

Library Board Minutes

September 11, 2017

Bethlehem Area Public Library

President Cathy Reuscher called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ATTENDING: City – Jane Gill, Olga Negrón, Cathy Reuscher, Marie Sterlein, Sharon Yoshida

Bethlehem Township – Janet Barry, Thomas Nolan

Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan

Hanover Township – Jack Nagle

Staff – Josh Berk, Jenne Mante, Erin Poore

Other – Terence Faul (King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul), Elyse Geyer (Buckno Lisicky), Jamie Paxton

ABSENT: City – Emil Signes, Julie Zumas

Sharon Yoshida proposed that Committee meetings, rather than Board meetings, be held on a more frequent basis. She suggested quarterly Board meetings, with Committee meetings established to meet on a regular basis.

Director Berk introduced Jenne Mante, who is pursuing a master's degree in library science and was attending a board meeting for a class requirement.

The June minutes were approved in a motion made by Annamarie Jordan, seconded by Jane Gill, and passed unanimously.

Thomas Nolan, treasurer, reported that all numbers basically jive and while he has two questions, he was fine with the financials. The July financial report was approved, subject to audit, in a motion made by Jack Nagle, seconded by Sharon Yoshida, and passed unanimously.

Thomas Nolan made the recommendation that the BB&T accounts be consolidated and the Room to Grow account closed, with the balance transferred to the Operating account. Jack Nagle motioned for approval, Olga Negrón seconded, and all approved.

DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT:

1. In addition to the emailed report, Director Berk added that Liza Holzinger retired and that the jobs she did were being distributed amongst the staff. This system will be reevaluated and tweaked, if needed, for the new year. He said the library has been busy doing some good things and preparations were underway for the Geoff Gehman event on September 28.

REPORTS:

1. City – none
2. Bethlehem Township – Thomas Nolan said the library bookdrop at the Bethlehem Township Community Center has become so popular that two weekly collections are now needed.

Thomas Nolan also stated that Howard Kutzler, the former Township Manager, has been appointed to fill the vacancy of Kim Jenkins. He also alerted the Board that a survey will be conducted regarding issues facing Bethlehem Township, with some of the questions regarding the Bethlehem Area Public Library, though he does not believe the survey results will have an impact on the Township's membership in the library.

3. Fountain Hill – Annamarie Jordan reported that it is business as usual.
4. Hanover Township – Jack Nagle reported that the revised Bookmobile schedule was being introduced, with two central locations, rather than neighborhood stops. He also asked if the library will be participating in the Bethlehem Halloween Parade, which prompted discussion. Janet Barry suggested opening up involvement to patrons, with children carrying large Bethlehem Area Public Library membership cards.
5. Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library – Sharon Yoshida stressed that all Board members should be members of the Friends group, which is planning a membership event to the Moravian Archives on October 18. Participants will see the original Bethlehem City Charter and enjoy a boxed lunch for the \$15 fee. The annual meeting will be in November and Roman Holiday will be the theme for the 2018 gala.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Strategic Planning: Cathy Reuscher, Sharon Yoshida, Julie Zumas
The committee is planning a survey, which will be looked over by a Lehigh professor to make sure a cross-sampling of participants is realized.
2. Community Outreach: Janet Barry, Emil Signes, Sharon Yoshida
The goal is to have more frequent meetings in 2018, with quarterly events in which the library will participate.
3. Evaluation: Janet Barry, Annamarie Jordan, Emil Signes
Janet Barry apologized for not having Director Berk's evaluation completed and is hopeful things will be ready to present in October.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Adoption of 990: Thomas Nolan asked if everyone understands the purpose of a 990. To maintain a 501(c)(3) status, the Board must file a 990. He stated a Board motion must be made to proceed. Olga Negrón made the motion, Marie Sterlein seconded, and all approved.
2. 2018 Preliminary Budget Discussion: Director Berk stated that aside from the \$.50 increase in the per capita a few years ago, the per capita for the budget has remained the same. He stated that he does not know, at this time, how monies will be allocated and Sharon Yoshida asked if Liza Holzinger will be replaced. Director Berk reiterated that her responsibilities (marketing and development) are now being shared and her remaining 2017 salary is being saved. This will be reevaluated for 2018.

Sharon Yoshida asked if there needed to be an increase in the per capita and Thomas Nolan stated that commissioners are sensitive to any increase, with Jack Nagle in agreement. The recommendation was to not fill Liza Holzinger's position and work within the current budget. Sharon Yoshida stated that Holzinger wrote grants and that will need to be addressed. Olga Negrón added that marketing is a big concern and asked if there is someone on the staff who is able to fill that void and Director Berk assured the Board that there are people with that talent already on staff.

3. City of Bethlehem Ordinance: City of Bethlehem recently passed an ordinance stating that City employees and boards may not accept gifts. It was stated that Article 117 does not apply to the Bethlehem Area Public Library Board because trustees are not employees of the City. Thomas Nolan added that it may be prudent to introduce a gift policy ordinance for the Board and Terry Faul, board solicitor, stated that would be the decision of the Board. Olga Negrón said she does not feel there is a need for such an ordinance for the BAPL Board.
4. Thomas Nolan opened a discussion on proposed Resolution R01-17. The resolution would establish a policy for the authorization by the BAPL Board for the Executive Director to enter into contracts for outside services, including financial services, legal services, and audit services.

Olga Negrón remarked that this expense is a line item in the budget and the Board may direct the library director to find another vendor/company. She stated that boards and nonprofits do not seem to do something like this, although the practice is normal for municipalities.

Jack Nagle said that the line item is seen, but the breakdown of the expenses is not.

Olga Negrón asked if the Board needs to request a breakdown and details.

Sharon Yoshida stated that resolutions seem to be increasing micromanaging.

Thomas Nolan added that the Board does not see letters authorizing things and that the renewal of service contracts just happens without the Board's knowledge.

Cathy Reuscher said this resolution seems redundant since he (Director Berk) is authorized to budget.

Jane Gill said that Director Berk is an effective director who does due diligence in all areas with services to get the best deal possible; so what are we gaining?

Sharon Yoshida called the question.

Janet Barry requested the issue be tabled until the next meeting.

Jack Nagle made a motion to adjourn, and Janet Barry seconded, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m. The next meeting date is October 9.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Barry, Board Member