

MOUNT VERNON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

June 19, 2013

6:30 PM

MINUTES

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

Present were: Marcia Dupree and Julie Mills Worthey

Absent: Millie Burns

Also present: Chris Hansen, WLS Trustee; David Hall, Peter Yoon, Allied Barton Security; William Stump, Andre Coleman, NJB Security; Nathan Muhammad, Nature's Finest Security; Juan Isales, U.S. Security Associates, Inc.; Gary Newman, CSEA Unit President; Donna Hatcher, Troy Johnson and Tamara Stewart, Library Patrons; Leroy Lea, and Cheryl Thomas, Library Staff; Carolyn Karwoski, Library Director and Mary Harper, Administrative Assistant

MINUTES: Approval of the minutes of May 15, 2013 was tabled.

WLS TRUSTEE REPORT:

Chris Hansen reported that the federal government is requiring that libraries receiving in excess of \$125,000 in federal funds must now install software to block obscenity.

Mr. Hansen said that there is no software that does 100% of what the government is requesting.

The software would be installed by WLS and there are two possible ways to install it.

One way to install is to have a site blocked and the librarians can unblock it. The second option is to install the software with a patron override.

Mr. Hansen said that he does not think the second option would comply with the statute.

Chris Hansen said that the WLS budget is in good shape and there is a chance that they could raise the amount of federal money in fees.

Julie Mills Worthey asked what would be the reasons for the software to be unblocked. She asked once a site is unblocked does it stay unblocked.

Chris Hansen said that the system is set up for WLS to unblock it. This can be done if a patron is doing bona fide research; each library makes their own decision.

Julie Mills Worthey asked would the process be confidential.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she is more inclined to comply in a manner that the other libraries are doing.

Na'im Tyson said that his immediate thought is that the entire system can be circumvented.

Dr. Tyson asked how confident is WLS that they can absorb not getting the federal funds if they don't comply. Chris Hansen said that WLS may pass on the costs to the libraries.

Carolyn Karwoski said that software filters were used at the Connecticut libraries that filtered out websites. There was no way to unblock them.

Mrs. Karwoski said that this actually changed the complexion of reference services. People got back to using the computer more for reference. The children's area had sixty computers with filters for years.

Gary Newman said he had not seen much porn use at Mount Vernon.

Chris Hansen said that ALA is opposed to filtering, but losing funding pushed most libraries to filter.

Na'im Tyson asked about the cost. Mr. Hansen said that the software is cheap and WLS can absorb the cost.

Leroy Lea asked why it was necessary to filter the adult computers. Mr. Hansen said that federal law requires it. WLS controls the software and are the only ones who can unblock permanently.

Na'im Tyson said that WLS IT charges are getting higher. He said he fears if the library does not comply the additional costs may be a burden.

Chris Hansen said that WLS continues to add on software that costs money. He said there is debate on spending on software or lower local user fees.

Julie Mills Worthey asked if the libraries that have elected to use the filtering software they have already invested in be overridden by WLS.

Mr. Hansen said that everyone will be affected. There is no method to opt out.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she would like WLS to work with the library on creating a confidential system of communication where patrons can communicate with WLS.

Chris Hansen said that most patrons will not do that.

Carolyn Karwoski said if established she would like to see a quick resolution.

Leroy Lea asked if the software would affect computers not owned by WLS.

Chris Hansen said if they were connected to the WLS system, the software is running; even on staff computers.

It is not however required to run on Wifi computers.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Tamara Stewart asked for an update on the library's budget vote.

Ms. Stewart also asked what was being done about getting the word out about half days on Saturdays.

Carolyn Karwoski said that there will be banners on either side of the building. Flyers are coming to the circulation desk, including new flyers for the new regular hours.

Ms. Karwoski said that we will also reach out to the newspapers.

Donna Hatcher voiced her concerns about the library. She said that she is very concerned about the behavior she sees. She said that she is unable to work because of disturbances from other patrons in the library.

Ms. Hatcher asked if security and staff could be more proactive. She asked if nice signs could be displayed and a short video shown on library etiquette.

Donna Hatcher also complained that the chairs and tables at the cyber corner are filthy and need to be disinfected.

COORESPONDENCE:

Dr. Tyson said that he received an overview of the WLS Trustee report.

He also received a package from Chase Bank.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Library Director, Carolyn Karwoski reported the following:

Facilities Management has been an ongoing responsibility that continues to take up much time. The building is structurally sound but it is showing its age in the deteriorating conditions of the library including the front doors, the steps, the elevator and now the staff offices area. A few weeks ago the plaster on one of the pillars in the Staff Offices broke apart and came down. Luckily no one was hit by the plaster pieces which are very heavy but this created a serious problem for the library. The offices had to be closed and we had to come up with another area for staff to work. At first staff used the Trustee Room while the old Director's Office was repaired and converted into a new office space. Currently most staff are working from this space while two others are using the Circulation workroom. To get the old office space ready, the wall had to be repaired and the room repainted. This was completed and we now have a usable space. The staff office area was inspected by the city engineer and repairs have begun. Not only did all the old plaster need to be pulled down and the beams inspected but we also had to have the room repainted. While all the furniture has been moved to the side, the director decided that we needed to remove all the old electrical outlets from the floor. These outlets will be wall mounted and this will create more space for the desk layout. Also having all the metal strips off the floor addresses a potential liability issue which has now been corrected. Currently the room has only partially been repaired and will be closed until all the work has been completed. She anticipates that these will take a few more weeks to complete.

Carolyn Karwoski met with Mayor Davis last week to discuss several very important issues for the library going forward. They had a very cordial and productive conversation including a discussion of the problems of the library building. She presented the Mayor with a folder of photographs of the library building problems including the staff offices and the need to replace the children's bathroom. They spoke about the capitol grant that the library has received from Gary Pretlow's office and the director hopes to have access to this grant soon. The Mayor told her that he would be talking to Gary to release the capital funds as he never received the money. Hopefully this will happen soon as we could use some of those funds to pay for the repairs to the staff offices. They also spoke about the need for 2 more additional trustees for a one year term as well as support from the city for an additional year of funding, as we prepare to go out to vote on the library budget in the spring of 2014.

She and the staff have been working extremely hard to finalize summer programming for the Mount Vernon Community. We feel we have a vibrant and exciting summer prepared especially for children, tweens and teens. From movies, crafts and dance to book discussions, reading buddies and story times, we will have much to offer over the warm summer months. Also the library will be open on summer

Saturdays for the first time in several years. We are very excited about this redistribution of library hours especially since Saturdays are a very important day for library services and programs. We are celebrating our first open summer Saturday with a family film program in the community room. We will be showing the new Oz film beginning at 10:00 am. Packets were distributed to the board of our flyers for our programming events and summer reading clubs. She and the staff will continue to develop new programming for the library in the coming months.

Board packets with the revised rules for Cyber corner as well as for a library card were given to the board. She hopes to institute this change, with the board's approval, on July 1, 2013.

Carolyn Karwoski said that librarians May Wu and Gary Newman are working in the old circulation office while waiting for the Tech Services repairs.

Mrs. Karwoski said that the Mayor was given a flash drive with pictures of the Tech Services room and the Children's room bathrooms. The Mayor wants to come and tour the library.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the Cyber corner rules need to be updated and voted on.

Gary Newman asked if the volume on the computers could be turned down. Leroy Lea said that most of the WLS computers present so the control panel is not accessible, but each individual media panel may have its own volume control.

Na'im Tyson asked if the contractors working on the tech services area were licensed in Westchester and did they have to abide by the city codes.

Mrs. Karwoski said that the contractors are doing it the right way, but there is some discussion about affixing wire to steel.

Dr. Tyson asked was the new furniture being used in the temporary space for tech services Carolyn Karwoski said yes. She said that we were going to try using the JIC tables in the main room, but they were too big.

Na'im Tyson asked if the mayor had mentioned a punch list. Carolyn Karwoski said that she had given the Mayor a punch list for the sprinklers, the children's room bathroom and the tech services room. She said that the Dormitory Authority grant pays for the doors and steps.

Dr. Tyson asked the director to request that if the Mayor sends contractors he will let the library know ahead of time.

Julie Mills Worthey suggested that a follow-up message be sent to the Mayor regarding the meeting with Carolyn Karwoski.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she assumed that Mayor did not decline support for the library next year or the suggestion of new trustees.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she was excited about the summer hours. The community has been strident about the additional hours.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she thinks a big announcement should be done with as much flourish as possible in various newspapers.

She said she knows that we have the ability to do email blasts, but has not seen considerable work on this.

Na'im Tyson suggested that the director get a third party for eblasts.

Tamara Stewart suggested that information be distributed at the Summer Breeze concerts.

Mrs. Mills Worthey said that she thinks asking the library staff to do this would be an imposition. She asked if we thought the recreation department could help.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Tyson said that last month the board had a working session to discuss various issues with Carolyn Karwoski.

Na'im Tyson said that there are issues with Chase Bank. They are moving toward a token system. He said that he received the wrong dates and cannot get information online.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she is locked out of the system and can only verify access rights.

Dr. Tyson said that he has met with the Mayor.

The library's tax consultant has not gotten any information from the IRS regarding the 501(c)(3) status.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she has contacted a taxpayer advocacy group through the office of State Senator Elliot Engel. She said that she anticipates we will have our status returned by the end of July.

Mrs. Karwoski said that Mount Vernon is not the only library to have its 501(c)(3) status revoked.

There are about 275,000 other non profits that were revoked when the laws changed.

Na'im Tyson asked was it felt the library would have to pay penalties. Carolyn Karwoski said that they would be considering retro-active reimbursement.

Dr. Tyson said that he had spoken with the tax consultant and he is concerned about the Form 990 for 2012, even though the library has filed for an extension. The extension does not go until the end of August.

He asked that the bookkeeper get the preliminary audit numbers from the city and start to work on the report. In August an amended audit report can be filed.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Na'im Tyson questioned whether the MTA tax had been phased out. He said that it was paid in January and March, but not in April.

Julie Mills Worthey questioned if we were being billed for dental insurance.

She asked were there any planned purchases of library materials and is it in conjunction with WLS.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she has been sending non-fiction invoices to WLS and they are being disputed by the financial officer.

Mrs. Karwoski said that she has informed WLS that the library wished to pay its own bills. She said that the current process is taking a tremendous amount of time. She said that WLS has given us the money for this year, but is still holding onto money from previous years.

Na'im Tyson asked did the director want a bill pay option. Carolyn Karwoski said that the bills were paid, but we must get reimbursement from WLS.

Dr. Tyson said that she must raise the issue with WLS.

Mrs. Karwoski said that Fran Feuerman's response is that the previous director had signed off on this method.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she thinks WLS has \$32,000 that belongs to us. She said that she had just received an invoice for \$53,000.

Na'im Tyson said that the personnel benefits number has grown. A check was supposed to be paid against the 2012 budget, but we did not get the notification on time.

Carolyn Karwoski said that we need to account for the January bills.

Julie Mills Worthey asked if there were an issue with worker's compensation. Mrs. Karwoski said that she would look it up.

TRUSTEES: REMARKS:

Marcia Dupree said that she had gotten three copies of the building plans. It has been a struggle to get the plans, but it was done.

Julie Mills Worthey asked could we follow up on the sprinkler system and smoke barrier.

She said that we need to get quotes based on the plans.

Carolyn Karwoski said that she needed to talk to the Mayor.

Na'im Tyson said that a marketing consultant needs to be selected, so the dialog on the budget vote can be started as soon as possible

OLD BUSINESS:

Na'im Tyson asked about updates regarding meeting with the school board.

Julie Mills Worthey said that she has not gotten any response from them. She said that she has reached out to their contact person, but has not heard back.

Carolyn Karwoski said that the paperwork for the charter changes was not put on the May agenda. The regents said that they did not receive the check in time. It has now been placed on the June agenda.

Mrs. Karwoski said that notarized copies of the paperwork had to be sent separately.

Julie Mills Worthey asked about the time line for the proposed 2014 budget. Carolyn Karwoski said that she was going to do the scenario for both. Mrs. Mills Worthey said that we need to go for the higher one.

SECURITY PRESENTATIONS:

Representatives from NJB Security, who currently handle security for the library; as well as Allied Barton, Nature's Finest and U.S. Security Associates all gave presentations.

The presentations centered on each company's experience, policies and procedures, personnel and benefits; as well as how each could work within the library's budget to best serve its security needs.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting ended at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully

Carolyn Karwowski
Secretary