

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

July 15, 2009

6:30 pm

MINUTES

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

Present were: Millie Burns, Julie Mills Worthey, Arlene Roberts Grant, Rodney Reynolds, and Danna Wood-Webb, Trustees.

Also present were: Mary Ellen Forte, WLS Trustee; Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Cheryl Berent, Scott Griffith, Shawn Lucas Dunnom, Cheryl Thomas and Wu, Xiao Yuan, Library Staff; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; Karen Preuss, Assistant Director; Willie Lou Gayles, Chief Account Clerk and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting of June 17, 2009 were approved without exception.

OATH OF OFFICE:

Board President, Chris Hansen administered the oath of office to new library trustees, Millie Burns and Julie Mills Worthey.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Gary Newman welcomed the new library trustees and said he hoped that the contract negotiations could be brought to a satisfying conclusion. He said it had been a long time since the staff had received a salary increase.

Mr. Newman continued that he had worked at the library since 1982 and had seen all kinds of Trustees; he hopes the new trustees will come into the library, look around, speak with the staff and decide for themselves.

FRIENDS REPORT:

American Legacy Magazine is donating new books to the Friends of the Mount Vernon Public Library.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

Mary Ellen Forte reported that in celebration of WLS' 50th Anniversary three new WLS awards have been created.

The Service Award: To an outstanding individual supporter such as a staff member or volunteer or donor who has enhanced services.

The Support Award: To an outstanding corporate supporter or municipality or non-profit.

The Innovation Award: To an outstanding community group, municipality or service organization whose work supports Westchester libraries.

Mrs. Forte stated that she would like to see Mount Vernon qualify for an award. The deadline to submit nominations is September 15, 2009.

FOUNDATION REPORT:

Karen Preuss said that the library has received \$15,000 from the Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation.

The next Foundation gala is scheduled for October 22, 2009.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

There are a number of young people working in the library this summer from other agencies; a total of 18 in all.

The library has partnered with the Youth Bureau, Westcop and with Westchester Jewish Community Services.

The Summer Reading program has had a very good kick-off with over 200 participants.

The 1st Central Library Event was a book social held in the gallery. The Friends underwrote the event. Several council people attended and Rob Colouri from WLS came to give remarks. Daphne McKnight gave "Storytime for Grown Folks".

The local history room is making headway and inventory is underway. Opal Lindsay met with an intern who is interested in working in the local history room.

New Librarian Wu, Xiao Yuan (May Wu) was introduced to the Board of Trustees. Mrs. Lindsay said that all of the librarians are doing an excellent job.

The library is in the process of switching the YA Room to the Fiction Room location.

Part-time staff has been added to the maintenance department during the absent of cleaner, Lionel Turner.

The library received 2 grants in the amount of \$5,000 each from Assemblyman Gary Pretlow.

Mrs. Lindsay said that she had met with the City Council regarding time on the parking meters. She said the library is seeking help from the city to put up security cameras.

The building commissioner visited the library to review the plans for the Children's Room. Mrs. Lindsay will work with the Senior Custodian, WLS and the electricians.

The Regional Director of the Division of Library Development, Lisa Areford will visit the library in August.

The new computers and laptops have arrived in the library and are being set up. A procedure for public use of laptops must be developed.

Mrs. Lindsay is working on the 2010 budget.

The August board meeting will focus solely on the 2010 library budget.

REMARKS OF THE TRUSTEES:

The Board welcomed back trustee, Rodney Reynolds who was out due to illness.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mrs. Gayles reported that a bill in the amount of \$7,200 for the WEBS Career Counseling had been paid. This represents a five month period.

There were questions regarding measuring the success of the WEBS program and whether there was any follow-up with the individuals who had sought counseling.

Mrs. Forte said that WLS keeps statistics.

Large bills for terminal maintenance and professional fees were also presented.

It was questioned how much of the money spent on attorney fees were for legal matters and how much was for contract negotiations. Chris Hansen said that the library is already getting a discounted rate and it is spending a fortune on lawyers which is the function of union negotiations and grievances.

Mrs. Gayles said that a journal entry must be made for a bill paid in October 2008, which must now be paid out of the Capital budget. The library will be reimbursed for the money.

Opal Lindsay said that a bill for the 3M Detection system should have come out of the capital budget. The large bill will leave a hole in the budget.

Mrs. Gayles said that she had sent bills to the comptroller last year that should have come out of the capital budget, but the comptroller returned them and said to pay them out of the library's operating budget.

A large bill for \$34,000 came this year and the comptroller wants the bill to come out of the Mount Vernon budget. Mrs. Gayles said that the bill is for the detection gate and sensitizer.

Arlene Grant said that typically the capital budget includes equipment and other big ticket items. Greenwich Library bought three of the security machines from 3M and the purchase came out of their capital budget.

The library should find out what projects fall under the capital budget guidelines for the city and try to get a copy of those guidelines.

There was discussion regarding the library's knowledge of the city's capital budget program and how the library could best utilize the capital funds that the city has earmarked for the library.

Chief Account Clerk Willie Lou Gayles will retire on August 31, 2009. There was discussion about restructuring the Business Office.

The Board discussed the library governance issue and the status of the Mount Vernon Public Library.

An explanation was given regarding the Mount Vernon Public Library's central library status and the cooperative agreement between the library and Westchester Library System.

A WLS Trustee Institute will be held on August 26, 2009.

The June 2009 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$339,959.03 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Danna Wood-Webb and Arlene Roberts Grant were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered #019469-019521 (payrolls), #55833-55876 (payrolls, petty cash), and #030191-030191 (bills).

OLD BUSINESS:

Millie Burns asked for a clarification on CD's and DVD ordering.

The library is purchasing a lot more DVD's than before. Chris Hansen is concerned that circulation is not what it used to be. Circulation still continues to be low. The cost to Mount Vernon is twelve dollars for each book that is checked out. No other library in the county pays that much. Mr. Hansen said that the library programs are not translating into book circulation yet.

Karen Preuss spoke about the "e news" database that is used to send out mailings and the cost per email address.

It was asked if "e news" owned the library's email list and if that list could be sold.

Chris Hansen stated that he thinks the library budget is in good financial shape. The library's retroactive increases are already built into the budget.

Mrs. Gayles explained the refunds revenue line in the budget.

Mr. Hansen said that the library has an endowment fund that is not being spent.

Mrs. Lindsay said that the library is running a very large deficit with the city. Chris Hansen said that last year the library came in under budget.

It was felt that as long as the library had a relationship with the city; it should use the city's resources as heavily as possible.

NEW BUSINESS:

Willie Lou Gayles spoke about a bill from Con Ed in the amount of \$18,000 dollars. Con Edison claims that the library gas meter was broken and was not recording. Con Edison will not make an adjustment to the bill, but will work with the library on the payments.

It was questioned if the amount on the bill was in line with the history Con Ed is declaring.

There was concern that a number of bills have gone through without being questioned. Mrs. Gayles said that there are an enormous amount of invoices and perhaps there was a more efficient way of delegating responsibility. The library is trying to assist by having other department heads look at bills for their purchases to say they are valid.

Mrs. Gayles said that the library electric bill is included in the city's bill. The library just pays its portion.

The library entered Executive Session at 9:01 pm.

Gary Newman objected stating that Public Session should be completed prior to going into Executive Session.

The Board returned to Public Session at 9:28 pm. No decisions were recorded.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The following slate of candidates for office was proposed:

Danna Wood-Webb- President

Chris Hansen- Vice President

Arlene Roberts Grant – Treasurer

Rodney Reynolds – Secretary

The proposed slate of candidates was elected unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary