

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

July 16, 2008

6:30 pm

MINUTES

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

Present were: Danna Wood-Webb, Trustee.

Also present were: Mary Ellen Forte, WLS Trustee; Brian Johnson, Vice President, Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation; Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Sharon Cohen, Diptimoy Roy, Retired Library Staff; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; Willie Lou Gayles, Chief Account Clerk and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant.

FOUNDATION REPORT:

Brian Johnson said that the Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation had been established in 2004. Mr. Johnson said that the foundation is holding its Inaugural Bash on October 16, 2008 at the VIP Club in New Rochelle to raise money for the library. There are currently twelve foundation board members.

The vision of the foundation is to raise significant resources for a first class library and to establish funds for long term library use.

The foundation must identify a library need that would generate interest in people who are willing to give money to the library. It would like to develop strong partnerships that would provide lasting relationships with the donors. It was suggested that the board propose a few big ticket items in the Children's Room for consideration

A save the date notice has gone out to the public regarding the gala.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT

The Friends have raised money with their book and bake sale. They are in discussion with Opal Lindsay about a donation. Chris Hansen said that the friends are in the process of becoming a 501C3 non-profit organization. They are also planning a food fair.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

Mary Ellen Forte said that WLS Executive Director, Siobhan Reardon was leaving WLS and moving to another job. The WLS Trustee Board will conduct a search for a new director. In the interim an acting director will be chosen. Board President, Chris Hansen expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Reardon for the help given the library during the more difficult times.

The 50th Anniversary of Westchester Library System will kick-off in November. Input from individual libraries is welcome.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

A Legislative Thank You Breakfast sponsored by WLS was held at the Ossining Library. Legislator, George S. Latimer shared his experience of growing up as a Mount Vernon resident and using the library.

The library is in receipt of a \$5,000 grant from Legislator J. Gary Pretlow toward development and improvement of Young Adult Services.

The Children's Room has also received \$600.00 from Jack and Jill of America, also toward library improvement.

The Westchester Arts Council (WAC), along with the Mount Vernon Public Library has created a committee to oversee works and improvements of educational and cultural exhibits in the "Rotunda Gallery". Members of the committee include representatives of the library and WAC, plus two local Mount Vernon Residents.

An exhibit opening for "Capturing the Moment" a teen photo workshop, was held at the library on June 28, 2008.

The library was without air conditioning during the month of June. A meeting with the city's Corporation Counsel helped to resolve the problem. An update meeting is being scheduled for July with all parties present to bring the extended contract agreement to conclusion.

The Library will have a six-month trial period in publicity ads with the Mount Vernon Inquirer, a community bi-monthly paper.

Material ordering has been updated and reorganized. All professional staff will now participate in making purchases for the collection. Each staff member will be assigned a specific area of concentration and a spending budget.

The Central Library Committee met with Marcella Jenkins of the Collection Development department to arrange plans to revamp and restore the Foreign Language Collection. Members of the WLS cataloging department are on the committee.

The first phase of staff library visits has been completed. The participants will record there visits in hopes of improving library services.

The bid notification for the library Security Collection System has been posted and the library is awaiting the results.

The light fixtures are being replaced in the main area and the lower stacks.

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There are still difficulties in the library's Young Adult room, which is resulting in the collection of water on the roof. The problem must be corrected at a cost to the library, since it was not part of the original contract.

The library will get an estimate to make repairs in this area.

The library needs to move forward with the policy manual. The consultant will be contacted for an update.

The library is still in contact with the Board of Education regarding the expansion of the Trustee Board.

The administration is working on recruiting an additional librarian, as well as an Assistant Director.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Sharon Cohen questioned the need for the library to hire an Assistant Director given its small staff and the tight library budget. Mrs. Cohen said that she had worked at the library when there were many more people on staff and there was no Assistant Director. She said that she did not understand why the library needed such a top heavy administration; particularly when it is proposed that the staff be given less money, with no retro-active money for retirees and being asked to pay for health insurance. Mrs. Cohen said that this shows a despicable attitude towards the staff.

Chris Hansen said that the library only has three non-union members.

Mr. Hansen stated that he strongly felt that the library should have an Assistant Director.

Diptimoy Roy said that he had retired in 2007 and he believed that he was covered by the old contract. He questioned the justification and legalities of the new contract proposal pertaining to retroactive salaries.

Mr. Hansen stated that he was not going to discuss the union negotiations at the board meeting and that no decisions have been made yet.

Gary Newman said that the library's proposals are a window into the library's psyche. The library is supposed to be a humane institution, but people are not being treated humanely.

FINANCIALS:

It is believed there is approximately \$100,000 in the gift fund. A report of the money in the gift fund was requested.

Money will be shifted within the budget to cover professional fees which are running high.

Areas in the budget that are incorrect should be balanced out.

Mrs. Gayles said that there was a large bill for attorney's fees.

It was noted that book purchases has started to accelerate.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary