

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

January 19, 2011

6:30 PM

MINUTES

Millie Burns who presided called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Present were: Julie Mills Worthey, and Rodney Reynolds, Trustees.

Absent: Trustees, Arlene Roberts Grant and Danna Wood Webb

Also present: Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Rachel Primavera, Toba Lumbantobing, Girl Scouts of Larchmont; Tamara Stewart, Robert McDonald, library patrons; Kevin Robinson, Cheryl Thomas, library staff; Opal Brown Lindsay, Director; and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Tamara Stewart said she was pleased to see the change in library hours on the high school television station.

She suggested that when the library has weather delays it should go on the library website.

In the interest of good communications with the community, the library closings should be updated on the telephone system.

Ms. Stewart said that there was a system in place at Ossining Library to announce closings.

Millie Burns said that she would like to work with the library on formulating a policy.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Board received a thank you note from Mary Ellen Forte acknowledging a basket of cheer that was sent to her.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Millie Burns said that the board has written statements regarding the lack of accuracy and is trying to put out information to rebut that.

Ms. Burns said that she had spoken to Terry Kirchner as late as today regarding funding. Mr. Kirchner made it clear that because of how Mount Vernon Public Library operates; the trustees are not allowed to raise funds.

Terry Kirchner is looking to hire someone to do fundraising for WLS.

Millie Burns said that she had met with the Mount Vernon Public Library Foundation on January 10, 2011. The Board has a lot of work to do with them.

Ms. Burns said that it was her understanding that because the trustees were not allowed to raise funds, the foundation would. At the meeting she got a different understanding.

Ms. Burns said that Elias Gootzeit invited her to a committee meeting and a school board meeting. Mr. Gootzeit offered to work with the library on advocacy.

Millie Burns said that she was able to schedule a meeting with the Mayor for February 1st.

Ms. Burns said that she spoke to Barbara Wiley at the New York State Library about a waiver. Unless the Mount Vernon Public Library maintains 95% of its previous years funding, it will lose 25% of the Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) money.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she felt the informal approach that the Board asked the union to participate in regarding the grievances was fruitful. The union's comments were helpful in responding. The Board has heard from Gary Newman and the grievances were withdrawn without prejudice.

Mrs. Mills-Worthey said that she recommends that the library accept the withdrawal of the grievances.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she is hopeful in the future conversations can take place. The library will remain open to resolving the issues, while remaining respectful to the rights of the contract.

Gary Newman said that he thinks the resolution is helpful.

Rodney Reynolds said he had questions about the trustees not being allowed to raise funds. He said that he wanted to send a letter on his company's letterhead asking businesses to contribute.

Millie Burns said not allowed to fundraise does not mean you cannot say to someone that the library needs money. There can also be in kind services and products.

MINUTES:

Julie Mills Worthey moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 15, 2010. The minutes were approved unanimously.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

Chris Hansen has been appointed the new WLS trustee to represent Mount Vernon.

Opal Lindsay said that she spoke with Terry Kirchner who said he met with Chris Hansen and everything was set.

FINANCIALS:

The Board received the preliminary financial report for December 2010.

The November 2010 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$347,295.69 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Millie Burns and Rodney Reynolds were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered #020444-020482 (payrolls), #056478-056506 (payrolls, petty cash), and #031147-031184 (bills).

The December 2010 Bills and Payrolls totaling \$251,041.74 properly certified by the Director and reviewed by Millie Burns and Rodney Reynolds were approved by the Board of Trustees and requested paid.

The checks are numbered #020483-020545 (payrolls), #056507-056537 (payrolls, petty cash), and #031185-031223 (bills).

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director, Opal Brown Lindsay reported the following:

WLS has eliminated two departments. A meeting was held to see how the system would adjust.

The capital project for signage is still outstanding. The Young Adult capital project will continue.

Former Library Clerk, Sheila Jones has been brought in temporarily to replace Thea Blessitt while she is on FMLA.

The new Diaspora exhibit reception at the library was well attended. Legislator Lyndon Williams also attended.

The New York Power Authority lighting installation has begun.

Cataloger, Nancy Coradin from WLS is working with Technical Services on cataloging.

An E News letter outlining library services is being distributed.

The library's new introductory website page will be reviewed.

Mrs. Lindsay is working on a policy regarding use of the library space for events.

The grant writing process has begun. The committee will meet on January 21st to review six grants.

The committee is looking at six grants, two for the Children's Room, and two for the Local History Room. One for the collection and one for humanities.

It was asked if there was going to be new lighting in the parking lot. Opal Lindsay said no. In 2003 the New York Power Authority was scheduled to replace lights in the entire building.

There is a large container in the parking lot for the project and some of the parking spaces have been displaced. The entire staff has been provided with parking passes for the lot on Second Avenue.

OLD BUSINESS:

Toba Lumbantobing said that an architect had put together preliminary ideas for the Girl Scout project. She did not have an estimate yet because of the recent snow.

Rachel Primavera passed out samples of the bricks that might be used for the landscaping project.

Millie Burns said that she respects the amount of time and energy that was put into the presentation. She said that she is not clear if the architect is aware of the issues required to do this work. She asked Rachel Primavera how comfortable she was taking on a project of this size.

Mrs. Lumbantobing said that she had spoken to the building department and they said that there was no need to obtain a permit. A permit was only needed if a sprinkler system was part of the project.

The bricks will be laid after the planting is done; possibly the end of April or the beginning of May.

Mrs. Lumbantobing said that the Girl Scouts cannot solicit donations. She said that she has gone to construction companies in Mount Vernon to ask for donations of trees and shrubbery. She also visited two landscapers with the plans, but cannot get a count of the amounts needed due to the weather.

The board asked if Mrs. Lumbantobing understood that the library may have other projects that could impact the board giving its approval for the Girl Scout project. The library foundation may have almost an identical proposal.

Toba Lumbantobing said that the building department said that the foundation was thinking about doing something similar. She said that they had no plan in place.

She said that the Girl Scouts could walk away from the project; but asked if the library was going to do the planting, this year or the next.

Rodney Reynolds said that he thought it was a great project and likes the idea that youth are involved, especially during this time. It is a great way to involve youth in this library. He said that he thinks the community will respond positively.

Millie Burns asked if the Girl Scouts would consider doing a project on the Second Avenue side instead.

Toba Lumbantobing said that they would. She said that Pepsi and other businesses had already set money aside. She said that she can go to the alumni, and PTA. People with roots in Mount Vernon would want to lay a brick. A Girl Scout project always has a warm feeling.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she agrees with all of the comments. There is concern that at a time when the library wants to build up the Foundation and step up their game, we do not want to cause a divide.

Millie Burns said that she does not know if the Foundation has delivered a formal proposal. She said that the library wants to respect the Girl Scout's deadline, while not alienating the Foundation.

She said that she is trying to be strategic in thinking and really respects Toba Lumbantobing and Rachel Primavera coming to them.

Ms. Burns said that she respects young people and wonders if there is a mechanism to include Mount Vernon.

Ms. Lumbantobing said that unfortunately there is not a heavy Girl Scout presence in Mount Vernon. This may peak interest in parents stepping up to put children in the scouts.

She said that they may want to have Brownies come and be part of the project. It is a Girl Scout project and they would want scouts to be involved.

Toba Lumbantobing said that if the library decides to go with the Foundation, the scouts would consider the Second Avenue side. There is a gated area that might handle the plans.

There is no financial gain for the scouts and no cost to the library. Any profit would go toward the cost of the bricks. The only gain would be Rachel Primavera's gold award project.

Tamara Stewart asked if the library would be changing its policy about people loitering in front of the library. If you create a comfortable space for people to park themselves, they will come and park themselves.

Ms. Lumbantobing said that she was hoping to present the project to the council by next week, but will push it to February if the library needs time.

The real goal is to get the planting done. The planting should be done no later than May. The trees are guaranteed for one year, the bushes not at all.

Toba Lumbantobing said that there is a company in California who is used to doing this. People can go on line to their website, design a brick and pay through PayPal. There is accountability for all monies.

Millie Burns asked if there was any review of what gets put on the bricks. Ms. Lumbantobing said that she could review. Rodney Reynolds said that companies usually have a template.

Ms. Lumbantobing said that New Rochelle library has done the same thing.

Millie Burns said that the Board needs to discuss the project, but will definitely get back to her.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:22 pm

The Board returned to Public Session at 9:50 pm upon a motion by Julie Mills Worthey seconded by Rodney Reynolds. No decisions were recorded.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 pm

DRAFT

Respectfully submitted

Secretary