

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

June 18, 2008

6:30 pm

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chris Hansen who presided called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

Present were: Susan Capeci and Rodney Reynolds Trustees.

Also present were: Maureen Walker, City of Mount Vernon Comptroller; Mary Ellen Forte, WLS Trustee; Ronnie Cox, Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation; Charlotte Schachter, Friends of the Mount Vernon Public Library, Thea Blessitt, Scott Griffith 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 May 28, 2008 were approved without objection.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Comptroller Walker spoke about the article in the paper regarding former director, Rodney Lee. Mrs. Walker said that the investigation was ongoing and it was unknown if charges would be filed.

Maureen Walker said that people from her office would be visiting the library from time to time to ensure that the recommendations regarding equipment inventory that were sent to the library were being followed. She said that they were important for theft and insurance purposes.

She also inquired about any art pieces the library may have. She said that the staff should avoid bringing their own personal computers or furniture to the library for use.

There was also discussion about implementing the new requisition signature forms and who the signatories should be when items are being ordered.

There was inquiry regarding the money in the budget to hire new employees and money set aside for union negotiations.

Mrs. Walker said that as long as it is within the library budget, new hires can be made.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT

Mary Ellen Forte spoke about the Mount Vernon Local History Initiative Committee. The members of the committee are Patricia Dohrenwend, Director, Westchester County Archives and Records; Diana Deichert, Librarian, Westchester County Historical Society; Mary Ellen Forte, Westchester Library System, Trustee; Katie Hite, Executive Director, Westchester County Historical Society; Donna Jackson, Triple Hill Arts Initiative; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director, Mount Vernon Public Library; David Osborn, Director, Saint Paul's National Historic Site and Jeffery Williams, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development, City of Mount Vernon. She said that a committee had been formed to investigate measures to preserve materials in the Local History Room. One of the members Jeffery Williams formerly worked as an archivist. Mr. Williams informed Mrs. Forte that there would be no new Mount Vernon Public Library building, but city officials are aware of the need for more meeting space at the library. Any new additions to the library will be added for meeting space.

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There are questions regarding the ownership of materials in the Local History Room. There is a Landmark Historical Society of Mount Vernon that was chartered in 1989. They issued one report and it is not know if they are still active.

A tour of the library facility and a talk with Gary Newman, Head of Reference is suggested in order to ascertain what materials the library has and the storage conditions for them.

Chris Hansen said that he would be opposed to Local History Room materials leaving the library. There was a question of hiring someone to put the materials in order.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT

Charlotte Schachter reported that the Friends had a successful Book and Bake sale on May 17th and 18th. The sale raised about \$800.00.

There are books on trucks at the entrances from previous sales that are free to the public. The Friends have met with Mrs. Lindsay to donate money to the library for programs.

FOUNDATION REPORT

Ronnie Cox reported that the Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation Gala was scheduled for October 16, 2008 at the VIP Club in New Rochelle.

The money from the fundraiser will be designated for improvements in the Children's Room. Mrs. Cox said that a goal should be given to corporations for an opportunity to place their name or logo. Feedback from the library is needed as soon as possible. Input from the board is needed for this event. This will be a big event with potential honorees. Mrs. Cox said that the foundation is going after corporate money. The foundation was hoping to reach out to the greater Westchester Community.

It was suggested that a relocation of the children's bathroom was a priority for that space.

There was a question regarding the acknowledgment of corporate sponsorship.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

She thanked everyone for coming and sharing their information. Mrs. Lindsay said that she had invited recent retiree Beatrice Travis to also come to the meeting to speak, but she could not make it.

The library continues to participate on the Mayor's neighborhood outreach team. The meetings have given the library an opportunity to be visible and personal.

Patron attendance and participation in library services can be directly attributed to the summer camp fair.

Daycare library visits continue in numbers and the Early Childhood Corner continues to build momentum.

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The WEBS career counseling service is offering a variety of programs that appeal to the needs of unemployed and employed adults. This spring WEBS participated in the Westchester Career Counselors' Network training.

The library received a \$20,000 Grant from the Westchester Arts Council for the Rotunda gallery activities

The library's obligation to interlibrary loans was strengthened by the addition of 1,316 items to the collection.

The CLDA Committee is moving along.

Collection Development is ordering materials in Spanish, German and Chinese. The books will be housed at Mount Vernon Public Library. Mrs. Lindsay said that the library is reorganizing its way of ordering.

There will be other areas of ordering; databases such as tutor.com and others will be ordered. Mrs. Lindsay will meet with the Children's Department to order books.

Some library staff attended the Westchester Library Association Conference on May 9, 2008. Thanks to the Friends, seven members of the staff were able to attend.

Principle Clerk and Head of Circulation, Deborah Ramsey attended the first series of library visits arranged for the staff to review operations at member libraries.

There will be a Reference Department workshop on using Westlaw and Learning Express databases.

The library's major annual summer event is the summer reading program and vacation loans. This year it is hoped the bookmobile will be included in the activities.

The Bookmobile will be ready to start service in Mount Vernon on July 8, 2008. It will be making stops at the Fleetwood A&P, Hartley Park and the Dole Center. The bookmobile will also participate in the Summer Reading Program closing. Mrs. Shirley Garrett is the coordinator and liaison for this project. Patrons will be able to borrow materials, sign-up for library cards and check-in and check-out holds.

Several staff members attended the review meeting of the Bridges Out of Poverty Workshop.

WLS and Co-Communications are developing a "Business Resources Road show". It is designed to highlight the on-hand and online resources available to the business community. Participating libraries will invite members of various business organizations to the library for orientation on library resources.

An updating of the Mount Vernon Public Library website needs to be a priority.

A veteran clerical staffer, Anne Marie Ward retired after 23 years of service to the library.

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Meetings have been held with all departments in the library. New ideas for better patron service in the Circulation Department are being implemented.

There are still building concerns regarding the roof, air conditioning system and the fencing around the outer air conditioning unit; as well as lighting.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Charlotte Schachter asked what was being done about beautifying the Mount Vernon Web site. Mrs. Lindsay said that a company will be working on the web site for a cost of about \$1,500.

Mary Ellen Forte asked about a time frame to determine if there was artwork and rare books in the library. She said that there were a number of card catalog cabinets, which could be valuable collector's items.

OLD BUSINESS

A draft of the policy manual is being reviewed by the board president.

There are still issues regarding the operation and maintenance of the HVAC system. The city holds the contract for the library's system and they must be informed.

The Mount Vernon City School District will be contacted regarding expansion of the Library Trustee Board.

The legislative bill regarding the library's governance status now before the State Legislature is previous legislation that was automatically resubmitted.

There is sufficient money in the budget to cover the line items for an Assistant Director and one librarian.

The adjusted budget proposes increasing lines for professional fees and security, although the line for professional fees is already over budget.

Scott Griffith questioned why promotional civil service positions had not been opened up. He felt that additional money in the budget could be better served by promoting from within. Mr. Griffith stated that there was an open Librarian II position in the children's room that had not been filled.

It was asked if a civil service position was posted, couldn't anyone qualified take the test.

FINANCIALS:

There are still questions regarding the amount of additional money that may be in the salary line of the budget and how much money is available to hire librarians in vacant positions.

It is requested that the line items in the budget be redistributed and sent to the comptroller.

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Mrs. Gayles said that some of the additional money is from recent retirees.
It was asked if an analysis of the current salary budget could be done.

Mrs. Gayles said that the salary increases calculated by the library are not the same as the city has settled for.

There were questions about the unrestricted money and also money for the A.B. Davis fund.

The Board authorized the director to hire an Assistant Director and one Librarian.
There is currently the question of the hiring freeze and whether any other positions can be filled at this time.

It was questioned if new hire positions had to go through civil service.

The line item and amount of money for petty cash was discussed. Mrs. Gayles said that the money is used for programming refreshments and travel.

The May 2008 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$257,173.25 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Susan Capeci and Rodney Reynolds were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered # 018756-018804 (payrolls), #55311 - 55345 (payrolls, petty cash), and # 29488 -29525 (bills).

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:15 pm. The board returned to Public Session at 8:32 pm, no decisions were recorded.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary