

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
September 17, 2008
6:30 pm
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chris Hansen who presided called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

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

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

WLS FOUNDATION:

The Library Trustee Board will decide on a method of purchasing tickets for the Foundation Gala. They will also decide if they will take out an ad in the gala journal.

Board President, Chris Hansen pledged a least three gala tickets to be given to the staff.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

WLS Comptroller John Smith has been appointed Interim Director by the WLS Trustee Board.

The WLS Board Retreat will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2008 from 9am to 12 pm. About 13 Trustees will attend.

The WLS Trustees are going to the retreat to figure out the board's strengths and weaknesses.

The WLS Annual Meeting will be held on November 19, 2008. An events planner has been hired.

MINUTES:

The Regular Minutes of the meetings of August 20, 2008 and the amended Executive Minutes of June 18, 2008 were accepted without objection.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

The End of Summer Reading Program was successful, more than 200 participants signed up. For the second year in a row, South 2nd Avenue was closed for a Block Party for the participants. It was attended by Assemblyman Gary Pretlow who gave a monetary gift to the most read. The program was also attended by John Boykin a representative of the Mayor; State Senator, Ruth Hassell-Thompson and NBA star Ben Gordon, who read to the children. There was also a barbeque.

The Bookmobile participated in the program as well.

On August 6th the library participated in the N-Word event at Purchase College. This event was held in conjunction with the Youth Bureau.

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The expansion of the library trustee board is underway. City of Mount Vernon School District, Communications Director, Desiree Grand will handle the publicity.

Every line item in the 2009 budget is being reviewed carefully. Opal Brown Lindsay met with the Mayor regarding the library budget. A copy of the budget was sent to the comptroller.

It was suggested that the trustees try and meet with the Mayor and City Council regarding the budget.

The process of purchasing the library materials security system is underway.

The plans continue for the new library website.

A project is underway in the Fiction Room regarding getting more space. A listing of items that have not circulated in the last five years is being generated.

It is suggested that particular attention be paid to the law collection and the discard of some of the law books.

The library will hire a maintenance service for the annual upkeep of the HVAC system.

The process of hiring additional staff has begun. An ad for Assistant Director will be placed.

The Planning Commission is looking at the Local History Room. Donna Jackson of the Local History Room committee is soliciting volunteers for the room.

Several grants are in the works for the library, a lifetime arts grant, a teacher collaboration grant and a grant for intergenerational programs funded by the State Education Department and Assemblyman Pretlow.

There is also a pending CDBG Block grant in collaboration with the United Coalition of Contractors for a satellite program.

The City Planners are encouraging the library to decide if it wants to remain at its current location.

The current library location is a central location, but the library is old and getting too small.

There has been discussion about enlarging the library space. The planners spoke about the need for a small auditorium in the library for community use.

The draft of the library policy manual is in the works, though some items need to be negotiated.

The Public Libraries Directors Association (PLDA) will meet tomorrow at the Mount Vernon Public Library.

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The Director attended several meetings including N-Word Event, Library Friends and Foundation, WLS, City Planning and other City Department meetings.

FINANCIALS:

Opal Lindsay said that there is money in the Capital Budget for roofing and repairs. A lot of repairs are needed. The entrances are dismal and there are security concerns regarding the doors leading to the fiction room.

Willie Lou Gayles said that changes have been made to the 2008 budget and money has been transferred. The funds in the contingency fees line can be adjusted if no increases are given this year.

Chris Hansen said that additional money is needed in the line item for professional fees. Several others shifts have to be made in the budget.

Standing orders have been significantly decreased.

The purchase of books may not be correctly reflected in the current reports.

Gary Newman said that the librarians place orders and get dozens of bills with hundreds of items to sign off on. They cannot keep it in their head what was ordered.

There are some large bills including a two month bill for health insurance and a bid notice in the NY Times.

A separate line item was proposed for the money the library expects to receive from the Foundation.

There were questions about the periodicals budget and the budget for library programs. It was suggested that money be transferred from the salary line to increase staff development.

The line item for security may need to be increased due to additional hires and a requested increase from the security company.

Increases to staff development and collection development were also suggested.

Willie Lou Gayles said that this year's CLDA budget is still the same as last year.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Gary Newman said that he was not tracking on the spending discussion. He said that on one hand the library is not spending enough and on the other hand the budget needs pruning. Chris Hansen said that spending more money and spending money wisely is not inconsistent.

Cheryl Thomas spoke about her concerns regarding her position in the Technical Service Department and its supervision. It is the board's view that this is an issue that must be worked out with the Director.

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OLD BUSINESS:

Mrs. Lindsay has asked for a review of the budget to see if funds are available to open on Sundays through the end of the year.

Chris Hansen said that there is no objection to opening on Sundays as long as there is money in the budget. He would hate to see the library open on Sundays in October and then close in January.

Mary Ellen Forte asked if there were statistics for library usage on Sundays. She suggested that these figures could be presented to the Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION -

The Board entered executive session at 8:45 pm. The Board returned to Public Session at 8:59 pm. No decisions were recorded.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary