

LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, January 17, 2022, 8:00 a.m.

BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Sloan, Joe Shaw, Rhonda Seacrest, Lisa Hale and County Liaison, Nichole Bogen. A quorum was present. Jackie Ostrowicki and Donna Marvin arrived late. Christopher Stewart, absent.

OTHERS PRESENT

Ryan Wieber, Library Director; Traci Glass, Assistant Library Director; Paul Jones, Accountant; Gail McNair, Executive Director, Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries; Jocelyn Golden, Senior Attorney, City Attorney's Office; Peter Jorgensen, Library Manager; Cait Lombardo, Librarian; Firas Pirali, Library Guard.

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

President Dan Sloan noted that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. He announced the Open Meetings Act was posted and available for review.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Sloan noted that the Agenda and Meeting Notice were posted according to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Nebraska. Sloan asked for a motion to approve the Agenda. Shaw so moved. Seacrest seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Sloan, Shaw, Hale, Seacrest – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

President Sloan noted that public comment is welcome and reviewed the public comment process for those attending. There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 20, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

President Sloan noted the Minutes of the December 20, 2022 Meeting had been submitted. Sloan asked for a motion to approve the Minutes. Hale moved approval. Seacrest seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Hale, Seacrest, Sloan – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration

No Report.

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

No Report.

Committee on Finance

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for December 2022

Vice President Shaw provided the report in Marvin's absence. Total operational expenditures for November were \$1,070,269.39. Total expenditures from other funds were \$56,652.12, for a total of \$1,126,921.51. Shaw moved approval. Hale seconded. Discussion: Sloan asked if November was a 3-paycheck month, Paul Jones replied, yes. Hale asked for clarification the Support services YTD number, showing a greater portion expended than budgeted. Jones explained, since the Keno budget for that department starts near zero and is filled throughout the year, operational budget is expended first, then once the Keno money is in the account for the year, he begins drawing from that account. The monthly amount spent remains steady. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Hale, Seacrest, Sloan, Shaw – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

One Book – One Lincoln

Sloan noted that Ostrowicki planned to speak to this, and would arrive soon, so instructed the Board move on to the next report and return to this once she arrived.

Foundation Executive Director

Gail McNair reported the Foundation's year-end reports will be available next month. She reported that the date for the upcoming "Wine and Dine" will be either the third or fourth Thursday in April. They're still looking for a location. Please consider an auction item you might donate for the event.

McNair spoke to the upcoming New Business, reminding all that the Library Board's approval of new Foundation Board members is required by the IRS of all Type I Support Organizations. Marvin arrived at this time. Director Wieber asked how many Foundation Board members were being replaced, McNair replied seven had dropped off, and they were bringing on five new members. Ostrowicki arrived at this time. Hale inquired if the members leaving the Board were being replaced by new members with similar skill sets. McNair reported yes, that the Foundation's Nominating Committee considers that, along with other criteria, including age, gender, and area of town when they review the applications.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Foundation Board Candidates

Sloan instructed the Board to complete the vote regarding the Foundation Board and then return to the One Book – One Lincoln report. Sloan noted that names and bios of the five prospective Foundation Board members had been distributed and invited a motion to approve the slate. Seacrest so moved. Shaw seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Seacrest Sloan, Marvin, Hale AYE. Motion carried 5-0.

One Book – One Lincoln

Sloan instructed the Board to return to the One Book – One Lincoln report. Ostrowicki reported the Steering Committee met the preceding week. There were six seats to fill in a 16-member Selection Committee. There were ten applicants, and hearty conversation was held, including consideration of diversity, age, background, approaches to reading. Six new members were chosen, and all have been

notified. She noted an increase in the number of applicants this year, it appeared that having active promotion and an application form both helped the process. Staff is working to winnow down the list of titles submitted. The Selection Committee's first meeting will be held February 11, and three more are scheduled to complete the process. She announced, "Let the reading begin!"

Librarian Cait Lombardo reported on the selection process, noting that while in the past, a title without an accompanying book on CD option would not have been considered. Publishers, however, have been cutting back on physical audiobooks, and replacing them with digital options. Further, physical books in large type – which have previously been required of a nominee – are being replaced by downloadable ebooks, on which the font size can be increased. Both of those older requirements are being struck in favor of allowing titles with a downloadable audio version, and an ebook version.

Lombardo continued, genres not considered in the past, notably Young Adult fiction and Graphic Novels, will now be considered. The goal for this year is to experiment with having at least one Graphic option, so the genre's popularity with Lincoln readers can be evaluated. Lombardo noted that the first ever graphic novel, "Sabrina" by Nick Dmasso, was nominated for the prestigious Booker Prize in 2022 and "Ducks" by Kate Beaton appeared on former President Obama's recent holiday booklist. Lombardo referenced the ALA's Alex Award, given for fiction that appeals both to Young Adults and Adults. She hopes that additions like these will help increase the One Book – One Lincoln youth readership.

President Sloan asked how long nominations were open. Lombardo replied until January 31st. He asked if the number of nominations was about what was expected. Lombardo replied yes, and that a rush of last-minute submissions is typical.

Director Wieber asked Ostrowicki about the application process. Ostrowicki replied that she would share copies of the application with members via email. She reviewed the thinking behind the application – the desire to learn about readers' previous community service, their regular reading choices, and their motivation for joining the committee were among the topics included. She shared that the application serves to demystify the process and make it more transparent, as well as clearly communicating the time commitment. She hopes it serves to increase interest in the Selection Committee and provides objective information the Steering Committee can use to choose new members. Wieber concurred, having observed the committee's process, that the applications provided ample information upon which to discuss and make educated choices.

Approve LCL/Foundation Annual Contract

President Sloan brought the item forward. Director Wieber spoke to it, reviewing for the Board the three Agreements the Library has with the Foundation: the general overarching Annual Agreement, the Office Space Lease Agreement, and the Book Sale Agreement. The first two were brought today, the Book Sale Agreement is being reviewed for action next month, with an eye to providing more flexibility in its planning. Thanks to Senior City Attorney, Jocelyn Golden for working to clean up the agreements. There were only minimal language changes to the Office Space agreement. The overarching contract was more thoroughly overhauled, to make it more uniform with the other agreements, including updating the insurance clause, an audit, and an eVerify statement. The essence of the contract stayed the same and will be in effect through the end of this year. Golden confirmed that outdated language

was removed, and the agreements brought into compliance with current City policies. McNair noted that the Foundation has been diligent about keeping their insurance policies intact and thanked the Library for not raising their rent. Ostrowicki moved approval of the motion. Shaw seconded. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Seacrest, Sloan, Shaw, Marvin, Hale, Ostrowicki – AYE. Motion carried, 6-0.

Approve LCL/Foundation Annual Lease for Office Space Agreement

President Sloan asked for a motion to approve the Lease for Office Space Agreement. Shaw so moved. Hale seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Sloan, Shaw, Marvin, Hale, Ostrowicki, Seacrest – AYE. Motion carried, 6-0.

Approve Library Website Redesign Contract

Director Wieber shared that the contract has gone through both readings at the City Council and been approved. There is preliminary work to be done on preparing messaging and branding of the site, in conjunction with the functional development of the site, which should be complete by late spring.

Glass referenced the summary she'd shared with the Board, noting she and her team have been working on the project for the past six months. Glass wrote the Request For Proposal (RFP) with the Purchasing Department and received twelve proposals. After reviewing them, Zoom interviews were held with the team's top four choices, where potential designers answered questions provided in advance. GHD was chosen based on their score and their price. They're focused on creating a good user experience. They've had experience with other public library websites, incorporating the library catalog and Integrated Library System (ILS) with good results.

Ostrowicki shared that she was impressed with the thoroughness of GHD's answers and their detailed plan, and approved of the choice. Hale asked about the rebranding process. Director Wieber replied that we'll be working in conjunction with City Communications on it, and hope to plan ahead so the website will incorporate the most up to date City branding efforts, and coordinate our timing with GHD's process. Ostrowicki noted that GHD will expect certain assets to be in place before they begin. Sloan asked for a motion. Seacrest so moved. Ostrowicki seconded.

Discussion: Sloan asked, after the one year development and three years maintenance on the new website, what happens next, contractually? Glass replied, once all the proprietary customization is in place, we'd likely seek a Sole Source contract, like we do for the ILS. Sloan asked, if we're not pleased with the result, would we need to start completely over, or can it be hosted by someone else? Glass replied, their work would be proprietary to GHD and we'd have to begin again. Sloan asked, it's been about nine years since the last update? Glass confirmed. Sloan congratulated Glass and her team for their hard work. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Marvin, Hale, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Sloan – AYE. Motion passed 6-0.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Sloan expressed his excitement and thanks, going into the new year, with new united leadership. He's encouraged to go forward with continued planning for a new Central Library for Lincoln.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Glass reported on the progress with the Bookmobile consultant – with Golden's help, the contract was extended so that we can move to phase two of the project, wherein the consultant will put together the detailed specs we've worked out for approval. Phase three will be the acquisition of the vehicles. Glass further shared an update on the Early Literacy grant the Foundation received, slated for iPads at Anderson Branch for use by kids. The iPads have finally arrived.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wieber seconded President Sloan's excitement about moving the library forward. He's focused on making library services the best possible for Lincoln's residents, and hopes that eventually a new Central Library will come of those efforts. The excellent programming work done by staff is moving us toward achieving our big picture goals, as is progress on the new website, and looking towards the new strategic planning process this spring.

Of particular importance is the ConnectED project, our collaboration with Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) that allows all public school students to access to a public library account. Director Wieber shared the intent to make that collaboration more well known to the community, as it's such an important resource. Wieber is monitoring the State Legislature as they consider bills relevant to libraries and intellectual freedom. LCL has solid processes in place to deal with requests for reconsideration, which, unlike some other communities that have struggled with book challenges, helps us successfully work through them.

Overall usage is up 5.5% from last year. Circulation and visits are up 13%. While visits are still down from pre-pandemic numbers, circulation is less affected. This is a place where the website design is particularly important as it shows that while in-person visits are down, folks are making good use of the website and downloadable content.

The parking lot next to Bethany has been sold. We, along with the Law Department and Urban Development are reaching out to the new owner to explore any further opportunities. Hale asked if the new owner's use for the property is known? Golden replied, possibly residential but we're unsure, but we hope to learn more.

Director Wieber shared he's met with the new leadership at City Human Resources, and is pleased they are working on improvements needed to bring talent on board more quickly, a problem departments have been struggling with recently. Shaw asked for more information on the relevant Legislative Bills in the Unicameral so members can communicate with representatives. Wieber agreed to send more information via email.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 a.m.