

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE LEMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
COOK AND DUPAGE COUNTIES, ILLINOIS
HELD AT THE LIBRARY DISTRICT EVENT SPACE
50 EAST WEND STREET, LEMONT, ILLINOIS**

August 14, 2018

I. Call to Order

President Kirvelaitis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

The following trustees answered present: Thomas Burton, Jr., Patricia Camalliere, Tom Culcasi, Christine Hogan, Vytenis Kirvelaitis, Catherine Sanders and Michaeline Skibinski. Library Director Sandra Pointon and library attorney Eric Hanson also attended.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Burton and seconded by Trustee Skibinski to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 10, 2018. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed. Trustee Camalliere made another motion, seconded by Trustee Culcasi, to approve the minutes of the special meeting of August 3, 2018. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed. Trustee Sanders then made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Hogan, to approve the minutes of the executive session of August 3, 2018, as amended. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

V. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Skibinski reported that the Library had received a Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Grant of \$27,106.25. An adjustment to the Cook County tax rate due to overpayment in spring tax collections resulted in an adjustment of approximately \$43,000. There was a motion made by Trustee Hogan and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to approve the treasurer's report as submitted:

Illinois National Bank		
e-Pay	\$	1,000.00
Illinois Funds		
Money Market e-Pay		31,158.42
MB Financial Bank		
Interest Bearing		108,936.21
Operating Account (formerly Checking)		24,241.98
Expense Account		1,330.36
Lemont Bank and Trust		
Certificate of Deposit		250,000.00

A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

VI. Approval of Bills

Trustee Burton made a motion, seconded by Trustee Camalliere, to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$65,516.46. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

VII. Public Participation

The event space was filled to capacity. The President asked that the public limit statements to 5 minutes, to allow sufficient time for other participants to speak. He advised patrons that the Board was not able to discuss confidential personnel information during an open meeting. Although the trustees could not engage in dialogue or answer most questions, they wanted to hear the comments of all gathered. Speakers could state their names if they wished, but were not required to do so.

All of the subsequent comments were regarding Children’s Services Manager Mary Inman, also known as “Miss Mary”.

Ann Stout said that Mary Inman’s impact on three generations of Lemont’s children deserved to be celebrated. Mary was a major part of a culture of calm, safety and affection that helped make the Library a great place.

Michael Dunkin thanked the trustees for their service. He knew that the background of many of the Board members was in law and human resources, but felt that the decision to dismiss Ms. Inman was not fact-based. He observed that she worked tirelessly and long hours and said that she should be rewarded for the success of her programs. Mr. Dunkin indicated his dissatisfaction with the Library Director and felt that she was not working in the children’s best interest.

A 13-year-old patron compared Miss Mary’s ability to capture kids’ interest to Mr. Rogers. She had greatly influenced him pairing books with his personal interests and encouraging him to enroll in and volunteer for programs. She fostered his love of learning.

Pam Nogal was on the Library Board when Ms. Inman was hired. Over those 30 years, she had never heard a single complaint about the librarian. She felt that Mary Inman was the Lemont Library and that the Lemont was losing a treasure.

Meredith Galos had been in Ms. Inman’s first storytime and felt that the librarian had been treated unfairly. She said Miss Mary was caring, passionate about reading, loved Lemont’s children and had an amazing gift to make people feel welcome. Ms. Galos questioned the timing of her termination, which fell between the end of summer and beginning of fall programming.

Both Michelle Bernard and her daughter had forged friendships of a lifetime with Ms. Inman. She was grateful for the librarian’s impact on her life and for fostering her daughter’s love of reading. She noted that children and seniors use the library most. Although Ms. Bernard acknowledged that she did

understand all of Ms. Inman's job duties and how well they were performed, she stated that the Library "robbed us and our children" of Ms. Inman.

As a former Board member, Don Turner recognized and appreciated the trustees' uncompensated role in the community. He understood the Board's fiduciary responsibilities and the trustees' inability to defend themselves against many of the previous speakers' charges due to confidentiality and other legal matters. He encouraged his neighbors to give the Board the benefit of the doubt.

Terri Graham was a volunteer with the Friends of the Library. She did not know all of the details behind Ms. Inman's termination, but felt that Miss Mary should hear how much the community loved and appreciated her. Would it be possible to send her letters via email or post office box?

Charmaine Drafke commended Ms. Inman's talent in connecting to multiple generations. She asked the Board how they intended to replace Miss Mary. If someone this valuable was being taken away from the public, the community wanted to know what the Library planned to do next.

A woman asked what percentage of the Library budget was funded by taxpayers. The Director replied that about 90 percent of the Library's total revenue came from local taxes. Given the extent to which the community financed Library operations, the woman asked the trustees to reconsider the termination, which she thought of as a huge disappointment and a disservice to future residents.

Maria Gillette was impressed with Miss Mary's impact on her daughter. She felt that Ms. Inman's termination was a disservice to the children and the community. She also hoped that the Library would reconsider its decision.

A friend of Ms. Inman knew her from the days when the Library was still housed in the Village Hall. She said that Ms. Inman served not only kids, but adult patrons, too, i.e. by starting the Library's writers group. Even many of her days off were spent at the Library. The friend noted that Ms. Inman's disability taught children to accept people with disabilities. She regretted that the children who adored Miss Mary hadn't even a chance to say goodbye to her.

An 11-year-old patron spent 10 years in children's programming at the Library and was always excited to go to storytime with Miss Mary. She thought that the Library made the wrong decision, loved Miss Mary and wanted her back.

Chuck Zdenek traced his granddaughter's voracious reading habit back to Mary. Lemont kids were starting the new school year the next morning (August 15th); so many children who wanted to attend the meeting were unable to. Ms. Inman's termination had caused an uproar in the community. He could not understand how such a decision could have been made without input from parents.

28-year resident Kate Davis had two 3-year-old twins who would run through the Library to see Miss Mary, and she was no longer there. She said something important had been stolen from her children.

Brian Bury remembered the shock on his daughter's face when she saw Miss Mary being escorted from the building, on her last day of employment. The play she had been working on with Ms. Inman had consequently been cancelled. The librarian had also considerably helped his son, who was dyslexic.

Each of Christine Cunningham's five children had amazing experiences with Miss Mary. The kids programs at the Library were relevant and affordable, and Ms. Inman had always been warm and accommodating.

Dennis Belsa shared a letter from his daughter, who had been Ms. Inman's assistant for a couple of years during college. The daughter wrote about Miss Mary's expertise, her dedication to literacy and her skill at developing relationships. She felt that, despite the challenges to libraries presented by electronic media, people were still the heart of a library. Miss Mary was the Library.

Danette McSweeney was a 32-year Lemont resident. After reading about Ms. Inman's termination on electronic media, her daughter in Germany contacted her to find out what had happened. Ms. McSweeney's 6-year-old grandson wrote a letter, asking. "Who is going to help me now?"

A new resident stated that she had moved to Lemont because of its reputation as a good place to raise kids. Her son preferred the Lemont Library to larger libraries in more affluent areas because of Miss Mary, who made the Lemont Public Library "feel both big and welcoming". Since Ms. Inman was such a high-caliber employee, the new resident asked either for her to be reinstated or for the Library to find a really good replacement.

Nancy Calderon did not know Ms. Inman very well, but listening to these stories made her feel the loss. She could not imagine for what reason the librarian had been fired; she just trusted that it was not over a trivial matter. Ms. Calderon thought that patrons had a right to know how Ms. Inman would be replaced.

Lifelong resident Carol Dunkin was 10 years old when Ms. Inman was hired. As a teenager she was a volunteer page, and as a parent she brought her children to Miss Mary's programs. The librarian made everyone feel special. Ms. Dunkin demanded that the Board investigate Ms. Inman's treatment and distributed copies of written comments from people who were unable to participate in the meeting.

Joan Callaghan laughed that she was surprised to hear that "Mary treats all of your children like she does mine". Apparently, Miss Mary made each child feel special. When her family heard the news, they shared many fond memories of her. Ms. Callaghan felt that Ms. Inman's dismissal was a huge loss.

Since the Library was funded 90 percent by taxpayers, Adam Weinberg concluded that the taxpayers were Mary Inman's employers. He wondered what good could come from a government building, constructed using taxpayers' money, if it was an empty shell. If there was no reason to bring kids in, what was the purpose of the renovation? With the increasing distraction of digital media, the reasons for adults to use the Library were decreasing, too. At least the community wanted to foster an educational environment. As there did not seem to be a lack of funds, requiring cost-cutting or layoffs, he asked why Ms. Inman was dismissed.

Annmarie Evans and her six-year-old granddaughter were deeply saddened by Miss Mary's departure and because other neighborhood grandchildren would never know her. She added that Ms. Inman was one of the reasons she visited the Library. She observed that the people attending the meeting were only the tip of the iceberg: Facebook had been lighting up for days since Ms. Inman was let go. Ms. Evans sat on two boards and admitted that being a trustee was often a thankless job. She did not want to jump to conclusions and requested that the Board simply consider the input received from the many residents.

Reverend Glenn Bergmark limited his address to the trustees to five words, "Did you learn something today?"

Maria Gillette asked what the patrons could expect, now that the trustees had heard their feedback. When would members of the public be informed of any change in the Library's decision to terminate Ms. Inman's employment?

A man inquired whether minutes of the Board's meetings were publicly posted.

President Kirvelaitis responded that he would answer these questions in his report.

VIII. Reports

A. President

The President thanked the public for their comments and their passion regarding Miss Mary. The Board would take all of the remarks and emails under consideration. The Board's regular meetings are conducted once monthly. Board committees convene separately to discuss specific issues and make recommendations to the Board, i.e. the Policy and Personnel Committee handles personnel matters. Minutes of meetings are posted to the Library website once they are approved by the Board. The minutes from the special meeting of August 3, 2018, for example, would be posted online the following day, since the Board had just approved them. The minutes of this, the August 14, 2018 meeting would not be posted until after they were approved, presumably at the next month's meeting, September 11th. In compliance with state statutes, a public body could not take action on any items that were not included on the meeting's agenda.

B. Library Director

No report.

C. Attorney

No report.

D. Committees

- 1. Finance**
 - 2. Building and Grounds**
 - 3. Policy and Personnel**
 - 4. Planning and Goals**
 - 5. Technology**
- No reports.

IX. Old Business

A. Library Director Review

The performance review was deferred to the next monthly meeting.

X. New Business

A. Early Closing for Staff Training, November 1, 2018

The Director requested permission for the Library to close early, at 4:30 p.m., on November 1st for staff training and team building. A motion was made by Trustee Burton and seconded by Trustee Skibinski to approve the early closing of the Library on November 1, 2018. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

B. Continuation of Fine-Free Period for Children's/Teen Books

The temporary suspension of fines for teen and children's books over the summer months had been very successful. The number of children's materials checked out increased, and the decrease in fine revenue was offset by passport application fees and other charges. The Director encouraged extending the fine freeze through the end of September, as September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. There was a motion made by Trustee Hogan and seconded by Trustee Skibinski to approve the extension of the fine-free period for children's and teen books and audio books through September 30, 2018. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

C. Fine Forgiveness for Veterans Drive October 1--November 15, 2018

The Library's eleventh annual drive to benefit Hines Veterans Hospital and the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans would be held between October 1st and November 15th. The Lemont-Homer Glen Rotary Club and Ladies Auxiliary of the Lemont VFW Post 5819 would again partner with the Library in *Helping Veterans on the Home Front*. For each article donated from request lists, patrons would receive either \$1.00 in fine/fee forgiveness or a \$1.00 coupon off printing, copying or faxing services, or used book sale items. A motion was made by Trustee Hogan and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to approve fine forgiveness and a discount on fees for the period of October 1 to November 15, 2018. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

D. Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance 2018/2019-01

A draft of the ordinance was distributed to the Board. A legal notice had already been published, as required, in the local newspaper. The Budget and Appropriation Hearing would be held directly before the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, on September 11, 2018 at 6:45 p.m.

XI. Communications / Correspondence

The Director expressed her appreciation to the generous sponsors of the summer reading program, including the Friends of the Library. A full list of sponsors was included in the Director's Report and would be posted on the Library website.

XII. Executive Session

There was no need to move into executive session.

XIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Trustee Burton made a motion and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ramona Stephens-Zemaitis