

Library Board Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024, 8:00 a.m.

BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Joe Shaw, Lisa Hale, Morgan Gerteisen, Patty Beutler, present. A quorum was present. Jackie Ostrowicki, Dan Sloan and Terri Dunlap, Nichole Bogen, absent.

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

President 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 noted that two of the present Board members had not attended last month's meeting, so in order to have a quorum vote, the minutes would be held for approval until the January meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No Public Comment.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration

No report

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

No report – quarterly meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, December 18.

Committee on Finance

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for November, 2024

Treasurer Hale shared that the total Operational expenditures were \$806,670.15. Expenditures from other funds totaled \$843,214.21 for Total Expenditures of \$843,214.21. Hale moved approval of the report. Sloan seconded. Bogen arrived at this time. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Beutler, Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

Committee on Technology

Wieber reported that the committee met and reviewed the technology plan, and current and upcoming projects. Replacement of Public Access Computers (PACs) is in the works, replacement of access points throughout the system is upcoming. The budget is currently partly operational and partly Keno funds. The next Technology meeting will be held on February 26 at noon via Zoom.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation Executive Director Report

Gail McNair was absent – no report.

One Book One Lincoln (OBOL) Annual Report

Bennett Martin Librarian Jen Jackson reported this was an exciting year. Two committee members had to bow out early on. The remaining, smaller committee was full of great people with great new members who happily participated in creating videos for the top ten books. The big highlight was having winning author, Amanda Peters here. Thanks to all who participated with the Foundation for getting her here. Patrons are requesting access to the recorded event, which is still in process. Watching the voting and seeing a runaway hit was exciting. She received good feedback on what folks liked and didn't, as per the impact section of report. Feedback came via the voting site and also one-on-one at book group events.

Wieber observed that E-audio circulation is considerably higher than e-books. Jackson noted that she educates readers that while digital books do return themselves, if you finish and return the item promptly, folks on the holds list appreciate it. Hale noted the 2024 votes and circ totals are down from last year. Jackson noted a couple of factors impacting the top three. *North Woods* is written in an unusual format – following the setting and not the characters. Good feedback was received, but also, lots of folks couldn't get into it. *A Little Devil in America* was another atypical format, being essays rather than a novel. While many committee members were big proponents of the book, it didn't circulate well. Folks who did like it, really liked it.

Hale asked about the statistics on length of holds. Library Coordinator, Rebecca Arcena shared that the top three titles weren't available on Hoopla this year – which is the streaming (simultaneous access) service. For previous years, when they were available, it really boosted the number. Where the titles are available is dependent on publishers. The normal Overdrive hold ratio is reduced for OBOL, for the regular collection, the ratio is 6 holds to 1 copy and for e-audio 8.5 holds to 1 title. Because demand is so high for the OBOL titles, the ratio is reduced to 4-1 on e-books, and 6-1 on e-audio. Fewer formats available results in longer holds and less circulation. Discussion followed.

Jackson shared recommendations for next year will include trimming the number of events offered during the summer. The goal will be for fewer events with higher turnout. Marketing strategies such as using a podcast to promote events is being considered. She reminded the Board that three new committee members are needed. The application for new members is live on the website through January 5, 2025. Submissions for the 2025 titles are being accepted until January 31st. Board members commended Jackson, the OBOL committee and LCL staff for their hard work to put on the event.

NEW BUSINESS

Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries (FLCL) and Lincoln City Libraries (LCL) Mutual Agreement

Director Wieber noted this agreement lays out each party's responsibilities. The Foundation's charge, as a 501c3 is to act as the fundraiser and grant submission agent for LCL. Changes this year were limited to dates. Hale moved approval. Beutler seconded. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale, Beutler – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

FLCL License Agreement for Office Space

Wieber noted the physical address is required for the Foundation's function. The only change this year was the change of office space from Bennett Martin to Walt branch, at the same \$1,200/month rental rate. Walt was chosen as they are an active hub of Foundation volunteers and they are able to utilize the former police substation. Hale moved approval. Gerteisen seconded. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale, Beutler – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

FLCL Book Sale Agreement

Wieber shared that the only changes in the agreement are updating the dates. Per the agreement, sales can be of any type – large, small or pop-up. He noted that the two-year experiment of holding the smaller pop-up sales at the branches

has proven to be a significant drain on volunteers, and has not been as profitable as hoped. They will be paused for the time being. FLCL is still the agent for sales, and income from Thriftbooks is significant and those sales will be continued. For any sale, FLCL receives 10% for costs. Hale moved approval. Beutler seconded. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Gerteisen, Hale, Beutler – AYE. Motion carried 4-0.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Shaw had no report.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Director Glaesemann shared a significantly reduced list of vacancies compared to previous months. Vacancies include the 20-hour Read Aloud Librarian position at Bennett Martin, to be posted after the new year; the 20-hour Heritage Room Curator position which will post before the end of December; Gere is interviewing today for a 30-hour Library Service Assistant and Eiseley has a 20-hour position they are preparing to post.

She shared plans to try out desktop-style Hearing Loops at the service desks. Hearing Loops are magnetic wireless coils that send sound directly to hearing aids or to headphones if the patron needs assistance without using hearing aids. Beutler asked about the cost of the devices, Glaesemann noted the desktop devices are approximately \$300 each. Discussion followed.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wieber shared a sample of the good statistics from November. While physical circulation is down 6%, digital circulation is up 9%. Computer use is up 5%, program attendance is up 10% and meeting room use is up 3%. The increase in attendance and use indicates folks are making active use of libraries for things other than checking out physical books. A sampling of the services offered at LCL include job searches, resume building, how to use LCL's databases, and using the library as a fun space with storytimes and youth programming. Storytime statistics continue to be excellent and Outreach is benefiting from the hard work of all staff who do outreach, including Coordinator Ali Bousquet.

He announced that on January 28th, Eiseley will host a new piece of artwork on a five-year loan from the Museum of Nebraska Art at Kearney. The artist responsible for the piece requested it be placed at Eiseley branch. He also shared that the Foundation will look to the Board to co-plan a going away event for their outgoing Director.

President Shaw noted Wieber's announcement that while LCL has once again qualified for Gold level accreditation from the Nebraska Library Commission, the one statistic on which LCL scored extremely low was the number of staff. Wieber shared that LCL's number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff has remained static for the past 15+ years at 107 FTEs. The other comparably-sized library systems in the Commission's survey had an average number of 125 FTE's, and the median number is 139. Shaw expressed the hope that the FLCL can help find funding specifically for additional staff. Discussion followed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 a.m.