

**LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2018; 6 PM  
GERE BRANCH LIBRARY  
2400 S 56TH STREET  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA**

**LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:** Lowell Berg, Martha Florence, Lisa Hale, Donna Marvin, Carol Speicher, Rhonda Seacrest, Dan Sloan, and County Liaison Walt Broer. Absent: None. A quorum was present.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Pat Leach, Library Director; Barbara Hansen, Administrative Aide; Paul Jones, Accountant; Brenda Ealey, Gere Branch Manager; Julie Beno, Public Service Coordinator; Jenny Wiruth, Intern, Gail McNair, Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries Executive Director; Jeff Kirkpatrick, City Attorney.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPEN MEETINGS LAW:** The meeting was called to order at 6 PM. Marvin announced the posting of the Opens Meeting Law of the State of Nebraska.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was posted according to the Open Meetings Law of the State of Nebraska. Berg moved approval of the agenda as posted, second by Seacrest. Roll Call Vote: Berg, Florence, Hale, Marvin, Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher – aye. Motion carried 7-0

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:** None

**APPROVAL OF AUGUST 21, 2018, MEETING MINUTES:** Berg moved to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2018, meeting. Second by Seacrest. Roll Call Vote: Florence, Hale, Marvin, Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher, Berg – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Committee on Administration** - No report

**Committee on Buildings and Grounds** – Leach explained that the current facilities management contract expires in October. The contract must be rebid as no more renewals are allowed. Leach requested a six-month extension of the current contract so that the Library can bring on the new Building Superintendent to be part of the bidding process. The extension with NIA FMA would be through April 23, 2019, at a cost not to exceed \$44,000.00. Berg moved to approve the extension of the facilities management contract as requested. Second by Hale. Roll Call Vote: Hale, Marvin, Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher, Berg, Florence – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

**Committee on Finance** - Hale reported on the recap of expenditure for August 2018 listing claims in the amount of \$1,120,018.49 from all funds. Hale moved approval of the report and payment of all claims. Second by Florence. Roll Call Vote: Hale, Marvin, Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher, Berg, Florence – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Central Library** – The committee is currently in a holding pattern and is watching the November City election as that will have an impact on actions going forward. Pat Leach has been working with the Mayor’s office on timelines and information pieces.

**Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries** - McNair reported on the upcoming spelling bee on September 26<sup>th</sup> and the October book sale. The book sale will be held at the Lancaster Event Center from October 11 – 14. A presale event will be held on Wednesday, October 10. Presale tickets are selling fast and are available for \$50.

**One Book – One Lincoln** - Marvin shared information about upcoming events. The 2018 title selected by a community vote is *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Hompes Revenue Allocation** – Leach requested approval to designate expenditure of \$15,000.00 of Hompes Fund income from the most recent year for library materials, to include items for the Heritage Room and other materials for checkout and customer use. Approval moved by Seacrest, second by Berg. It was noted that the Hompes fund is held by the City of Lincoln as a result of a bequest. The library receives the income from the trust. Roll Call Vote: Marvin, Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher, Berg, Florence, Hale – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

**Allocation of Book Sale Funds** –Leach requested approval to allocate \$46,751.39 for the purchase of materials for use by library customers, and \$10,000.00 for use in supporting the library’s Begin with Books program. Approval moved by Hale, second by Berg. It was reported that the library received \$56,751.39 from the 2017 book sale. Begin with Books provides books to children during immunizations and other medical appointments to begin building their home library. Roll Call Vote: Sloan, Speicher, Berg, Florence, Hale, Marvin Seacrest – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

**Foundation Funds Distribution** – Leach reported that the library received \$20,516.94 in unrestricted funds from the Foundation in 2018, and requested approval to allocate expenditure of \$10,516.94 for library programming, \$8,500.00 for Urban Libraries Council membership, and \$1,500.00 for radio promotion of the Summer Reading Program. Approval moved by Berg, second by Hale. Roll Call Vote: Seacrest, Sloan, Speicher, Berg, Florence, Hale, Marvin – aye. Motion carried 7-0.

## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Marvin welcomed the new board member Dan Sloan. The list of Committee appointments was distributed. Marvin thanked all the partners that the Board has worked with on the Central Library project and noted that the Board will continue to work towards having everything ready so that we can hit the ground running when we are given the signal to proceed.

## **LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Leach introduced Jenny Wiruth, an intern working with the library this semester, earning her BA in Library Science at UNL.

Leach reported that today is the 10-year anniversary of the announcement of her as Library Director.

As part of the new budget, the library has funding for restoring evening hours at Bennett Martin Public Library, Monday through Thursday, 6 to 8 p.m., and will add two part-time staff. November 1st is the date for evening hours if hiring goes as planned. The Facilities Manager position is to be advertised fairly soon.

Leach has been working on the new strategic plan doing one-on-one interviews, meeting with people who have unique and specific views of Lincoln. An online staff survey is also underway. Community conversations with several nonprofits have been held discussing the library experience, asking what does the library experience mean and how do we make that happen.

Library staff is pulling together information regarding overdue fines. Many libraries are eliminating fines on children's and even adult materials. Low income families use the library less due to fear of fines, or the impact of fines. A staff committee is gathering information and will be making a recommendation in the next few months.

Regarding staffing, Leach reported that the library has an open Manager position. We are considering a public information position to assist with promotion and marketing.

Leach reported working closely with Read Aloud Lincoln, promoting reading aloud to preschoolers. That group is looking at sustainability of the program once its grant funding runs out. How do we make reading aloud part of our community's culture?

As a result of an Institute of Museums and Library Services grant, the Nebraska History Museum is developing programming focused on cultivating curiosity among its staff and visitors. Research shows that when people satisfy curiosity they have a physical response to the experience. Researchers are studying how this effect can be used by institutions. The Museum has been changing how staff present information and displays and it has had a big impact. This could be an effective way of bringing new information to library staff in terms of what we do every day and how we serve customers.

It was announced that the libraries will be closed on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> for inservice training

## **TRUSTEE DEVELOPMENT**

Jeff Kirkpatrick, City Attorney, presented information focused on laws and how they affect the Board. Members of the Board are officers of the city and fall under State laws that encourage transparency, including public records law. All correspondence, including text messages and email, is a public record and you can be forced to produce

that if requested. The easiest way for us to be able to respond to a request for information is for Board members to always include Pat Leach or Barbara Hansen into your emails so that it is archived in the city system. Text messages are more difficult. It is recommended that you refrain from sending text messages.

The Library Board also must follow open meetings law. Meetings are public and roll call votes are required on actions. Keep in mind that if you have four or more members in an email talking about library business, it makes it a public meeting. If you have four or more people in a discussion, any action taken is void. If you did this on purpose, you could be prosecuted. That doesn't mean you can't all attend a fundraiser or an event at a public park. You are only in violation if you insist on getting together to talk about library business. The way to avoid violating via email is to not reply to the entire board. Communicate with each board member separately. Doing business via conference call is also a violation.

High visibility actions, like a central library, will be scrutinized closely. As officers of the City of Lincoln, you must be careful about using public resources to advocate. There is nothing in the law that states you cannot express your personal opinion. Once the issue goes on the ballot, you cannot advocate as a board member using library resources, such as email, stationery, or meeting rooms. Prior to the issue being on the ballot you have more leeway because it is not a campaign issue. You can take a position and debate prior to the issue being on the ballot.

(Florence left at this time.)

Kirkpatrick noted that the law is not there to trip us up, but rather to keep us transparent.

It was also noted that Board members cannot participate in a public meeting via telephone. If a board member is traveling, they may call in and listen to the conversations but they cannot participate in discussion or vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA:** None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.