

Library Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024, 8:00 a.m.
BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Joe Shaw, Rhonda Seacrest, Lisa Hale, Jackie Ostrowicki, Morgan Gerteisen, Patty Beutler, Nichole Bogen.
Absent: Dan Sloan. A quorum was present.

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

In President Sloan’s absence, Vice President Joe Shaw called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and announced the Open Meetings Law was posted and available for review.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Shaw noted that the Agenda/Meeting Notice was posted according to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Nebraska. Shaw asked for a motion to approve the Agenda as posted. Seacrest so moved. Hale seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beutler, Gerteisen, Seacrest, Shaw, Ostrowicki, Hale – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No Public Comment.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 19, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Shaw noted that the December meeting minutes had been distributed and asked for a motion to approve. Seacrest so moved. Hale seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beutler, Gerteisen, Seacrest, Shaw, Ostrowicki, Hale – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration
No report

Committee on Finance

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for December 2023

Treasurer Ostrowicki shared that the Library’s Total Operational Expenditures for December, 2023 were \$958,833.66, and Total Expenditures from Other Funds were \$68,977.05, for a total in December of \$1,027,810.71. Ostrowicki moved approval of the report. Hale seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beutler, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for January 2024

Treasurer Ostrowicki reported that the Total Operational Expenditures for January, 2024 were \$827,716.61, and the Total Expenditures from Other Funds were \$99,878.71, totaling \$927,595.32 for January. Ostrowicki moved approval the report, Gerteisen seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale, Beutler – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

No report

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation Executive Director Report

Gail McNair shared that the Foundation finalized the 2023 annual payout and reported the book sale numbers. McNair urged all to mark their calendars on Thursday, April 25 for the annual Wine and Dine event at the Country Club of Lincoln. Invitations will be sent out shortly via email and USPS. She announced that the Foundation offices will be moving (date tba) from Bennett Martin to Walt Branch.

One Book One Lincoln

Patty Beutler shared that the first meeting of the new One Book One Lincoln committee was held on Saturday and new Chair, Alyssa Diehl did a wonderful job. She reported, the committee is a great group of readers and there was a lot of discussion. 71 titles were pared down to about 50. She shared she has a daunting six books to read in the next 2 ½ weeks. Ostrowicki asked how the 71 titles compared to past years' numbers. Beutler explained that over 200 nominations were received and narrowed to 71 by Support Services staff based on the usual criteria, things like—having digital or large print versions available to make the options accessible to all readers and eliminating ineligible books like those which have been on the top-10 lists from previous years.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Resolution Recognizing Library Staff and Guard for their role in a Patron well-being incident on December 22, 2023

Director Wieber commended the staff at Bennett Martin who have many opportunities to implement the training they've received and embody the outlook on library service they learn from Library Coordinator, LeeAnn Sergeant. He noted, library staff not only provide great library service, but also a great environment, including keeping people safe, and there is a great deal that goes on behind the scenes to make all of that happen.

Wieber also shared that the library also relies a great deal on our contracted security staff from Frye Frazey & Associates. He noted that today the board wishes to recognize a group of staff from Bennett Martin and in particular, Guard Firas Pirali who took part in the event near closing time on Friday, December 22.

Director Wieber stated, all our library teams strive to be prepared for anything, and in this case preparation, training and quick action gave the very best result. Reviewing the security tape showed how calmly and professionally all members of staff responded to the emergency and acted without hesitation to assist the patron in distress. Wieber expressed that often folks know only that we're here, checking

out books, greeting people and getting people logged into computers, but they don't realize that we're here making a difference in people's lives, and in this case, library staff made a huge difference in this person's and his family's lives.

Wieber commended the training Frye Frazey & Associates gives to Firas and all their staff. Members of Frye Frazey in attendance with Guard Firas Piralı were introduced – Owner Dave Frye, Manager Ofc. John Hudec, Chad Rowe, and Jack Erickson.

Vice President Shaw read the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS on Friday, December 22, 2023, as the result of excellent training by Library Coordinator LeeAnn Sergeant and Supervisor Rio Beranek, a Bennett Martin team performed seamlessly and without hesitation together in an emergency situation; and

WHEREAS Library Service Associates Scott Clark and Sharon Sayer identified a patron in distress at a Public Access computer and notified Guard Firas Piralı; and

WHEREAS Firas, upon being unable to rouse the patron, immediately and loudly notified other staff that a medical emergency was taking place and began administering first aid to the patron; and

WHEREAS Service Associate Cindy Krushenisky rushed to assist Firas while Librarian Ali Bousquet called 911 and relayed critical instructions; and

WHEREAS Service Associate Kimberly Jorgensen quickly retrieved the defibrillator, and Sharon took over at the public desk to watch and provide directional help when LFR arrived; and

WHEREAS Firas checked for breathing and rapidly massaged the patron's chest, and when that had no effect, carefully moved the patron to the floor, cleared his face and neck, and continued chest massage and checking for a pulse. Per the 911 operator, Firas expertly began chest compressions and continued without pause until the patron suddenly moved of his own power, then again per instructions, Firas moved the patron onto his side and continued to monitor him until LFR arrived; and

WHEREAS "Saving Lives" does not appear in any one of anyone's job description, and yet they are trained, willing and able to leap to the rescue when needed; and

WHEREAS Bennett Martin serves a population of Lincolnites who sometimes have more than the usual sorts of library needs, and Bennett Martin staff are here for it, every day, acting quickly, skillfully, and compassionately as a team, ensuring what everyone loves best from libraries – stories with happy endings; and therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Lincoln City Libraries Board of Trustees expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude to Firas Piralı, Cindy Krushenisky, Ali Bousquet, Kimberly Jorgensen, Sharon Sayer, Scott Clark, Rio Beranek and LeeAnn Sergeant for their exceptionally skilled, fast, and compassionate teamwork that saved a patron's life.

Seacrest moved to approve the resolution. Ostrowicki seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Ostrowicki, Hale, Beutler, Gerteisen, Seacrest – AYE. Motion carried 6-0.

Many thanks were shared, and Firas responded, “We have all kinds of situations. You just go into it ... every day is a different story.” Hale commended Firas’ inclusive and welcoming work, calling him, “top notch.” Brief discussion followed.

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

In President Sloan’s absence, Vice President Shaw reported on his Monday, February 12 attendance at the library’s all-day Strategic Planning Workshop, also attended by staff, board and community members, moderated by Parlay Consulting. Shaw shared that he learned a lot about the libraries, and the challenges faced. He noted there are fundamental things that need to be addressed and is looking forward to addressing them in the coming years. Shaw expressed the best part of the exercise was being around library staff, learning what librarians know and are concerned with, and knowing LCL has a great staff of people, and he’s happy to be a part of it.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Assistant Director Glass shared a look at the nearly completed new LCL website. She thanked Webmaster Peter Jorgensen for his hard work managing the transfer. Glass shared improvements like a “book river” that will display popular titles, showed how popular programs and services can be showcased, and the results of making the pages less text heavy. Board members commended the use of local photography, bright colors and the intuitive setup. Wieber shared that the library is coordinating with the City on a go-live date.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Wieber reported on the Strategic Planning workshop. He thanked Shaw and Gerteisen for participating, along with staff, community members and Amanda Barker from the Mayor’s office. He shared that after a day of great dialog, they landed on specifics for directives and goals, including strengthening the library’s identity (communication/marketing), maximizing access for all customers, improving internal training for all staff, and seeking out ways to grow funding sources (grants/collaborations.) Parlay will streamline the day’s work and provide a concise report to be used for crafting actions to meet the stated goals. Brief discussion followed.

Wieber reported on the biennial budget process, indicating that initial plans have been submitted, and will be discussed in more detail with the finance committee at their upcoming meeting. Brief discussion followed. He reported that the future library improvement plans are continuing, many options are possible, and the goal is to move forward soon with the best possible plans supported by the community.

Director Wieber shared that this would be Accountant Paul Jones’ last board meeting prior to retirement. Jones was roundly applauded and thanked for his service to the Library.

Ostrowicki shared her experiences working as a new Library Volunteer with her daughter at Gere Branch Library, and thanked Manager Brenda Ealey and Library Service Associate Aubrey Shumake for their training. She also provided information about a training opportunity for Board Members, the upcoming

Nebraska Library Association's 2-day Advocacy events. On Tuesday, March 19, Bennett Martin will host speakers including, among others, Director Wieber who will speak on "Creating Connections and Communicating Your Library's Value," recently retired LCL Youth Services Coordinator, Vicki Wood who will speak on "Understanding What's Really Behind Book Challenges and Bans" and Treasurer Ostrowicki on "Using Communication to Advocate for Nebraska's Libraries." March 20th events include more speakers at the Cornhusker Marriott in the morning and opportunities to meet Nebraska State Senators at the Capitol Building in the afternoon.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.