote at the PLDA meeting tomorrow.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Na'im Tyson said that there are a couple of personnel issues.

Dr. Tyson said that he has studied the library law regarding bid amounts for contracts.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT:

Juan Jaramillo said that minor changes had been made to the report compared to last month. He said that he is concerned with building operations. As of October, \$260,000 had been spent. There is only \$10,000 remaining.

Mr. Jaramillo said that most departments in the budget had been overstated, so we have more money. He said that he would have expected higher electricity usage in the summer rather than winter.

Juan Jaramillo said that we are billed by the city for a portion of the electrical bill. A one month bill may have two months together.

Na'im Tyson asked was there an issue with not receiving the bills on time.

Juan Jaramillo said yes. The city sends the invoice with the meter numbers.

Dr. Tyson asked if the utility company came to the library to read the meter. Mr. Jaramillo said no.

Dr. Tyson asked if these were estimates. Mr. Jaramillo said that he had never asked.

Na'im Tyson said that Con Edison should be coming to the library building to read the meters.

Marcia Dupree said that you can also read the meter yourself. She said that the bills are probably estimated bills. They are always higher.

Juan Jaramillo said that he is concerned with the cost of hospital and medical. He said that the \$200,000 in the retirement fund could help to cover the cost of the hospital and medical.

In October there was a surplus of \$213,000.

#### TRUSTEE REMARKS:

Na'im Tyson said that when the fire alarm went off, maintenance did a good job of getting people out of the building.

He said that people have to get out of the building faster. It took some people almost fifteen to twenty minutes to leave.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had spoken about this at the management meeting.

Dr. Tyson said that he would like at least two mandatory fire drills per year.

OLD BUSINESS:

Carolyn Karwoski said that the tax attorney had been in touch. She said that he is waiting for payroll information to show that the library payroll is going through the City of Mount Vernon. He wants to establish with the IRS that the library's 501C3 should not have been pulled because we are a government agency.

Mrs. Karwoski said that the tax attorney needs a random pay stub with name redacted and a letter saying the payroll is processed by the city.

Na'im Tyson asked has the tax accountant been given any information regarding the state returns. Carolyn Karwoski said that the tax accountant is working with the tax attorney.

Dawn Cancellieri asked if the 501C3 was reinstated what would that mean. Carolyn Karwoski said that it means we had it all along. The attorney says rather than retro, it shows it should never have been pulled.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she thinks she can get a letter from the state to apply for grants.

Dr. Tyson said that he would like the Fire Marshall to come to the library to find out how many times a building this size needs a fire drill.

Mrs. Karwoski said she has a proposal from Tyco for additional sensors.

Marcia Dupree said that the Fire Marshall may be able to establish protocol.

Na'im Tyson said that he had received an email about the Muslim Journeys grant. A report is due by the end of January.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had contacted Millie Burns for the log in information.

Marcia Dupree suggested that Mrs. Karwoski create a new one.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had done two programs with materials.

Carolyn Karwoski said that Libby Post is putting together the marketing plan for the budget vote.

Na'im Tyson said that in terms of outreach for the trustees, he would like to start in January.

Libby Post said that we are not ready. She said that we need to position people first before we get people to vote. She said since some of the information is proprietary, she was hoping to discuss it in executive session.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Tyson said the city has notified us that the warranty forms are no longer needed. The signatures of the Trustees and the comptroller are enough.

Marcia Dupree asked once we sign, what happens to them.

Mr. Jaramillo said that we file them.

Mrs. Dupree asked do you ever refer back to them. Juan Jaramillo said hardly ever. He said that he has them on computer.

Na'im Tyson said with positive pay you only have to bring up a spreadsheet with the information.

Juan Jaramillo said that there was an issue with the paychecks regarding positive pay.

Na'im Tyson said that positive pay verifies the names and numbers of the checks released.

Marcia Dupree asked what this had to do with the warranty forms.

Na'im Tyson said that it was another safeguard; the ultimate safeguard.

Dr. Tyson said that Carolyn Karwoski approves the invoices, the trustees approve them, and then they go to the comptroller and are put in positive pay.

Juan Jaramillo said that every check has a back-up. Na'im Tyson said that all checks are watermarked. Upon a motion by Marcia Dupree, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri, the board approved discontinuing the warranty forms. The vote passed 3 to 0.

Na'im Tyson said that the number for the budget vote was 4.5 million. Given the numbers Juan Jaramillo has quoted so far, he would feel comfortable with 4.75 million.

Juan Jaramillo said that the tax assessment is \$366.00 per household.

Dr. Tyson said that he feels comfortable with the 4.75 million.

Libby Post said also there is the psychology of the number. Dr. Tyson said he thinks it should stay at 4.5 million. Ms. Post asked was that what the library needed.

Juan Jaramillo said no, we need to look at the money for capital improvement.

Dr. Tyson said that he would prefer 4.75 million which is just above the pre recession level.

Libby Post said that you can go back every year, but you want to stay below the tax cap.

The vote only has to pass by a simple majority, but 60% of the board have to approve the budget.

Ms. Post said if 4.75 million is what you need to do what you want to do, then you need to go with that. You have to be clear on what you want to do with the money. She said that you are not asking for much more than you did before.

Na'im Tyson said that he would like trustee input. Do we go slightly higher than the pre recession number or back to the same level.

He said keep in mind that there are repairs to the building that will not be covered by the city.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the elevator and children's room are big issues. The doors cannot be put off. The proposal for the doors is \$26,000. It does not have to go out to bid.

The board agreed to revise the budget to 4.75 million dollars upon a motion by Marcia Dupree, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri. The motion passed 3 to 0.

Dr. Tyson asked if outreach had been done to social services.

Carolyn Karwoski said that a person comes from WLS and does career counseling by appointments on Tuesdays only.

Na'im Tyson asked if Carolyn Karwoski wanted to start appointments with social services regarding program outreach. Mrs. Karwoski said that more staff was needed to accommodate this. We do not have enough staff to do huge outreach.

Tamara Stewart asked if WEBS had expanded beyond homemakers. Mrs. Karwoski said yes, most of the people having resumes done are people who have been out of the workforce for a while. It is a little broader than homemakers returning to the workforce.

Dr. Tyson said that he had examined NYS Education law, section 260 regarding online sales of discarded books.

He said that the "Friends" do not have a 501C3.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she does not think the "Friends" are selling any discarded books.

Libby Post said that the library can donate books to the "Friends" if they were a 501C3.

Carolyn Karwoski said that Better World Books gets the library's discards. She said that the "Friends" are working to get their 501C3.

Na'im Tyson said rather than have full fledged computers for the PAC terminals we could use Raspberry Pi, a motherboard that can be used as a full terminal with an sb card. The library could order around five at about \$200.00 apiece. Carolyn Karwoski said that we will need new monitors.

Dr. Tyson asked was the budget line for computer equipment exceeded. Carolyn Karwoski said that there was only \$3,000 dollars allocated, but \$8,000 had been spent. Mrs. Karwoski said that the line for software and supplies had not been exceeded.

Dr. Tyson said that he would like to purchase five motherboards and monitors. He said that he would like the board's second to purchase the equipment for the terminals.

Upon a motion by Dawn Cancellieri, seconded by Marcia Dupree, the board approved the purchase of the equipment for the terminals.

Na'im Tyson said that anything major should be brought to the board first.

Carolyn Karwoski said that there are furniture costs. She said that Juan Jaramillo and Debbie Harris have to get new furniture. She said that she is working with a company that is under state contract to get a good discount.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon a motion by Marcia Dupree, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri, the board went into executive session at 7:47 pm.

Respectfully

*Carolyn Karwoski*  
Secretary