

**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**

September 11, 2018

I. Call to Order

President Kirvelaitis called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The President requested that all remain standing for a moment of silence to honor the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

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 also attended.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Trustee Hogan made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Camalliere to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 14, 2018. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

V. Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Skibinski noted that the Library had received over 90 percent of its 2017-2018 levy year fall tax collection from Cook and DuPage Counties. The Finance Committee was considering a transfer of funds from a lower interest-bearing account to one offering substantially higher interest rates. A motion was made by Trustee Hogan and seconded by Trustee Sanders to approve the treasurer’s report as submitted:

Illinois National Bank		
e-Pay	\$	1,000.00
Illinois Funds		
Money Market e-Pay		32,234.19
MB Financial Bank		
Interest Bearing		1,068,438.36
Operating Account (formerly Checking)		25,000.00
Expense Account		1,177.87
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

There was a motion made by Trustee Burton and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$41,358,25. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

VII. Public Participation

The President greeted the assembled members of the public. He requested that patrons be courteous and respectful during this part of the meeting and reminded them that the Board was unable to discuss confidential personnel information and performance issues during open session. Although the trustees were unable to engage in dialogue or answer most questions, they truly wanted to hear all comments. Speakers could state their names if they wished, but were not required to do so.

The President noted that the Library was a team-oriented organization, valuing the contributions of each staff member. “No specific individual is the Lemont Library.” The Board supported all of its team members, including the Director. He also took the opportunity to announce that Rachel Cooley would be returning to the Library as the new Children’s Services Manager, effective October 1st.

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

Lifelong resident Carol Dunkin said that Ms. Inman was irreplaceable. She admonished the Board on its complacency and unresponsiveness. She told the trustees that the Director reports to the Board, and the Board reports to the taxpayers. Ms. Dunkin demanded an investigation into the alleged high employee turnover.

A statement of a 13-year-old patron was read. He praised Miss Mary’s drama skills and said that she had inspired him to write his own children’s book.

Current Lemont resident and former Library employee Marilyn Devries had worked directly under Ms. Inman. She praised her former supervisor as a good manager, who had been responsible for exceptional children’s programming. She felt that Ms. Inman succeeded despite lamentable cuts to the children’s department budget. If circumstances did not change, the Library was setting up the next Children’s Services Manager for failure. She was disappointed in the Board and thought that the community should have been afforded the opportunity to say goodbye to Ms. Inman.

Michael Dunkin said he had collected 1,100 signatures on a petition demanding that Ms. Inman be reinstated with back pay and that the Director be investigated by an independent third party for misconduct. He proceeded to tell each trustee how many votes s/he had received in the last election. He complained that his messages to board members had never been answered. Evidently, Ms. Inman’s employment termination was considered final, and no investigation had been initiated into purported misconduct by the administration. Mr. Dunkin also claimed that 5.5 percent of the Library’s budget was set aside to pay legal fees, which was eight times the local average, and that four times more was spent on adult programs than children’s. He questioned a supposed Christmas bonus for the Director, the

Library's new alcohol policy and the Library's accounting practices, asking whether the trustees demonstrated the community's values.

A resident of 44 years and a frequent patron of the Library, Bernadette Turner had witnessed the Library's development from its early days down the hall from the village jail to its most recent expansion, which had been accomplished without a tax increase. She applauded the variety of Library programs. The previous were hallmarks, she felt, of a thoughtful, concerned, responsible Board. Ms. Turner pointed out that the community was not in possession of all of the facts. Ms. Inman's friends had been speaking in her stead. If need be, Ms. Inman could present her side in court to an impartial jury. In the meantime, she urged her neighbors to wait "in civility, kindness and patience".

Miss Mary had been the favorite part of 19-year-old Megan Atheron's Library visits. Ms. Inman interviewed her for a school project position, and she had been working for the Library just two weeks when Ms. Inman was let go, so Ms. Atherton never had the chance to work with the librarian who had inspired her to aspire toward becoming a children's librarian herself.

Michelle Bernard understood that she did not know the whole story, but she was concerned that Ms. Inman's employment had been ended. Was it worth the cost of a lawsuit by an employee in a protected class? She questioned the Director's leadership skills and backed an investigation into the aforementioned allegations. It was obvious, she said, that the community did not support the Board's decision.

Natalie Quinn professed that, although Ms. Inman looked after all of the children in the Library, she had been like a mother to Ms. Quinn's kids. Her older children had even sent Miss Mary a Mother's Day card.

Annamarie Evans had presented a program at the Library at the Director's invitation and sat on two other boards. She was disappointed that the Board had not included a line item in its agenda to discuss Ms. Inman, and that all the Board was providing was an opportunity for the public to vent their frustration. This was very bad publicity for the Library. Ms. Evans maintained that, since Ms. Inman did not have children of her own, the community's children were hers, and that the Library was Miss Mary. Since her position had already been filled, the community's opinion seemed to have made no difference.

A friend of Ms. Inman reiterated that it was an injustice and inhumane to let the librarian go so close to retirement. Ms. Inman had been unable to speak for three days after her employment was terminated. She prioritized her service to the Library at a sacrifice to her own needs; for example, by scheduling her surgery around her job. What could she have done that would merit such horrible treatment? The friend assured the Board that she would have been outraged, even if Ms. Inman were not her friend.

Caitlyn Sarna considered Ms. Inman a second mother. She remembered Miss Mary brushing her knotted hair one summer, when both parents were working. Ms. Inman thought so highly of Ms. Sarna that she sent her Ivy League university papers to proofread.

Unnamed woman #1 enjoined the public to run for trustee seats in the next election. Pointing at the board members, she exclaimed, "We need to vote them out."

At this point, Brian Bury was ashamed to know people on the Board. He told the trustees to resign.

Chris Montalbano disliked the policy limiting check outs to 4 books and was angry that her cardholder status was not looked up when she forgot her library card at home. Ms. Montalbano also claimed that the Board's bad decision would cost the community both Mary Inman and a lawsuit. Taxpayers' money would be going toward heating an empty building and lawyer's fees.

Christine Hare was sorry to have missed the last meeting in September, having not heard about it. She asked what type of lesson the Library was teaching children by firing Ms. Inman. She indicated that she would rather give every penny to Ms. Inman than to the Library.

Unnamed woman #2 inquired when the Board had last witnessed such a large public turnout, other than the previous month. She argued that Ms. Inman had done nothing wrong and had spent 30 years helping raise the community's children. In her opinion, Ms. Inman's replacement would lack commitment, staying in the position for a little while, before moving on. She accused the Board of paying a substantial salary, plus bonuses, to the Director, while ignoring the rest of the staff.

Michelle Bernard then asked the trustees if they had spoken to Ms. Inman to hear her side of the situation.

President Kirvelaitis emphasized that the Board was not trying to be evasive; by law, it simply could not breach confidentiality. He also cleared up some misconceptions. The Board was made up of volunteers; members did not interview or review employees. Committee meetings, like the Policy and Personnel Committee meeting held on September 6th, required a posting at the Library 48 hours before the meeting. In the past, there was little or no turnout for a committee meeting, yet the Library had always gone the extra mile to invite the public, in view of how important it was to keep people informed.

The friend of Ms. Inman inquired how the Board hired staff.

President Kirvelaitis responded that the Board hired the Director, and the Director hired staff members.

Unnamed woman #1 declared, "Then the Board needs to go!"

Unnamed woman #3 had been a teacher for 14 years. She felt her situation was similar to Ms. Inman's, as her teachers union had just made an unfavorable decision by voting for a contract, which required longer hours, staff decreases and program cuts. She was a member of the Lemont Junior Woman's Club, which made sizable donations to local organizations, including the Library. She asserted that the issue with Ms. Inman had not gone unnoticed. She hastened to add that this opinion was hers and not the Club's.

The friend of Ms. Inman asked whether the Board agreed with the Director on hirings and firings and if all of the trustees had voted against Ms. Inman continuing in her position.

President Kirvelaitis explained that the Policy and Personnel Committee reviewed the information and made a recommendation.

One patron demanded that the committee members be named.

The President reminded the public that this part of the agenda was not meant to be a dialogue and that the members of all of the Board committees were posted online.

Annamarie Evans remarked that the Board was just patronizing the public, assuming that the situation would eventually blow over. The community, however, wanted answers and would discover the facts, one way or another.

The President advised the public that the Board was obligated to keep personnel matters private.

Unnamed woman #4 wondered how the damage could be repaired or made right, not just out of concern for their children, but for Ms. Inman, in a show of respect and to celebrate her accomplishments.

Although the Board should not plan an event, Michelle Bernard believed that the Library should finance such a celebration to provide closure.

VIII. Reports

A. President

The President wanted to clarify a misconception. A statement had been made earlier that 5.5 percent of the Library's budget was set aside for legal fees. That was incorrect. Last year's actual expenditure was \$3,915. Besides, Library spending on attorney fees was capped by the approved 2018/2019 Budget and Appropriation Ordinance at \$135,000 or five percent of the amount appropriated by the Ordinance.law

B. Library Director

The Director addressed a claim that the Children's Department had decreased staff and were operating fewer hours. In fact, the Children's Department had increased staff members to provide programming and desk coverage. Whereas, in the past, there had often been no one at the children's desk, it was now manned 68 hours per week, during all of the Library's operating hours. The Library would continue to expand its children's offerings, as September had, thus far, been a busy Library Card Sign-Up Month, and there were already waiting lists for some of the programs.

C. Attorney

No report.

D. Committees

1. Finance

The Committee would have a report at the October meeting.

2. Building and Grounds

The Committee would have bids for snow removal and elevator maintenance next month.

3. Policy and Personnel

The Committee met on Thursday, September 6th to review the drafts of changes to two policies, prior to a first reading of each. The members also moved into executive session to discuss matters that had been brought up during the Public Participation.

4. Planning and Goals

No report.

5. Technology

Temporary replacement computers had been installed at the adult reference desk. New computers were on order and would arrive shortly..

IX. Old Business

A. Roof Evaluation

There was nothing new to report at this time.

B. Library Director Review

The performance review would be discussed in executive session.

X. New Business

A. Approval of Budget and Appropriation Ordinance 2018/2019-01

Copies of the ordinance had been distributed to the public. A motion was made by Trustee Hogan and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to approve Budget and Appropriation Ordinance 2018/2019-01. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

B. Set Date for Truth-in-Taxation Hearing

The date for the Truth-in-Taxation hearing was set for Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 6:45 p.m., before the regular November meeting.

C. Rescission of Medical Reimbursement Plan--First Reading

The medical reimbursement plan had become an incentive for employees to choose a PPO insurance plan. If it were rescinded, the HMO and PPO plans would be on fairly equal footing. No current employees were impacted by this policy, so it had, essentially, become obsolete.

D. Amendments to Circulation Policy--First Reading

Among the proposed amendments, resident borrower status would be extended to owners of any Lemont property (not just residential), as well as commercial lessees. At patron request, the loan period for DVDs and Blu-Ray sets with three or more discs would increase to three weeks and fines would be decreased to 50 cents per day. Late fees for teen and juvenile materials would be lowered to ten cents per day. The maximum fine charged for most returned items would be \$7.00, or an identical replacement would be accepted. The Director noted that earlier claims made by a patron about using her card and a checkout limit of four books were inaccurate. Per the Circulation Policy, B. Lending Policies, (1) "All borrowers must present their own library card to check out materials. An ID will be accepted if the patron's picture has been added to the

borrower’s library account”. Also, patrons are limited to 250 books checked out from Pinnacle Library Cooperative libraries and 25 books from reciprocal libraries. The limits are different for other materials. Trustee Hogan made a motion, seconded by Trustee Skibinski, to waive a second reading of the amendments. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed. Trustee Camalliere then made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Hogan, to approve the amendments to circulation policy, as submitted. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

XI. Communications / Correspondence

Power-Palooza II, Making Reading Your SuperPower was kicking off on Wednesday, September 12th, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

XII. Executive Session

There was a motion made by Trustee Culcasi and seconded by Trustee Hogan to move into executive session to discuss personnel issues. A roll call was taken: Trustees Burton, Camalliere, Culcasi, Hogan, Kirvelaitis, Sanders and Skibinski—ayes, no nays. The motion passed.

XIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Trustee Skibinski and seconded by Trustee Culcasi to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. A voice vote was taken: all ayes, no nays. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ramona Stephens-Zemaitis