

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

April 23, 2008

6:30 pm

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chris Hansen who presided called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

Present were: Rodney Reynolds and Danna Wood-Webb Trustees.

Also present were: Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President, Geraldo Soares and Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; Willie Lou Gayles, Chief Account Clerk and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting of March, 19, 2008 were approved without objection.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of officers was postponed until the May board meeting.

COMMUNITCATIONS

Opal Brown Lindsay read a letter from a patron commending members of the library staff.

Pictures of the opening of the Early Childhood Resource Corner were shown.

The library received an invitation to the Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation's Fall Gala on October 16, 2008. The library also received invitations to fundraisers for Comptroller, Maureen Walker and the Mount Vernon City School Board.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

The library has received two grants; one through the Westchester Arts Council for programs and exhibits. The other grant is the El Dia mini-grant for program activities for Children's Day/Book Day and cultural and diversity programs in Westchester libraries.

The library is planning a number of collaborative efforts with the elementary schools. One is participation in the city's second annual Spelling Bee competition. A library card drive is planned as well as school and class visits. The library will be hosting an exhibit of Mount Vernon students' art.

The library is preparing a job readiness workshop for teens and a Camp Fair for the community on May 14th. The children's room has officially opened the Early Childhood Resource Corner in collaboration with the Westchester Jewish Council Services (WJCS).

A two day Bridges-out-of- Poverty Workshop was given by WLS at the Hudson River Museum. Several staff members attended.

March 11, 2008 was Library Lobby Day in Albany. Two MTVPL staff members attended.

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The staff continues to attend regular community and networking meetings.

The weekly Public Service meetings continue. The staff is challenged to take a more active role in planning for services and participating in decision making.

Staff visits to other libraries will continue.

Shift adjustments continue to be made to tackle functions and services.

Many thanks go to the Technical Services team for working through the kinks in the department. WLS has helped in strategizing to fill the management position in this department.

All departments and ordering staff were given allotments for program planning and material purchases for the first six month of 2008. The effectiveness of these plans will decide future allotments and spending assignments.

Adjustments are being made to clerical operations for better management and coverage of the Circulation desk. The periodicals full-time staff will be reassigned to the Circulation Department. They will continue to manage Periodicals as well, though the periodicals desk will mainly be covered by part-time personnel.

The library foundation has started plans for its fall event.

The library was among the work teams presented at the Mayor's community meeting.

Mrs. Lindsay met with the Mayor's Chief of Staff Yolanda Robinson to review library needs.

Mrs. Lindsay has met with the City's Planning Commissioner, Jeff Williams and discussed thoughts on the library's façade and arrangements for the Local History Room.

The bid specifications for the library materials security system are in the process of being completed.

Brief discussions with the DPW Commissioner included conversations about the building challenges on the South East side of the library. The contractors for the HVAC system will meet to finalize their work. Maintenance Foreman, Jesse Van Lew said that roof repairs will take place as soon as there is a break in the weather. A six foot fence needed to secure the property and mechanical units is requested by the insurance company.

It is hoped that there can be community involvement in the decision to select a new library logo. It is suggested that perhaps a competition can be developed to get people involved.

The consultant for the library's procedural manual indicated that the manual should be completed soon.

Mrs. Lindsay attended various other meetings including the State Central Library Director's meeting in Albany and the Health Initiative conference for seniors.

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Ways of extending the libraries advertising base were explored. Advertisement rates for local newspapers should be explored; as well as advertising on the local Hot Shots station.

GRIEVANCE:

The Step III Grievance of Gary Neman was heard by the Board of Trustees. By a vote of 3 to 0 the grievance was denied at Step III.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Gary Newman read an inscription in author Vincent La Brutto's book commending some of the library staff members. Mr. La Brutto's book is a biography of film director, Martin Scorsese.

Mr. Newman said that the library could use a higher budget for DVDs; choices have to be made when selecting materials, all of the budget is being used. He said that in the past the library would run out of money in mid summer and he would be told to stop ordering.

Mrs. Lindsay said that until recently the children's department was not circulating DVDs, but are now doing so. She said that she is considering starting a 3 day express book and DVD checkout.

Gary Newman spoke about the new concept of the roaming librarian which is now being used at the Mount Vernon Library. One librarian walks around the building soliciting assistance to patrons. Mr. Newman said that the experience is mixed, when people ask for assistance they are usually brought back to the reference desk. He said the concept has worked well in other libraries and is much more in use in academic libraries.

Mrs. Lindsay said that the roaming librarian is a new concept in libraries and something to get used to. She said that the concept has a customer service value.

Cheryl Thomas spoke about her concerns with her position in the Technical Services Department. Ms. Thomas was advised to address her concerns to the Director.

TRUSTEE REMARKS:

A question arose regarding the Mayor's thoughts about the library. Opal Lindsay said that the thoughts were positive, but it is felt that the library needs a donor who can make a significant donation to the library.

It was asked if there were grants or organizations that could help fund the library.

Rodney Reynolds asked about book signings in the library and suggested that a few local authors could be contacted to do a signing.

FINANCIALS:

It was questioned if there was any news regarding money for Sunday openings.

There was also concern regarding efforts to get the information needed about the earmarked money in the gift fund.

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The Board discussed the bill from the city for legal consultations regarding the bond for the library roof replacement. The city will be notified that the library is not responsible for this bill.

Mrs. Gayles said that the figures for the March encumbrances would not be reflected in the financial report until she receives the bills.

It was asked how the line item for refunds was established and are they continuous. Mrs. Gayles stated that refunds are usually from hospital and medical and are continuous. They are usually paid by retirees. Refunds for electronic services are usually once a year. Miscellaneous refunds could be from employee overpayment of retirement.

The library budget has been revised to reflect the adopted CLDA budget.

Several line items for payment of library materials were also questioned.

The resolution of computer and cell phone equipment was questioned.

The discrepancy in the income statement for salaries for January and February was discussed. Mrs. Gayles explained that an entry was made at the request of the comptroller and that the first 6 days of the January payroll were accrued in December.

The difference in the salary line based on contingency increases and new hires was also discussed. Mrs. Gayles said that there may be some savings in salaries due to vacant positions. The budget may currently project some surpluses in that line because the vacant positions have not been filled.

The line item for professional fees was also discussed. It was suggested that any savings could be reallocated to that line.

The March 2008 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$239,494.94 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Danna Wood Webb and Rodney Reynolds were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered # 018665-018709 (payrolls), #55232-55267 (payrolls, petty cash), and # 29386-29447 (bills).

NEW BUSINESS:

Library membership in the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce was discussed. The library will contact the Chamber regarding a discount rate.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:07pm. The board returned to Public Session at 8:28 pm, no decisions were recorded.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary