

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

February 20, 2008

6:30 pm

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chris Hansen who presided called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Present were: Susan Capeci and Arlene Roberts-Grant, Trustees.

Also present were: Mary Ellen Forte, WLS Trustee; Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President, Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; Willie Lou Gayles, Chief Account Clerk and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting of January 16, 2008 were approved.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

Mary Ellen Forte informed the Board of the results of the WLS Trustee Board Elections:

President, Patricia Fontanella, Vice-President, Patty Dorhewend, Secretary, Sue Neale, Treasurer, Hope Furth.

The WLS Trustee by-laws were approved. It was thought that library Boards represented by WLS trustees should be aware of who the trustees are and any issues that effect that library can be brought to the WLS Board.

The WLS Trustee Board selects the trustee to represent each member library.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported that the library had received positive media coverage in two recent articles.

The budget crisis has resulted in reduction of hours (Sunday Closings), slashed spending for the collection.

There will be concentration on services offered to the public, while tweaking clerical operations, cyber and technical operations and children's. A new staff member has been assigned to Technical Services. Plans to provide a Teen Tech Center and additional children's programming have been curtailed.

Meetings have been held with city hall and the various officials, who were attentive, but made no commitments. The Mayor has decided to meet monthly with the library and the Comptroller has offered to help look into the needed items for the Capital budget.

The community and media have been quite supportive as they inform the library of calls to representatives. Positive media coverage has been given to the library. The Foundation and Friends members have regrouped to offer help.

The shifting of the books was completed in January, special thanks to the work team involved.

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In a general staff meeting, on January 18th the staff was brought up to date on the library's state of affairs.

Scheduled interviews were done for the position of Account Clerk.

Meetings were held to review possible grants for the library. Thanks to Donna Jackson for the assistance in the grant search and preparation venture.

Mount Vernon Public Library hosted its first Central Library committee meeting. The meeting included exploring ways to make West Law more remote & accessible to the system. The CLDA budget will soon include Westlaw, but this must go to PLDA for approval.

Electrical problems have been discovered on the side of the library that houses the tutoring rooms. Electricians have been called to analyze the problem.

The administration continues to make calls to DPW regarding unfinished work in the building. A new DPW commissioner has just been assigned and the director will be in touch with him.

More security presence is needed in the building.

Counters are needed at the main entrances, to concentrate on building attendance. Some adjustments have been made to the closing procedures. The library will now close 5 minutes to the hour instead of 10 minutes. New ways of obtaining the library statistics are being explored.

Gary Newman said that in the past, standing orders had been paid for by CLDA, this year that money is going to West Law. He said that there were cuts to the reference and circulating test books, as well as GED and travel. He said that some of the items he regretted losing.

Mrs. Lindsay said that she has spoken to the comptroller regarding the circulation security system and wiring to move the cyber corner.

The library staff manual was sent to the consultant who is working on the library's policy and procedural manual.

The director attended several meetings with the Mayor and met with Assemblyman, Gary Pretlow and State Senator, Ruth Hassell-Thompson. Various other community and board meetings were also attended

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Gary Newman said that the staff manual on policies and procedures was written in the 1970's and pre-dated the CSEA contract. He said that the manual had never been distributed to the staff.

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Mr. Newman urged the new trustees to tour the Local History Room to see the condition of the collection. He felt that the library is no longer equipped to preserve it. He suggested that the library identify what it wanted to keep and the rest of the collection should be turned over to the Westchester Historical Society.

Mary Ellen Forte said that a Westchester archives organization has periodically inquired about the collection. Mr. Hansen agreed with Gary Newman about the collection and said that WLS has offered money to help with the collection.

GRIEVANCE:

The Nishan Stepak grievance was heard by the Board of Trustees and denied at Step III.

REMARKS OF TRUSTEES:

Chris Hansen addressed the open meeting law questioned posed by Mr. Newman at the last Board meeting. He stated that hiring and firing could be done in Executive Session.

Mr. Hansen said at the Executive Board meeting of December 17, 2008, Opal Brown Lindsay was hired as Director of the Mount Vernon Public Library by a vote of 4 to 0. Trustee, Susan Capeci was absent.

FINANCIALS:

The revised 2008 budget has been reviewed by the board.

The salary lines have been revised to indicate an increase in professional salaries.

Opal Brown Lindsay said that she is looking into hiring an Adult Services Librarian with grants experience.

A new staff member has been hired in the position of Account Clerk. This position is not a confidential one and is not exempt for the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Mrs. Gayles is still investigating the cell phone contracts with Sprint. Board President Chris Hansen said that the comptroller has instructed the board to continue to pay for the cell phone bills that were accumulated during Mr. Lee's tenure.

The library's budget surplus and deficit history was discussed, particularly the library surpluses in past years. A 10 year review of the library budget was suggested.

Mrs. Gayles said that the auditors have requested that the library develop a written purchasing policy. It was suggested that the library adopt the purchasing policy submitted by the comptroller's office.

The January 2008 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$629, 571.60 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Susan Capeci and Arlene Roberts Grant were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered # 018560-018603 (payrolls), #55156-55186 (payrolls, petty cash), and # 29274-29332 (bills).

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EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:07pm. The board returned to Public Session at 8:43 pm, no decisions were recorded.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary