

MOUNT  VERNON
PUBLIC LIBRARY
the CENTRAL LIBRARY OF WESTCHESTER

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

April 16, 2014

6:30 PM

MINUTES

Na'im Tyson, who presided, called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

Present were: Dawn Cancellieri, Marcia Dupree, Julie Mills Worthey and David Ockene

Also present: Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Hafeezah Basir, Linda Bryant, Jane Curtos, Jamie Pessin, and Tamara Stewart, Library Patrons, Denise Lyles, Head of Youth Services; Scott Griffith, Deanna Smith and Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Carolyn Karwoski, Library Director and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant

MINUTES:

The minutes of the special meeting of March 13, 2014 were approved as amended, upon a motion by Dawn Cancellieri, seconded by David Ockene.

The minutes of the meeting of March 19, 2014 were approved, upon a motion by David Ockene, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Gary Newman said that the library has had its ups and downs, but 114 years is a good run. To quote Ovid: "All things change; nothing perishes" See you next month.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Dr. Tyson read the WLS Trustee Report from Chris Hansen regarding the Learning Ambassadors program.

Dr. Tyson said that the program exposes youth to careers in librarianship, library science and technology.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the library had really good ambassadors last year and the program was very successful.

The maintenance of effort waiver that the library submitted has been declined. We no longer have our central library status.

Mrs. Karwoski said that this does not mean that the library cannot reapply. The board has to make that decision.

Carolyn Karwoski said that Terry Kirchner has been asked to submit a plan for an all digital central library.

Mrs. Karwoski said there is an issue because some patrons do not have access to digital.

The CLD money the library receives is very little, around \$12,000. At one time the library used to receive over \$200,000. WLS has expanded Central Library services and the money has been deluded over the years.

Na'im Tyson said that the denial letter states that the city did not show department cuts across all departments. It says the report shows appropriations, but not revenues available to the city. It does not establish a severe drop in the tax levy.

Dr. Tyson said that he did not understand the second point in the letter.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the letter was sent to Terry Kirchner and the library was not carbon copied.

Dr. Tyson said that he wanted to write a letter. He said that he worked with Tom Rajala on the waiver. This explanation does not make sense.

Given the fact that the library did not receive the letter and the explanation originated from here is distressing.

The library's original documents were sent to Terry Kirchner. He drafted the response to send to the State.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Library Director Carolyn Karwoski reported the following:

These past few weeks, she and the staff have been immersed in all the details surrounding our first library budget vote. After last month's Board of Trustee meeting where approval was given to hire Alice Patterson as a consultant, she arranged with her to train Debbie Harris as our Clerk of the Election. Alice has been in charge of the school district election for many years. Her help and assistance in training Debbie has been invaluable. There are so many details involved in this process that we did not realize had to be completed. With Alice's help we have been able to prepare and advertise for election workers. This was done by a letter and brought in over 100 applicants. We also were able to order the printed envelopes needed for the absentee applications as well as work with the county for the list of registered voters and the list of absentee ballots needed by those who are permanently disabled. Also the legal notices that were prepared by our attorney, Robert Schofield, were placed in the daily, The Journal News and the weekly, Mount Vernon Rising. The notice will run for 4 weeks in each newspaper.

Libby Post was in town last week and worked with the Friends of the Library as well as volunteers to assist on the marketing campaign for the vote. Libby and she are pleased with the numbers of volunteers that have turned out to assist in the marketing campaign. This is a direct response to all the work of the Friends of the Library executive committee. Mrs. Karwoski commended their dedication and their love for the Mount Vernon Public Library. They have been true library advocates and all their hard work is certainly paying off with growing support for the budget vote.

We have had many phone calls from people interested in possibly running for a trustee position. Petitions are due back on April 16th. So far we have received two applicants and are in the process of verifying the signatures. She expects that we should have at least four people running but could be a few more depending upon if those who expressed interest follows through in the process. Once the signatures are verified, we will post their names and a short bio on the website so that voters can be informed about all the candidates.

Applications for those people who are interested in manning the polls went out a few weeks ago. We received over 100 applications for the position. We numbered each application as it was received. She and Debbie and a volunteer oversaw the pulling of numbers to select the inspectors. Each number pulled corresponded to an application. We selected 20 people to train as election inspectors. There will be a training session next week to work with each person and prepare them to do their best job at the budget vote on May 6th.

The library has received several requests for voter registration forms as well as applications for absentee ballots. We have mailed out to several people and have forms available at the Reference Desk. On the whole we have been extremely busy fielding a variety of phone calls from citizens of Mount Vernon with questions about the budget vote. It has been nonstop and is taking up quite a bit of our time. The other issue is having an information and candidate session here at the library. It is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30 at 6:30 at the here at the library.

Plans are proceeding for a wonderful summer reading program experience. Denise is here to report on the program for youth. For the adults, we are planning a variety of programs including an end of year concert featuring Cookie Thomas and his trio. Cookie is a phenomenal singer with a wonderful repertoire of songs. We have also scheduled another concert as well as a book/film discussion series. Online registration is planned for all 3 summer reading club programs.

In addition, she has launched a library newsletter. Right now it will be quarterly. The spring edition is with the designer. She is calling the newsletter, Connections: news from the Mount Vernon Public Library. The summer edition should be out by the end of June and will feature all 3 summer reading club programs. Also in the plans is to improve our email outreach. Mrs. Karwoski will be running an effort for patrons to sign up for our newsletter as well as looking at different email services that we can use to handle our email blasts. The push for signup will be a feature in the summer edition. Her hope is to move into a bimonthly newsletter in the fall. That will be contingent on passing the budget vote so that we might bring on help in the writing of the newsletter as well as press releases.

Carolyn Karwoski also received news from WLS about the status of our maintenance of effort waiver that has been sitting at the Division of Library Development. The Board of Regents considered our waiver request and has decided to deny the waiver. The Board will now have to decide whether to file a new application for Central Library Status. WLS will have to issue the application to all the Westchester Libraries. If we decide to apply we will have to consider the other applicants and how that may impact the choice of Central Library.

Youth Service Coordinator, Denise Lyles reported that her goal is to establish a daily habit of reading for the kids, each reading at their own speed. She said she plans to increase the number of children participating in the Summer Reading Program. The reading buddies are coming back this summer.

Visits are scheduled to public schools and PTA's. Greenburgh Nature Center and The Children's Museum will be visiting each week. Ms. Lyles also spoke about additional plans for the Summer Reading Program.

Dr. Tyson asked had the schools supplied the summer reading lists. Ms Lyles said that she had been in touch with the schools, but had not yet received the lists.

Na'im Tyson asked how the children were going to be graded on whether they had read the books. Denise Lyles said that the learning ambassadors were going to quiz them.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she put in a proposal from the local architect. He is recommending a fees list. She said that she needs this information to apply for a construction grant for the children's room bathroom. The architect is going to look at the local history room and its connection to the children's room.

Recommendations for the strategic plan committee and a survey were given to the board. Carolyn Karwoski said that three staff members want to work on the plan.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she has spoken to Brian Johnson about getting the money from the Library Foundation.

Dr. Tyson asked if Mr. Johnson had the library plans. Carolyn Karwoski said that she had looked at the plans that Marcia Dupree had gotten from city hall and they are not complete. The children's room is not included.

Na'im Tyson said that we have to go back to the buildings department to get the rest of the plans. Marcia Dupree said that she thought the plans were complete and only the parking lot was missing. She said she will call to see what she can do.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she has to submit the grant online, but she needs the plans. She said that we can receive 75% of the grant, but WLS has the final say. All of the libraries are vying for the grant.

David Ockene asked if the architect had any references. Dr. Tyson asked if he could provide estimates. Carolyn Karwoski said that she would have him give a presentation at next month's meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Na'im Tyson reminded the board to sign up for phone bank hours.

TRESURER'S Report:

Juan Jaramillo said that he met with the accountant regarding the 2013 taxes. She will ask for an extension because the audit is not complete.

The line item for health insurance is basically breaking even. He did not receive the health insurance bills for January and February until March.

The general liability insurance has been paid for the entire year.

Dr. Tyson said it looks like we will blow through the amount allocated for custodial supplies.

Juan Jaramillo said that he would not put through any more Cell Tech bills.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the dust mops from Aramark have been discontinued. They can be gotten from Staples for half the price.

She said she is checking prices on Amazon.

Na'im Tyson asked if the frequency of ordering had been negotiated.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she is trying to get the cost down and would like to work on surplus supplies.

Dr. Tyson said that the board should start to see purchase orders in June.

Mrs. Karwoski said there have been requests for the 2013 and 2014 budget to go on the website. She said that we need to consider the fiscal year. We also need to consider what percentage of the budget will fund the remainder of this year.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the board should look at the budget before it goes on the website. Dr. Tyson said to make sure it was watermarked before it is approved to go online.

Julie Mills Worthey asked if we needed a special meeting to review the 2015 budget. She said that she would like to see a presentation.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she would present the budget with the expectation of how to handle the rest of funding for 2014.

TRUSTEE REMARKS:

Na'im Tyson asked if Libby Post had anything additional to be approved. Carolyn Karwoski said that a second postcard is to be mailed out.

Mrs. Karwoski said that all 28,000 copies of the first mailing had gone out to all postal zip codes. She said she does not know what the delay is. She said they were mailed out two weeks ago. She will check with the post office.

Dr. Tyson asked when the lists were created did we use U.S. Postal Service standardized format. Carolyn Karwoski said yes.

Julie Mills Worthey said it was a considerable expenditure to develop email lists that are usable, effective and to a certain standard. She said that she understands that the lists belong to the library.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she has not received any eblasts in a long time.

She asked if Carolyn Karwoski could get the lists from Libby Post.

Mrs. Karwoski said that the library is going to be working with a different email distributor.

Dr. Tyson said that we want to see the list.

Na'im Tyson asked had Carolyn Karwoski heard from the IRS. Mrs. Karwoski said that she had received a letter asking for the same information they had already been sent last month. This is for the retro reinstatement. She said if they don't approve then we will have to deal with the corporate part.

Mrs. Mills Worthey asked if there were someone earmarked to handle this. Dr. Tyson said it goes to the accountant.

Julie Mills Worthey asked if the issue about generating reports had been resolved

Dr. Tyson said not yet, someone must be contacted for advanced training, which goes beyond what we have now.

Mrs. Mills Worthey asked that this item be added to the May board meeting agenda.

She said at various times the board has asked for reports and it appears the information has to be obtained manually without utilizing our software. She said that she would like to know what it will take to get our business office to this point.

Na'im Tyson said that Juan Jaramillo has to call Intuit to get information. If they suggest anything, it should be included in the report.

Carolyn Karwoski said that we may have to look at different software.

Mr. Jaramillo said that QuickBooks is made for small companies that don't need flexible reports. He mentioned Peachtree, Sage and Mass 500 as programs that can generate them.

Dr. Tyson said that the taxes have to wait until next month when we get the reports.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had discontinued the services of the tax attorney.

She said that he did not give her any paperwork.

Julie Mills Worthey said at this point we are asking for our file from the attorney with the exception of his work product.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she has to meet with the union regarding the fire safety policy.

Dr. Tyson asked about the progress of the Dormitory Authority grant. Has the paperwork been submitted?

Juan Jaramillo said that he was working on it.

Julie Mills Worthey asked what the time line was for that. Carolyn Karwoski said that it was a lot of paperwork. The doors are not complete. The stairs have been completed and that paperwork can be submitted.

Mrs. Mills Worthey asked if anything else was included in that grant.

Carolyn Karwoski said the foyers and floors are included. She said someone needs to come in at look at them. If there is any money left we may want to replace the paneling. She said she is going to get a proposal on the costs.

Carolyn Karwoski said that a postcard regarding the budget vote is going out. The Friends have paid for two ads in the Mount Vernon Inquirer.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Tyson introduced a resolution to change the debit card account from Hudson Valley Bank.

Na'im Tyson said that the Hudson Valley Bank has not been prompt in giving us information.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she would like to table the resolution until the budget vote. She said that she cannot get more information before April 25th.

Dr. Tyson said that the topic is switching from Hudson Valley Bank to Pay Pal. We do not have electronic access to the account.

Julie Mills Worthey asked why the account with Hudson Valley Bank was opened. Dr. Tyson said Chase Bank would not give the library a debit card.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she thinks it is an issue because Pay Pal links to the checking accounts. She does not think there is online access with the Chase accounts.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she is confused how we reached Hudson Valley checking and now Pay Pal. How did we get to Hudson Valley?

Carolyn Karwoski said that Chase will not permit us to use a debit card.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said she recalled the board discussed looking at opening a separate Chase account for the purpose of these transactions. This account would also link to Pay Pal.

Juan Jaramillo said that he worked four consecutive months with Chase and could not get an answer. He said he got fed up and went to Hudson Valley. The only problem is not getting access to online information. Mrs. Mills Worthey said that is a huge problem.

Dr. Tyson said there is no control with Hudson Valley Bank beyond what the card is being used for.

Julie Mills Worthey said in her experience it does take considerable time to work on this given the other tasks. She agreed the resolution should be tabled until the next meeting, if we receive a report.

Upon a motion by Carolyn Karwoski, seconded by Julie Mills Worthey the board agreed to table the resolution to change the debit card account from Hudson Valley Bank. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Na'im Tyson introduced a resolution for a policy on hiring professional and non-professional staff.

Dr. Tyson said that there are concerns that we are in compliance with civil service. The idea is to have a process and have a committee to follow through before job postings go out.

Carolyn Karwoski said that it cannot be a hiring committee. The board only has the power to hire the director. We have to be careful with the language. She said she has no problem with the committee being comprised of trustees. The committee should be chosen when the board changes.

Na'im Tyson said that he will change hiring to personnel. The second issue is the nature of the committee; resolutions moving forward. Discussions will affect the committee moving forward. Also discussions on whether it should apply to certain levels or departments.

Carolyn Karwoski said that background checks should be defined. Dr. Tyson said there can be a separate resolution to define background checks.

Mrs. Karwoski asked if this extended to library aides. Do you want to appoint people and then approve at meetings?

Dr. Tyson said that the questions are whom this applies to. Should the appointment be made first?

David Ockene asked if the resolution applied to promotional appointments.

Dr. Tyson said no, that's a separate resolution.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she could see the new board having a say. She said she would suggest professional and non-professional. She said she could also see the board having a say in background checks.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she does not see making a decision at this time. Since some of the issues are personnel, she feels it should be done in executive session.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that all are in agreement if there are no planned hires before this is approved. She said this should be an item of discussion in executive session. Be prepared to vote on it at the next meeting.

Carolyn Karwoski said that there are no planned hires. She has only hired on library assistant.

Upon a motion by Julie Mills Worthey, seconded by Dawn Cancellieri, the board tabled the hiring committee resolution.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had sought an estimate on the foyer repairs. When she gets it she will know how to proceed. A decision on whether to repair or replace the paneling needs to be made. She needs to let the Dormitory Authority know if it is enough for the grant.

Na'im Tyson asked about the issue of the separate set of doors in the local history room to give access to the children's room.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had discussions with the management committee about relocating the local history room upstairs. She said she is working on getting volunteers to scan local history room documents.

Mrs. Karwoski said that we should be able to access the children's room through the local history room inside the library. There is also an issue of handicap access.

Repairs were being done today and a security guard was posted to direct patrons through the local history room to the children's room. If the children's room bathroom goes there, it will block off the doors. We have to move them.

One of the "Friends" has volunteered to do inventory in the local history room.

Dr. Tyson said first we need an estimate. When the proposal is ready, then we can revisit. He suggested holing off until July in order to get the information first.

David Ockene asked if there was an existing children's room bathroom there. Carolyn Karwoski said no. The current children's room bathroom is in a place that is not easily accessible.

Carolyn Karwoski said that a new Mount Vernon Historical society group has been formed.

Upon a motion by July Mills Worthey, seconded by David Ockene, the Board moved to Executive Session at 8:29 pm.

The following decision was recorded.

Mount Vernon Board of Trustees

Resolution: Labor 2014-04-16

Topic: Board Personnel Committee

Policy on Hiring of Professional & Non-professional Staff

Board of Trustees & Patrons,

As the board looks forward to hiring opportunities in the future, in anticipation of a successful budget vote for 2014,

Whereas the Library Director should always recommend candidates to the Board of Trustees prior to their placements within the library staff,

Whereas the Board of Trustees is responsible for staff negotiations; now, therefore be it,

Resolved, that the Library Director shall recommend all professional and all full-time positions to the personnel committee prior to appointment,

Resolved, that the personnel committee will be comprised of a minimum of two, and no more than three trustees,

Resolved, that the personnel committee, in consultation with the Library Director, will ensure that:

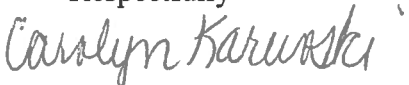
1. the proper budget accommodations have been made for the position(s) in the annual budget
2. the position has a proper fit within the organization chart of the library
3. the job description is up-to-date with Mount Vernon Civil Service (MVCS) guidelines
4. any changes to the job description are vetted by the Board of Trustees and approved by the MVCS
5. applicant(s) receive proper background checks prior to their paperwork being submitted to the MVCS

Further Resolved, that the personnel committee will be a standing committee whose penultimate selections shall be presented to the entire Board of Trustees during an executive session for a final selection.

Submitted by: Na'im R. Tyson, PhD

Action taken: Unanimously approved

Date: 4/16/2014

Respectfully

Secretary

Date: Wed, 26 Mar 2014 10:48:04 -0400

From: "Chris Hansen Subject: WLS

To: Na'im Tyson
"Carolyn Karwoski"

The March meeting of WLS was held last night. We approved the annual report that is sent to the state. We also received a quite detailed report on the Learning Ambassador program. As you know, Mt. Vernon participates in that program. It currently costs WLS approximately \$175,000 per year and serves approximately 20 teenagers. (There is an outstanding proposal to a foundation to receive an additional \$100,000 for that program. We expect a decision in April or May.) We discussed the added value those teenagers and the program provide to member libraries, librarians, and the children in the library with whom they interact. We also discussed the value from exposing those teens (and by extension their families and friends) to libraries. No decisions were made. Terry reported that the state has asked him to draft a proposal to turn the Central Library of Westchester into an entirely digital library. He agreed to draft a tentative proposal to that effect, but without any commitment as to its viability or wisdom. As always, feel free to call or email with questions.