

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

August 20, 2008

6:30 pm

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chris Hansen who presided called the meeting to order at 6:49 pm.

Present were: Susan Capeci, Arlene Roberts-Grant, and Danna Wood-Webb, Trustee.

Also present were: Mary Ellen Forte, WLS Trustee; Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Scott, Griffith, Deborah Ramsey, Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; Willie Lou Gayles, Chief Account Clerk.

MINUTES:

The regular minutes of the meetings of June 18, 2008 and July 16, 2008 were accepted without objection.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Opal Brown Lindsay said that Librarian II, Marcella Jenkins is resigning her position as of October 9, 2008.

The CSEA Union has requested the past 5 years of overtime compensation for library employees.

A letter was received from NJB Security asking to meet regarding increased rates for the security guards.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Union negotiations are ongoing.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

A farewell reception was held for outgoing WLS Executive Director, Siobhan Reardon on August 19, 2008, approximately eighty people attended. Mrs. Reardon served for 3 years as director. WLS comptroller John Smith has been appointed interim director by the WLS Trustee Board.

The WLS 50th Anniversary kick-off will begin at the November Annual meeting. All branch libraries are expected to participate. WLS has requested \$50,000 from Entergy Nuclear Company.

FOUNDATION REPORT:

The Save the Date Notices for the October Foundation Gala have been mailed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

Last month she met with Corporation Counsel, Helen Blackwood and the Mayor's Chief of Staff as well as contractors regarding the air conditioning system in the library. At the end of July the A/C was working for a while. Part of the agreement with the city was for contractors to return to set a deadline to sign off on the system. Someone is needed to conduct a/c maintenance; staff is to be trained on the system. Jesse Van Lew will get suggestions from DPW as to who that person should be.

20, August 08 –2 –

The Bookmobile debuted in Mount Vernon, at various selected places; Hartley Park, The Dole Center and the Fleetwood A& P.

Summer Activities are attracting a steady increase in attendance at the library. Staff is reporting an increase in library card registration and interlibrary loans.

A training workshop was held for the Learning Express Database.

A Government Documents meeting was held to review improved storage and the use of space in the library.

The bid process for the library materials security system has been completed.

Problems still remain with leakage in certain areas of the library.

Proposals have been sought for new lighting in the Young Adult Room.

The building will be undergoing a security risk assessment with the help of the Mount Vernon Police Department.

Suggestion boxes will be placed in children's room and the main area for patron and staff suggestions.

Plans are underway to create a form for suggestions.

A ceramic and sculpture exhibit will begin display in October.

The library is in talks with the Performing Arts Center of Southern Westchester to have some activities in library.

The Web Site committee has had two meetings with a WEB Master; the members are encouraged to give suggestions regarding the new web site. The company plans to attend the September Board Meeting.

The library will be part of the Poetry in the Branches Program. This program has been used in the city but is now being introduced in Westchester County.

Various meetings were attended in July, including the Central Library Mid Summer meeting in Ithaca, the Public Library Director's Association meeting (which will be held at Mount Vernon in September), and the MTVPL Foundation Meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

The City of Mount Vernon School Board has been contacted regarding the expansion of the trustee board, but it has not been determined who handles this issue.

The personnel manual is progressing; an expense proposal has been submitted.

20, August 08 – 3 –

After advertising in the NY times and receiving two phone calls, the library has been given the okay to start the process of ordering the library security system. We will need additional guards to man the system.

A decision still needs to be made as to where the panels will be placed in the library.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Deborah Ramsey discussed the need for additional staffing in the Circulation Department. She said that the low number of staff is preventing people from having days off when another staff member is off.

Ms. Ramsey also discussed her concern with the DSS workers who are assigned to the library being in unauthorized areas early in the morning when no one is supervising them.

It was questioned how people who had been dispatched to all areas of the library could be properly supervised.

Gary Newman said that he would like to hear how library plans to obtain the goal of getting new people in building.

Scott Griffith questioned why the job advertisements listed in the library were not listed at city hall.. Mrs. Lindsay said that the jobs were being advertised on the WLS Website.

Deborah Ramsey questioned why no replacements had been made for the people who were working in circulation as provisional clerks and had not passed the Civil Service Exam. Though they have returned to their old positions; she said that these clerks should be replaced with candidates from the Civil Service list. Ms. Ramsey questioned why there were aides who were working two part-time positions.

Opal Brown Lindsay said that the aides were hired during the budget crunch and hiring freeze at the beginning of the year. Mrs. Lindsay said that she had to justify hiring to city hall.

Chris Hansen said that he thought it was a priority to hire more people.

Scott Griffith said that it would be easier to promote from within. He said that the last job announcement posted for the Librarian II position had a grants writing component attached. He said that requiring someone with an MLS to have grants writing experience does not mix. He said, as a librarian he is capable of writing grants, but you are mixing two positions. Mr. Griffith said he felt that adding this component excluded people who were already working in the library.

Cheryl Thomas stated that she is not a librarian at all but does librarian work, she said that the library is not hiring people who are qualified for positions.

The Associate Director's position also has a grant's writing component.

Chris Hansen said that the remarks were best left for discussion with the director.

20, August 08– 4 –

Two main problems are financial and Civil Service rules. Opal Lindsay should get a consult from Civil Service regarding hiring. Mrs. Lindsay said that she has spoken to the new Human Resources person at City Hall and has been waiting for a clerks list.

FINANCIALS:

The Board has authorized the hiring of an Associate Director and Librarian II. Willie Lou Gayles and Mrs. Lindsay have met and found funds to hire a Librarian II. Mrs. Lindsay has gotten referrals for an Associate Director, but no decision made. She is receiving and reviewing resumes for the Librarian II position. The ad will place the salary at a maximum of \$90,000. The sooner the library starts filling positions the better.

Chris Hansen questioned if there was money in the budget for additional hiring, he referred to June 30th Financial Report.

It was questioned if the contingency salaries set aside for 07 and 08 were built into the current budget. Mrs. Gayles said that there are still vacancies to fill. An associate director, librarian and two clerks can be hired. Mrs. Gayles said that there are two other librarian positions to be filled.

It was suggested that additional people could be hired given the status of the current salary budget.

Five new people should be hired by October. A memo about hiring additional staff and how the library wishes to address any savings in salary will go out.

Mrs. Gayles said that new hire salaries have been calculated at a family benefits rate. She said that the estimated salaries for 2009 were based on a 4% salary increase.

Savings from the salary line may be moved around to the line for professional fees.

Chris Hansen said that he was happy to see that the purchases have substantially increased.. It was suggested that the lines for money be moved around without the increase for 2009 at 4%, since the library did not get the money it had requested.

Mrs. Gayles said that typically, the library asks for what is needed, and then city requests that the library make cuts. Mrs. Gayles said when she prepares the budget she asks how much the salary increase will be, then determines where each employee will fall within the scale, and then finds out about the department budgets and vendors increases. This does not mean the library will get the money it is asking for.

It was suggested that Mrs. Gayles should fill all salary lines in the 2009 proposed budget. Mrs. Gayles will submit the proposed budget to the board and administration before it is sent to the city.

Additional revisions must be made to the 2008 budget Mrs. Gayles will send the final revisions to city. A list of the propose revisions to the 2008 budget is requested by the board. Money may be moved into the attorney line and out of the salary line. The board approved shifting money to other line items in the 2008 budget.

20, August 08– 5 –

Mrs. Gayles spoke about the gift fund analysis and the Carrus Foundation gifts. The money from the Carrus Foundation has already been spent and the library has to reimburse the line item for maintenance. Money may be moved out of building maintenance to use in other areas.

Susan Capeci suggested that the CD in the amount of \$141,000 be put in two separate accounts at different banks when it matures; given the current banking situation.

The WLS terminal maintenance breakdown indicated that there will be a decrease in the amount of money the library has to pay for its computer terminal maintenance over the next few years.

EXECUTIVE SESSION -

The Board entered executive session at 7:56 pm. The Board returned to Public Session at 8:15 pm. No decisions were recorded.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary