

Broome County Public Library
Board of Trustees

Regular Session Meeting Minutes – 05.09.24 Meeting opens, 5:32pm

Members Present: Jeffri Boisvert, Charmian Foster, JoAnne Hanrahan, Kate Miller-Corcoran, Katie Bowers, Al Buyck, Jill Kissick-Castro, Jillian Sandy

Not Present: Vikki Collazo, Sarah Glose

Also Present: Josias Bartram, Kathleen Shores, Cheryl Sullivan

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

- None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None

MINUTES: April 25, 2024

- **Motion to Accept the April Minutes: JoAnne Hanrahan, Second Al Buyck. Passes unanimously.**

OATHS – Chad Miller

- Oath was not administered as Chad Miller will not be joining due to work commitments
- A new Vestal resident is needed to fill this position - please start looking!

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- Succession planning
 - Josias attended a succession planning workshop given by the Hoyt Foundation, offered to 10 of their grantees. Workshop focused on policy review and the concept of “leave it better”.
 - Actual succession plan work will be done with a consultant over the next ~two months. This will include, among other things, defining roles within the library team (staff, admin, board, Friends, etc) and updating job descriptions.
- Org chart
 - Speaking of which.
 - The org chart features every currently funded position, including 17 full time positions. Woo hoo!
 - Positions highlighted in green are new positions since 2021. There’s a lot of green! This reflects how supportive the County has been in adding 1-2 new positions each year as we build the library back up. Yay!
 - The org chart with staff names is not available publicly in order to prevent harassment of staff.
 - Every position is currently filled other than the Deputy County Historian. The County Historian reports directly to the County Executive, but operates in the library building. They are not seeking to fill the Deputy position at this time.
- Policy 5000-1 Chain of Authority

- The original draft of this did not include the Assistant Director position, which has been added to the new draft.
- The policy needs to be rewritten to further reflect current practices.
- Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy
 - Trustees are all supposed to sign the COI policy form. So far, only three of us have. That said, the policy states that even if it is not signed by a trustee, the policy is still enforced as if it were.
 - Should we be signing this yearly? Yes, as your circumstances and therefore COI can change.
 - This policy needs to be updated, too. Does it apply to staff? Should they sign it upon hiring? Currently, staff only sign it if a COI arises that they need to disclose - including financial interests, power-imbalance relationships, etc.
 - Staff should at least see the form during their onboarding process so that they are familiar with it.
 - Presently, this policy states that the Board decides on disciplinary action if any. *Well*. This leaves a lot of ambiguity. When should the Board address/not address? In what timeline? We don't currently set disciplinary actions for staff (except for the Library Director), so should we really be the ones doing this at all?
 - Yet another policy to be reviewed by the Policy Committee!
- Financial Disclosure Form
 - *Throws confetti* Everyone handed in their Financial Disclosure forms on time! Great job everyone.
 - These regularly get FOILed (Freedom of Information Law, also called FOIA). Happened last year, and may happen again in the future.
- Decker Foundation donation
 - Each trustee at the Decker Foundation gets \$5,000 to donate to a cause of their choosing. This year, former Library Trustee Jim Leonard chose us!
 - He will be donating funds specifically for a combination work station/play area, which allows parents to work while their young child is in a safe play space next to them. Wonderful idea. Thank you Jim and Decker Foundation!
 - **Motion to Accept the Donation: JoAnne Hanrahan, Second Jill Kissick-Castro. Passes unanimously.**
- Estate of Jeannetta M. Williams
 - We have been named as beneficiaries of the estate of Jeannetta M. Williams. The amount the Library will receive is unclear. It sounds like there is a property that must first be sold. So, unsure of the amount, but President Kate Miller-Corcoran can sign to accept.
 - **Motion to Accept the Donation: JoAnne Hanrahan, Second Al Buyck. Passes unanimously.**

OLD BUSINESS

- Harm Reduction Vending Machine
 - BCPL has been offered a Harm Reduction Vending Machine from a partnership between BC Health Department and ACBC. It would be filled and maintained by the Health Department. This fits with previous requirements we wanted met in previous board discussions regarding such vending machines.
 - Presently, we are waiting to receive a potential contract and picture of the machine.

- Currently, the machine that would go in the library is at the Greyhound Bus Station. They do not fill it and do not want it.
 - The machine would be free to use and would contain both Narcan and fentanyl test strips. These can be life-saving: Narcan can temporarily reverse the effects of overdose prior to definitive care, and fentanyl test strips prevent substance users from unknowingly using fentanyl that may be mixed into other substances.
 - The machine would look like a regular vending machine and we believe can't be easily operated by young children.
 - Staff is open to having it onsite, but want clear policies re: safety, potential increased traffic, etc. Policy needs include, but are not limited to, a need to address:
 - Do test strips encourage people to bring their drugs out in the library?
 - Does that encourage use in the library?
 - Does that lead to a chance of entrapment?
 - People will not necessarily be trained to administer Narcan. Does it come with directions?
 - Where would it be placed? Rotunda? Peer Support Room?
 - Not really policy, but a note that we would also need to think about signage.
 - There's lots of support for this from County leadership. Some vending machines are already located throughout the county, and there are going to be many more placed as part of a mass deployment across the state. We will not be the only site in Binghamton or Broome County, and it's therefore less likely to increase traffic, so much as serve the current patrons.
 - Questions:
 - Is it possible to start with just Narcan and continue discussions about the test strips?
 - Can we see data on the fentanyl test strips - specifically, do sites with these machines containing test strips see increased drug usage at their site? Increased traffic? Other significant concerns or benefits?
 - Next steps: Josias needs to get the contract, picture, more information, and more staff input. Discussions will continue and a vote will be held in the future.
- Board documents and email
 - It seems like the password protected Board documents page on the website works! See Josias' May 8th email ("Board documents on the website") for details if you have not tried signing in. Speak to Josias directly if you have any trouble accessing the page.
 - This will serve to replace the large binder of policies and procedures that Trustees used to receive. You're welcome, trees! 🌳
 - Committees
 - Charm sent out committee descriptions to everyone. Thanks Charm!
 - A discussion was held about how we can keep abreast on committee activities.
 - Announcements of upcoming meetings in the minutes? (No enthusiasm).
 - A shared Google calendar? (somehow even less enthusiasm).
 - The winner: each meeting will include verbal Committee Reports, including what the Committee did this month, and what is planned. (Mild enthusiasm, yeah!)
 - It's okay if a committee doesn't have something to share every month. Some committees, like Personnel and Nominating, are more seasonal.
 - Committee Reports
 - *Marketing*: met and reviewed their Strategic Plan action items.

- *Nominating*: looking for candidates from Vestal to fill Chad's spot. We will require a formal letter of resignation from Chad, as he was already appointed and approved by the legislature.
- *Finance*: Met tonight and reviewed the Financial Report. Caught a typo. Democracy in action!
- *Personnel*: Nothing at this time - Josias' review happens in the Fall.
- *DEI*: Staff met and gave suggestions about next steps. Scheduling a follow-up meeting.
- *Policy Review*: Jeffri and Josias will be meeting next week to go through a long list of policies and pick their favorites (i.e. the ones most urgently in need of review/revision). Jeffri will then schedule a meeting with the full committee.

REPORTS

- April financials
 - In revenue, the remaining amount is incorrect and is actually ~\$90K. Thank you, Finance Committee!
 - We are on track in all areas. Josias has been following payroll particularly closely and it looks great - we're through 33% of the year and 31% of the payroll budget.
 - We have received some grants that are not reflected in the current reports.
 - Basically, things are going well in part to everyone's hard work, and in part to literally the best NYS budget for libraries in decades.

- Director's Report - verbal, because Josias is still regaining his land legs after his leave.
 - There is a new model of Binghamton on display upstairs near the elevator! It used to be in City Hall. Binghamton Parks and Rec built the display table. It's a lovely addition and has been well received by patrons.
 - Keith the page has pointed out that we need a Godzilla in the model city. He is right and he should say so.
 - There does need to be some signage added to the display to provide more information/credit/etc.

 - The bus station is attempting to decrease loitering in their facility, and as a result, we are seeing increased traffic.
 - The YMCA used to send people to the library, so this may be a similar situation.
 - Having lots of new people all at once has been a challenge. Some have created scary situations and violent threats. Security is active, and bans are helping somewhat, but it does create more work for the staff.
 - Staff feel mostly favorable about the peer support room. It give people a place to go and connection to services, so they are encouraging patrons to use that.
 - The medium-term plan is to expand that program to cover more hours. It really helps staff when it is open.
 - Staff report that the peer support room and the thoughtfully-executed bands are helping them feel safer.
 - Other libraries across the country are having debates about homeless populations in the library. Josias believes we are striking a good balance between being welcoming, being supportive, being safe, and trying to balance the increased workload for staff.

 - Facilities
 - The Break Room is almost done! JoAnne and Josias are facilitating the Literacy Volunteers move to accommodate the much needed space.
 - We are putting in gaming systems, relaxing furniture, etc.

- Should we have some kind of privacy pod for phone calls? This can be discussed at a future meeting.
 - The air handlers are in the process of being scheduled to be replaced in October by the county. The building will be closed for a few days to accommodate. We will decide on the days once replacement is imminent.
 - Sealant coat will also be applied to the roof during this time.
 - Summer will be focused on construction aid.
- Annual Reports were distributed and board members encouraged to share them with their network.
- The Code of Conduct is currently being reviewed and worked on by the county legal department.
 - Kathleen is making sure other regularly referenced policies in the library match this, and Jeffri and Josias will be combing through old policies that need to updating next week.
- The projector in the Decker Room is fully broken. Not great considering how many people use that room and need that service! It's under maintenance contract, so we are following those procedures.
- Staff Reports
 - The social media report looks great - excited to see the different types of interactions across posts.
 - We did have an issue this month with a Jewish American Heritage Month post. The post (put together by Jewish staffers) highlighted Jewish books that are *not* about the Holocaust, highlighting the diverse and joyful stories of Jewish people. Unfortunately, we unknowingly posted it on Holocaust Remembrance Day, and people understandably voiced their anger and sadness in the comments.
 - An apology was written by the same staffers that composed the original post and has been well received.
 - The original post will be reposted next week.
 - Staff collaborated quickly and handled it well. The apology comes across as genuine, which it was.
 - The board requests that Josias let the staff know how impressed we are with their speed and thoughtfulness in the handling of the error.

ATTACHMENTS

- April minutes
- Documents related to the estate of Jeannetta M. Williams
- Harm Reduction Vending Machine
- Policies
- pm 5000-1 Chain of Authority – draft of edits
- pm 0029-0 Conflict of Interest
- Organizational Chart 2024 (for trustees only)

6:59pm Motion to Adjourn: JoAnne Hanrahan, Second Al Buyck. Passes unanimously.