

**ROSWELL P. FLOWER MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Tuesday, March 12th, 2024**

Present: Mrs. Evans Mr. DiFabion
 Ms. Dittrich Ms. Calarco
 Ms. Mesires Mr. Bolton
 Mr. Caughlin Mrs. Renzi-Falge
 Mrs. Seymour Mrs. Tarzia
 Mrs. Lavarney, Friends Board President
 Mrs. Lisa Ruggiero, City Council Liaison

Excused: Mrs. Weldon

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 4:00pm by Mrs. Evans. Mrs. Evans welcomed Mr. Steve Bolton to the board as the new board member.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: Mrs. Evans introduced Matt Corey from NCLS.

Independent Treasurer: Mr. Corey from NCLS attended the board meeting to discuss the board's interest of possibly hiring an independent treasurer and its necessity or why it would be a good idea. This person would be appointed to the board as the treasurer, and would not be a voting member of the board. They would be a separate role from the day to day financial responsibilities (i.e. Mrs. Carr's role) and would be a person that is from an external organization like an accounting firm in order to be an additional set of eyes to review the financials on a regular basis. It's not a requirement for libraries to have an independent treasurer, but could be considered a best practice. The board proceeded with asking questions to Mr. Corey regarding this position, and its requirements. The board will further consider what Mr. Corey discussed with them.

Trustee Continuing Education (CE) – Mr. Corey also briefly discussed the trustee education requirement in reference to the annual report and what is considered a qualifying education credit, which includes most trainings offered through NCLS and the Annual Meeting. There are also some other grey area items that may qualify that can be considered as well, and the board member can contact Mr. Corey directly to verify. He explained that it is the board president's responsibility to keep track of everyone's completed courses, and it's the board member's responsibility to provide the self-assurance form to the president upon completion. This information is then also added to the annual report each year.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Caughlin moved to approve the minutes from the February 13th, 2024 meeting, Ms. Seymour seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED EXPENSES: Mr. DiFabion reported that the consolidated expenses looked relatively normal aside from the accounting and professional fees due to the audit costs being exceptionally higher than expected. Mr. DiFabion looked back at the audit costs over the past ten years, and noticed that the costs since just last year, have increased a little under \$3,000.00. The board discussed releasing an RFP to potentially look for a new accountant based on the rise in costs over the past several years. Mrs. Carr disclosed that she reached out to the city purchasing manager and asked if they had any input on this, and they stated that there was no reason that the board could not do this, but would also check with the city comptroller. The comptroller may consider providing more funds towards the board audit to make it more affordable. Ms. Mesires moved to approve the report as presented. Ms. Dittrich seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Mrs. Evans did not have a report.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr. DiFabion reported that the accounts are currently around \$230,000.00. Mrs. Carr added the CD maturity dates to the report, as requested. The year to date profit and loss, it should be reflecting about 66% with only four months left to the fiscal year and currently the income is higher (84.71%) than it should be, which is great. In particular is the donations. The appropriated fund balance is still unused. As for expenses, they are continuing to trend behind at about 51.38%. A large portion of that is the accounting and professional fees and everything else is pretty in line of where they should be. Adult graphic novels are a little ahead as well as grants and donations expenses. The month of February grants and donation report shows a quiet month of only \$430.00 received. For the year to date grants and donations, shows about \$53,270.00 received. And total unexpended grants and donations of \$108,224.05 for all time. Ms. Mesires asked about spending down the grants and donations fund. Mrs. Renzi-Falge stated that when the new budget is created, it can definitely be discussed. Additional funds could be used towards supplies and professional education. Mr. DiFabion also commented that the cost of the Makerspace materials will also need to be considered. Ms. Dittrich moved to approve the Treasurers Report as presented. Mrs. Seymour seconded the motion. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Building & Grounds

Makerspace plans and estimates will be available for board review per Patrick Currier. I also have cost estimates ready for the items we will be filling the room with.

I'm still waiting to hear about the progress of our windows. I will let you know as soon as I have any information.

Programming/Department Highlights

From Brittani LaJuett: "February's Sew What meetings marked 6 months of the reoccurring program meeting and it's been a huge hit. In fact, I recently had to expand each month's meeting to include morning and evening timeslots due to high demand. So far we've made: hair scrunchies, winter hats, pillows, and have many fun projects on the horizon. Each meeting includes a project they complete and get to take home with one skill being the main focus of the project. Thus far, 36 different tweens and teens have had the opportunity to sew at least one project with many caregivers mentioning they are thankful we offer this program because they don't know how to sew, don't have the patience to teach their tween/teen, or can't really afford to teach them; so clearly we are meeting a need in the community. I have been able to accommodate so many tweens and teens in part due to the dedication of my evening volunteer, Willow Cousino (affectionately referred to as Thread Master Willow- owing to their skill and experience sewing) and staff on hand to help with the morning group. In the future, I hope to invest more in sewing equipment and include outside experts on specific projects."

From Ashley Pickett: "Encompass Recreation - Open Doors Certification

During the month of February, Flower Library became Open Doors certified through Encompass Recreation, a local nonprofit that aims to provide recreational opportunities for youth with high support needs and beyond. This process involved a small interview with an Encompass Rec representative and resulted in a new sensory kit for our Children's Room and a sticker to display on our side door. The Open Doors decal reminds library users that:

- there is a policy and expectation that our staff is tolerant and accepting of those with differing support needs
- this location is making a public statement that they welcome those of all abilities
- increased movement and noise is allowed
- sensory kits are available

While our library is actively working to be a welcoming and inclusive place for all, this designation is the next piece in the puzzle of promoting this message to the community. It will help patrons (both cardholders and non-cardholders alike!) recognize our commitment to including all members of community.

Program - Composting with Cornell Cooperative Extension

On February 7th, adults were invited to learn more about composting with Sue Gwise, a local Horticulture Educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension. A large number of adults attended this educational event - 15 - making this an unexpected spring-themed hit in the middle of a cold, snowy season. Each participant left with the knowledge needed to start their own composting journey, and each gathered up some tips and tricks along the way from our seasoned presenter."

Miscellaneous

The Tug Hill Tomorrow Land and Trust has provided us with Community Explorer Backpacks thanks to a generous grant they received from Watertown Savings Bank. About the project: "Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is working on a regional effort to supply Tug Hill region libraries with Tug Hill Adventure Backpacks for inclusion in their loan circulation for patrons. The land trust is applying for funds from various grant programs now through early 2024 to fund the purchase and donation of these backpacks to our libraries. Each backpack focuses on one of four topics: Birds, Animal Tracking, Insects, and Pond/Stream Life. Each backpack contains various identification and activity resources for exploring a backyard, park or trail of choice, such as a pair of binoculars, a tracks chart, a story book, a hand net, etc. We donate each assembled backpack to you. In addition to learning resources, each backpack includes a list of contents (with replacement value listed), helpful inserts like how to care for binoculars, hiking safety tips or leave no trace guidelines, and activity suggestions, and a list of public outdoor trails/sites to visit.

We will keep 1-2 copies of these backpacks in our office:

1. to be able to promptly replace any items or whole backpacks to libraries if loss or damage occurs, and
2. to have an extra to bring to libraries if there for an in-person program. That's right - we're also offering free programs at libraries featuring the backpacks.

To date, eight libraries have received two backpacks each (birds & animal tracking). We would eventually like to supply each interested library in our region with 4 backpacks, Flower Memorial Library being the first to receive all 4 backpacks." –Linda Gibbs, Program Facilitator

We received notice from NCLS that Assemblyman Scott Gray has given our library (and others in his district) \$1180 in Bullet Aid. We are thankful to the Assemblyman and his support of local libraries in his district.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Building & Grounds:** Engineer Pat Currier is meeting with Suzie for the Makerspace on Wednesday, March 13th at 1:30. Mr. Caughlin encouraged board members to attend the meeting.
- **Finance & Investment Committee:** No Report. Planning a meeting soon.
- **Friends Committee and Liaison report:** Mrs. Lavarney reported that Trish Michael, who is a children's author is going to be presenting on Saturday April 27th at 2pm. May 1st at 5pm is the Friends Annual meeting, and Ellen Marie Wiseman is the keynote speaker.
- **Policy Committee:** The special events policy will be discussed under old business. Otherwise no report.
- **Marketing Committee:** No Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Special Events Policy: Mrs. Evans asked the board if they had an opportunity to review the policy that was provided in the board meeting materials, and if they had any feedback. The board discussed if there was a need for the policy to be revised, as well as how often a special event is requested of the library. A discussion took place regarding these topics, including whether or not there is a need for a policy at all. Mr. Caughlin motioned to keep the first two paragraphs to the current special events policy, and to remove the rest. Ms. Mesires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bylaws review information and discussion: The board received a letter of engagement from the law office of Stephanie Adams in their board meeting packet. Mrs. Evans asked the board for a discussion and input regarding the letter. Mr. Caughlin stated that he feels that it would be beneficial to engage with her office to do a bylaws review and obtain the confidence that they are current and correct, as well as establish a relationship with this new attorney for any matters that may arise in the future. Mrs. Evans agreed with Mr. Caughlin, and that this would be a great way to begin a new relationship with a different attorney. Mr. Caughlin moved to authorize the director to sign the engagement letter with Stephanie Adams. Ms. Mesires seconded the motion. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Annual Report: Ms. Mesires motioned to approve the annual report as presented. Mr. DiFabion seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TASK REVIEW:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Ms. Mesires motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. DiFabion seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 5:15pm.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on April 9th, 2024 at 4:00pm in the South Reading Room at the Flower Memorial Library.

Andrea Carr, Recording Secretary