

MOUNT VERNON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

March 20, 2013

6:30 PM

MINUTES

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

Present were: Julie Mills Worthey, and Marcia Dupree

Absent: Millie Burns and Winston Maharaj

Also present: Althea Anderson, and Tamara Stewart, Library Patrons; Scott Griffith, and Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Carolyn Karwoski, Library Director and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Tamara Stewart said that several public statements had been made by members of the city council that the school district should take over the operations of the library.

She asked had the board leadership spoken with the school district to educate them.

Ms. Stewart asked would the 2014 library budget go out for a vote in June and what was the status of the library's charter.

Tamara Stewart also asked how the library was going to deal with the 2013 budget shortfall.

Na'im Tyson said that he spoke to Yuhanna Edwards in December and tried to explain even though the library is classified as a school district library, the school district does not have the onus to run the library. He said that he explained that this was not how things were done.

Dr. Tyson said that the board is moving towards compliance. To do anything else would put the library severely out of compliance.

Julie Mills Worthey is working on getting out the resolution for a charter change. There are issues with getting agreement from Barbara Lilley and Terry Kirchner.

Dr. Tyson said that Barbara Lilley is strict with compliance and will send the information back if it is not right.

Na'im Tyson said that only \$250,000 was taken from public funds. The other funds in jeopardy are the central library development funds.

Dr. Tyson said that he had to file maintenance of effort documents with the state library.

The state asked for information for two budget years that would show budget decreases in each department. When the information was sent to Barbara Lilley she requested additional years dating back to 2008.

Na'im Tyson said that he worked with Tom Rajala of the finance office to send off the information.

Dr. Tyson said he has not heard back from Barbara Lilley.

Na'im Tyson said that as far as the budget vote is concerned, he believes that the library only has one shot.

Dr. Tyson said that previously the board tried to talk to the city clerk. They have not been successful with sitting down with him.

Trustee Mills Worthey has been asked to talk to the school board. The board needs to meet with the school board in order to schedule the vote.

Dr. Tyson said that the library had hoped for a rigorous campaign in order to market the election information, but we could not get the personnel.

Na'im Tyson said that we do not want the vote to happen the same day as the school budget vote. They have had a historically low turnout.

The library would also like to have three trustee positions voted on to bring the number to seven.

Dr. Tyson said that ideally we would want the last attempt at the budget vote to be the end of June. He said one problem is that the city council wishes to write off the library and thinks that the budget vote will be nailed on the first shot.

Tamara Stewart asked would the budget vote be a straight yes or no vote. Dr. Tyson said that it is some calculation of the percentage of the population.

Althea Anderson asked what information was needed from City Clerk, George Brown.

Na'im Tyson said that he wanted to know if there were any municipal requirements for the vote to happen. Where do we go to find the municipal code?

He said that he wants to make sure that everything is covered.

Althea Anderson complained that security is not enforcing the rules at the cyber corner. Kids are using the adult cyber corner and some patrons blast the computer audio. It can be heard even when they are wearing headphones.

Dr. Tyson said at one point the library was investigating having a new security company take over.

MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Julie Mills Worthey, seconded by Marcia Dupree, the board approved the minutes of the meeting of December 19, 2012. by a vote of 3 to 0.

Upon a motion by Marcia Dupree, seconded by Julie Mills Worthey, the board approved the minutes of the meeting of February 20, 2013 by a vote of 3 to 0.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Carolyn Karwoski reported that this has been her first month as the Director of the Mount Vernon Library and it has been a hectic, busy, productive month. The Mount Vernon Library staff has been very welcoming and she feels at home at her new library. She has learned quite a bit from staff about the workings of the library. Together we are working to become a team and prioritize the needs of the library to better serve our public. Her goal is to improve customer service and programs to the library's patrons. This is not an easy task, especially since the budget has been cut by \$250,000, but it is important that we serve our users to the best of our abilities.

Mrs. Karwoski held her first management meeting on Friday, March 15. All of the department heads were present and they discussed a whole host of different issues facing the library. The biggest issue, beside the cut in funding, is the building issues. She learned of the problem in the adult stacks of missing

shelves and a section that staff feels needs immediate replacement. They also discussed scheduling and staffing concerns as well as the restoration of Saturday hours, which they all agreed, are very much needed by the community. In addition, they are updating the organizational chart. It was a good beginning and they will be meeting on a regular basis each month to address these issues and many others.

The Director spent some time walking through the library with Maintenance Foreman, Jesse VanLew. There are many building issues that need attention. We need to repair the ceilings and walls but have to wait for the city to repair the sections of the roof that are leaking. Once these repairs are completed, we can then address the restoration of the study rooms as well as the repair of the plaster. The city has said that it should not be too much longer before the repairs have begun. She has also been informed that we have a construction grant from the Dormitory Authority. This grant is for \$50,000 to repair exterior and interior doors, the restoration of the woodwork and display cabinets in the foyers, as well as the restoration of the tile floors, in both areas. Mrs. Karwoski has received a partial bid on the work from Salerno Commercial Painters. She is also getting a bid for replacing the threads on the wooden stairs in both foyers as well as for the restoration of the display cabinets. She has been told that these repairs are critical, as the stairs in their current state of disrepair are a liability. Carolyn Karwoski is hoping to begin some of this work in the next two months. Having some smaller repairs done on the physical plant will show that the library does care about the appearance and safety of the building.

The library has decided to participate in the Library Ambassador's program for summer reading. This program is sponsored and funded by WLS and will provide for 2 paid teens to work at the library and assist the Children's staff with a variety of jobs for the summer reading program. As participants we will receive a stipend to help defray costs of the summer reading program. This additional funding will allow Shawn Lucas-Dunnom and her staff to add some additional programming to our already vibrant reading club plans.

Mrs. Karwoski was invited by Councilman Rich Thomas to attend the presentation at Purchase College, of Governor Cuomo's new initiative called "NY Rising". It was exciting to be part of the large audience to hear the Governor speak about "NY Rising" which includes a component to strengthen education in the state. This is a mandate that public libraries can offer support with a variety of services, programs and computer assistance, as well as many other aspects to compliment any public education initiative.

The Director met with the Friends of the Mount Vernon Library and attended their executive board meeting. They talked about a variety of issues and concerns as well as the upcoming book sale during the first weekend in May. They also discussed fall programming and she will be putting together some recommendations that they can consider. It was lovely to meet the dedicated members of the Friends executive board who will help the library develop and grow programming.

There were many meetings this month. The first was the meeting of the Central Library Committee. Bronxville Public Library hosted the meeting and Mrs. Karwoski said she enjoyed seeing that library as well as meeting all the committee members. The discussion centered upon the creation of different language materials that will be housed at several of the libraries. To that end Terry Kirchner prepared a survey to see which languages should be considered for each location. She also attended a talk given by the President of the Westchester Economic Council. It was very informative and gave her a better understanding of the economic growth in Westchester as well as the job creation that is happening because of the building of the new Tappan Zee Bridge. This presentation was followed by a look at a new e-book service that WLS is considering offering to Westchester Library patrons. Called Totalboox, it is a web-based product that will allow patrons to download and read a variety of books. Right now it is only in beta testing and only works on Apple products but it is definitely a product to consider adding to the WLS e-materials platform.

She also attended the presentation at Simon & Schuster Publishers for the upcoming spring and summer titles. These meetings are a way of not only viewing what might be the next bestsellers but

also a way to connect with the library marketing staff. These connections can mean authors for our library programs. Mrs. Karwoski also enjoy attending these events as it gave her a chance to meet librarians from the tri-state area as well as to see what might be the next “hot” book for the adult patrons at the library.

Na'im Tyson asked about the DPW schedule to replace the roof.

Carolyn Karwoski said that DPW Commissioner, Curtis Woods and Assistant Corporation Counsel, Brian Johnson had come to the library to view the roof damage. Brian Johnson wanted information about the roof. She said that she emailed him, but has not heard back.

Na'im Tyson said that according to Brian Johnson, the roof warranty company feels that the damage is so minor; the library should be able to repair it themselves.

Mrs. Karwoski said that DPW seems to think they can do the repairs.

Dr. Tyson said that the library is waiting for the building plans for the smoke barrier and sprinkler system.

Marcia Dupree said that she was told by the building department that the paper for the plans was on order. She said that she has not heard back from them.

Na'im Tyson asked if Carolyn Karwoski had spoken to the Friends about the grant. She said yes.

Mrs. Karwoski said that in the meantime the Friends wanted to paint. From a marketing standpoint, we should.

Julie Mills Worthey asked about the Muslim Journeys bookshelf grant.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she had sent out the press release.

She said that she met with Imam, Abdul Azziz to discuss a film presentation and discussion.

There will be a display, plus posters and bookmarks.

Mr. Karwoski said that until the 501C3 is reestablished, the library cannot apply for the second part of the grant which is monetary. The application for this part is due by the end of the month.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Na'im said the maintenance of effort documents had been sent to Terry Kirchner and Barbara Lilley.

Dr. Tyson said the application for the 501C3 reinstatement is two stages. Form 1023 has been submitted and approved. The second stage was to send the 990 forms to the IRS. Dr. Tyson said he believes it will be sixty to ninety days before approval.

Julie Mills Worthey asked what the reinstatement date would be, if the IRS did not approve the application retroactively. Na'im Tyson said that the library would have to negotiate the fees.

Dr. Tyson said that he has received notice from the IRS requesting form 990 for 2012. He said that the audited financials must also be sent.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the fees and taxes would be on donations and grants. She said that the library is still a tax exempt organization recognized by the State of New York. Getting the 501C3 will open up doors for grants.

Na'im Tyson said that he had tried reaching out to Senators, Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand. He also tried reaching out to Congressman Elliot Engel.

Na'im Tyson asked that Carolyn Karwoski get in touch with Tom Rajala for the audited financial report.

Julie Mills Worthey suggested that Councilman, Richard Thomas may be more successful in making some of the contacts.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Carolyn Karwoski reported the following:

The library received a large bill for 2012 from EBSCO. The invoice was over budget. She said we may have to look at periodicals closely in 2013.

The library under spent for books in 2012. In 2013 some spending for books has already been done. Some purchases have been made for Mount Vernon titles for patrons with reserves.

The line item for terminal maintenance is a little under budget.

Na'im Tyson said that the estimate may have been high because it has gone up in previous years.

The lines for worker's compensation and unemployment insurance are pretty high.

Dr. Tyson asked who the contact person for New York State documents was.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the library needs a full time bookkeeper. The position is not a part-time job,

Na'im Tyson said that he thought the previous director had revised her 2013 budget after meeting with Tom Rajala.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the 2013 periodicals were based on 2012 figures.

The line item for library materials has been reduced.

Mrs. Karwoski said that the line item for periodicals may be too low and she will take a look at it.

Carolyn Karwoski said that most lines stayed pretty much the same.

She said that she had tried to keep the administrative salaries on the administrative line. She said that she included the bookkeeper position in that line. It can always be moved back.

The library has not been billed for dental insurance for the last three to four years. There have been repeated requests made to the finance office to be billed, but we have not received them.

Carolyn Karwoski said that if the bill comes, some of the money will have to come out of last year's budget.

Na'im Tyson said that Mrs. Karwoski may want to contact Tom Rajala. He said that it is too late to write off the expenses for 2012 and she may want to run a revised budget by Mr. Rajala.

Dr. Tyson asked if Mrs. Karwoski still thought she would be able to have Saturday service with the reduction in budget. Carolyn Karwoski said she was going to try to work it out.

Na'im Tyson asked if the line for staff development and training included registration fees and reimbursement for travel.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she would look closely this year, but it is important that the staff go for training.

REMARKS OF THE TRUSTEES:

Julie Mills Worthey said that there was a major thrust in the efforts to understand compliance with the Board of Regents mandate to have the trustees and the budget voted on.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that state education law dictates the process and that process must mirror the local school district.

Julie Mills Worthey said that it was necessary to amend our charter to provide for election of trustees. She said that she has drafted a resolution and petition. Copies have been sent to Barbara Lilley and Terry Kirchner.

Barbara Lilley said that the documents must be edited.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she has not seen the edits to the charter resolution. She said she feels because of time constraints we must move forward.

Julie Mills Worthey said that the school district manages its own elections and pays; not the board of elections or the county.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that the board of elections will provide the voting machines. The library must pay for transport and storage.

There is an advantage to working with the school board, but because of past difficulties, the school board does not want to hold the election at the same time.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she is envisioning June 26, 2013 as the last legal day to hold the election. You cannot get a second turn to hold the election after that date.

If the election is moved up a month, it will coincide with the school board election.

The library must retain an election inspector and must have the Westchester County Board of Elections review the signatures.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she was in communication with the clerk to the board of elections and tried to get the number of people that voted in the school board election. This would determine the number of signatures needed for the petition.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she was told that a very small number of people cast votes in the school board election. She said that we have to anticipate smaller numbers casting votes for the library.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she has not been able to get what the minimum number needed is in order for the vote to pass.

Julie Mills Worthey said that a meeting is needed with the municipalities so they can agree on the legality of the process the library will follow in order to have its budget vote.

Also what will the tax levy be based on the library budget.

Some retooling in the way the comptroller distributes the library finances will be required.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that a meeting is needed with the Mayor, the comptroller, the city clerk and the school board.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she attended a school board meeting with the plans and was urged to hold a meeting with city officials.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that school board trustee Elias Gootzeit has been very helpful.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she has asked for charter petition language from New Rochelle library. She has drafted the resolution.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that once the budget is approved that will be our budget. She asked that the numbers be very carefully considered.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she has drafted the proposed calendar. Legal notices must be posted through the city clerk, in publications and public venues.

There is a requirement to have absentee ballots and when the budget presentation is made, voters could ask for propositions on the ballot.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she is looking at May 15th for submission of the petition and the following day selection of the ballot placement. The library must assume the cost of printing the ballots. Budget notices must be mailed out.

Julie Mills Worthey said in addition to meeting with city officials, she is proposing that the board schedule a work session for the trustees to work on the budget vote.

Mrs. Mills Worthey also proposed that the director reach out to New Rochelle Public Library for a template on how their budget vote was managed. Carolyn Karwoski said that she would talk to Tom Geofino.

Na'im Tyson asked what the probability of success was. Julie Mills Worthey said that she had drafted the resolutions, but Barbara Lilley questioned the form.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that a special board meeting may have to be called. She said if we don't have a charter change by the next board meeting, we cannot possibly comply with the June date for the budget vote.

Dr. Tyson asked about the progress of getting the library's building plans.

There is a delay in getting the paper that the plans are to be printed on.

Marcia Dupree suggested just going to the building department to pick up the plans.

Mrs. Mills Worthey asked was it possible for the library to acquire the paper the plans are printed on.

Na'im Tyson said that he was going to send a message to the Mayor's office to discuss the document.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she thinks there should be a conversation with all the stakeholders.

Carolyn Karwoski asked if the budget vote fails will the city continue to support the library.

Julie Mills Worthey said that the school board said the community is going to be interested in the city's position toward the library budget. If the city is not supporting the library will the taxes be reduced?

Tamara Stewart said that she was familiar with a person at the school district who could be helpful with the information process.

Julie Mills Worthey said if the board has a working session the participation of this person could be beneficial. Mrs. Worthey said that she will speak with the school board trustees.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she needs to talk about everyone's availability for the meeting, to see if she can get a commitment for everyone to come and spend a couple of hours.

OLD BUSINESS:

Na'im Tyson said there was concern about the format for putting the budget on the library's website.

Carolyn Karwoski said that White Plains library has three pages posted on their website. She said they also have a nice way of posting their Director's minutes. There is a monthly treasurer's report.

Mrs. Karwoski said that she is going to look at the library's web page and ways to improve the content.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she would like to do a biography of each of the board members.

Dr. Tyson said the discussion should be tabled until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Carolyn Karwoski said that the original amount of the Reader's Digest Endowment was \$141,000 (one hundred forty one thousand dollars). The money was put in an interest bearing account and the interest was used every year to purchase books.

The money was put in a Capital One bank account and the CD has not rolled over since 2009. It's just been sitting there.

Mrs. Karwoski said that she did not think the CD needs to be kept at Capital One Bank Chase Bank has a 1% rate and Allied Bank has .89% rate on CDs with an automatic rollover.

Carolyn Karwoski said that her idea is to use the interest every year for books.

Julie Mills Worthey asked how much interest would be if the CD were for a longer period of time.

Carolyn Karwoski said that there is nothing right now and only a little interest every year.

Carolyn Karwoski said that two trustees must sign off on transferring the CD to another bank.

The Board of Trustees of the Mount Vernon Public Library resolves that the Reader's Digest CD will be withdrawn from Capital One Bank to be transferred to another bank and that the Board President and Secretary of the Mount Vernon Public Library are authorized to be the signatories of the CD. The board further resolves that it will withdraw the funds and hold them at J.P. Morgan Chase Bank until a suitable vehicle can be found.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she received a call From Tom Migliano of the New York State Deferred Compensation Fund regarding speaking to the staff about the retirement plan.

Julie Mills Worthey said that the charter change provided for trustee elections and for a public budget vote.

There was a charter change approved in 2006 which changed the current amount of trustees from no less than five and no more than nine.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she proposed the additional two trustees be voted on because the board is small and cannot even form committees. In addition one trustee's term expires on April 30th and that position would also have to be elected. After that each trustee position would have to be voted on as they become vacant. This would create a staggering of the trustee positions.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she has proposed a budget resolution for 2014 for an operating budget of 4.5 million dollars. This budget would have to be supported in public hearings.

Carolyn Karwoski asked was it only operating expenses or could some of the money be used for capital improvement?

Julie Mills Worthey said that she picked this budget number in anticipation that we could create a reserve and capital improvement funds.

Na'im Tyson said that he talked to Tom Rajala who thinks that 4.5 million dollars is a good number.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that the library would have to live with the initial budget prepared for a year or two. In 2015 the library could petition for an increase.

Carolyn Karwoski said the reason she asked about capital improvement in the budget is because the library needs to improve technology. She said she does not think the city has a lot of interest in capital improvement to the building.

Julie Mills Worthey said it is her expectation to work on the calendar between now and the election.

Upon a motion by Julie Mills Worthey, seconded by Marcia Dupree, the board approved the draft resolution for the 2014 budget vote.

Julie Mills Worthey said that the resolution will become the framework for the budget vote petition.

Mrs. Mills Worthey asked that Carolyn Karwoski take the lead on getting the necessary parties for the meeting. At least three alternate dates are needed.

The board tabled the discussion of the arts project until April.

Julie Mills Worthey said that they were looking to have a relationship with the Mount Vernon Arts Council. She said she would rather have an entity of local people.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she would look for groups in the area.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she does not think we can overlook the Mount Vernon Arts Council.

Na'im Tyson asked that Carolyn Karwoski think of something for April.

Julie Mills Worthey said that there had been an Annual Exhibit of Mount Vernon School District art work which brings out a good crowd of people.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon a motion by Julie Mills Worthey, seconded by Marcia Dupree, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm to discuss personnel matters.

Respectfully

Carolyn Karwoski
Secretary

