

Broome County Public Library
Board of Trustees

Regular Session Meeting Minutes – July 11, 2024 Meeting opens, 5:31pm

Members Present: Sarah Glose, Al Buyck, Jeffri Boisvert, Vikki Collazo, Charmian Foster, JoAnne Hanrahan, Kate Miller-Corcoran, Katie Bowers, Jillian Sandy

Not Present: Jill Kissick-Castro

Also Present: Josias Bartram, Sherry Kowalski, Kelly Sullivan, Emily Pape, Alex Fisher, Rebecca Stone

GUESTS

- Kelly Sullivan, Emily Pape

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

- Will not be discussing lost item notices, as originally proposed

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None

MINUTES: June 13, 2024

- **Motion to accept the minutes: Al Buyck, Second Vikki Collazo. Passes unanimously.**

APPOINTMENTS

- Jeremy Liss – PT Library Clerk for Local History
- **Motion to accept appointment: Charm Foster, Second Jeffri Boisvert. Passes unanimously.**

RESIGNATIONS - none

NEW BUSINESS

- Performance Review process
 - Worked on by staff, and staff feedback was compiled by Sherry
 - The current system is clunky, cumbersome, and contained in a 15-page document that is so old it cannot be converted easily to PDF 🤖
 - The current compromise is a spreadsheet of items taken from everyone's job description with a likert scale (needs improvement → exemplary)
 - Going forward:
 - Want to implement an ongoing assessment throughout the year, including during regular meetings between supervisee and supervisor. If staff are doing well or need improvement, this will be discussed/planned for/check in on during the year. This will help ensure there are no surprises come review time.
 - Prior to the annual performance review meeting, Supervisee will complete a self assessment
 - Supervisor will review their written assessment and the supervisee's self-assessment in meeting between the supervisor/supervisee, and both will sign off on the final assessment.
 - Supervisees will also be able to provide feedback on supervisor as part of supervisor's annual review.

- While this ongoing, double assessment will be for everyone, some departments want to keep a checklist with scale while others departments want more quantitative discussion/writing
 - Admin would like to give the departments the option to decide which system they like best.
 - **Motion to pilot the new Performance Review process: JoAnne Hanarahan, Second Jeffri Boisvert. Passes unanimously.**
- Bylaw review
 - Bylaws are held by the Nominating Committee, so they will review them first along with the Executive Committee, and then the appropriate sections will be sent to corresponding committees to review/propose rewrites/etc.
 - Policy committee will lead assigning policies for feedback, official rewrites, and formatting, etc.
- 8 Pine Street
 - This house is surrounded on three sides by the library, including the staff parking lot. The property has been vacant for two years. Prior to vacancy, it was student housing and was maintained. Now however, the property is abandoned, not maintained, and home to several squatters who are camping on the porch.
 - There is a fair amount of drug use and build up of trash, strong, bad odors, and most troubling, human excrement on the sidewalk. Staff must walk by/through this to get to their jobs from their cars. Facilities staff are unfortunately regularly having to remove human waste from the sidewalk.
 - Additionally, some patrons that have been banned from the library due to harassment and/or violence toward staff/patrons are now going to hang out on the porch and harass library staff as they walk to work.
 - This is presenting a health and safety issue for staff, as well as people camping out at the home.
 - City of Binghamton is issuing code violations, which owners minimally address, but owners are not paying county taxes and mostly ignoring communications from the county and city.
 - Suggestion to mount a really bright spotlight and cameras on the library, pointed at the property. There are lots of vacant properties/squats around. This one is literally in the middle of the library property, so the goal is just to make the squat less attractive to stay at.
 - Possible permanent resolutions:
 - Private buyer purchases it and fixes it up
 - City acquires it
 - Both of the above solutions will take a long time given the unresponsive homeowners.
 - Will this come back and make the library look anti-homeless?
 - The concern is not that people are sleeping there. It's the excrement on the sidewalk, the smell, and the harassment of employees. The library works with many homeless patrons everyday and has made concerted efforts to train staff to connect people to services, started the Peer Mentoring program, etc.
- Prospective Trustees
 - Emily Pape and Kelly Sullivan, both of Vestal - both found us through the work of the marketing committee (Success!)
 - Emily Pape
 - From Iowa, by way of Michigan. Been in Vestal for 17 years.
 - Health economist, United Healthcare
 - History in nonprofits (Care Compass)

- Works in the Medicaid space
 - Interested in joining board because her Mom is a retired librarian, and she has school-age children
- Kelly Sullivan
 - Renewable Discipline Leader - engineering and project management
 - Works in local land development projects
 - ASCE – Ithaca Section Younger Member Group President, 2012-2020 - found a love of mentorship there
 - Tier Energy Network - helping get local clean energy sector up and running
 - Wants to help strengthen community, set positive example of giving back/being active citizen for her children
- Q&A
 - Term length
 - Committees - how many, when they meet, etc.
 - Rebecca weighs in that we are a well-functioning and likable board! 🌸🏆 Thanks Rebecca!

OLD BUSINESS

- 2025 Budget proposal
 - A new system/format is in place, so everyone is still learning this
 - There is also a narrative letter that goes with the spreadsheet, which was not reviewed during this meeting
 - Starts with Revenue at top. “2025 Budget” is the request column.
 - Line 562 - TRANSFER FROM GENERAL FUND is our request from the county. We are submitting a request of \$1,783,293 - up 18% from last year. There will be a meeting with the county in a few weeks to review the budget and the increased request.
 - Line 189 - OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS is from the City of Binghamton, our other major source of funding.
 - Line 808 - OTHER STATE AID is from NYS. This is a prediction.
 - Salary and Benefits
 - Fairly significant raise for everyone across the board - proposed by the union, coming from the county to make county wages more competitive across all departments. Includes both a \$0.50 per hour for everyone, plus a 3% COLA raise.
 - New positions drive a lot of the 18% increase. These include:
 - FT Senior Account Clerk
 - FT Library Assistant - Programs and Outreach Coordinator (Bachelor's Degree)
 - PT Librarian 1 (Reference and Youth Services)
 - Promotion for current Youth Services Librarian 2 to Librarian 3, recognizing years of service and leveling position up to level of Info Services.
 - Contractual Expenditures
 - Tried to put 3% increase in most areas to meet inflation
 - More funding to digital resources - services like ebooks, NYTimes, Newspapers.com, etc.
 - Everything in these lines requires contracts or bidding
 - Chargebacks
 - Money in our budget that is going to other county departments, for example Security or IT.
 - These are set by the county
 - Debt

- We have done significant capital improvement projects, and we are paying those down.
 - The Finance Committee supports moving forward with this budget proposal.
 - **Motion to move forward with submitting the current budget proposal: Al Buyck, Second JoAnne Hanarahan. Passes unanimously.**

- Code of Conduct
 - This was sort of languishing because we didn't have an attorney assigned to us. Code of Conduct has been approved by the BCPL Board and is used in practice. We need it to be reviewed by an attorney. Oh look, Alex Fisher is here! 🙄
 - Alex will review this first in his library assignments. Hooray!

- Policy Review
 - Jeffri is going to schedule a meeting of the Policy Committee to review things live - policies look like there is a lot more than there actually is because some things are redundant, there are blank pages, etc.
 - Relevant committees will be contacted to weigh in on relevant policies.
 - Many of these will likely need to be re-typed - many were originally designed to be able to run through a typewriter and the formatting is quite a mess.
 - Josias proposed reviewing deletions at the next meeting.
 - Staff worked on the following policies on Staff Day
 - Unattended Children Policy
 - Internet Policy

REPORTS

- June financials
 - We will be under budget in Revenue, mostly in Interest and Rentals
 - Literacy Volunteers - we budgeted to raise their rent, but they opted to reduce their space instead, which allowed us to build the break room, which has been a big boost to staff morale.
 - Miscellaneous - fines and fees are being eliminated, which is good, but does decrease revenue.
 - Totals in the categories are what matters, not the line by line
 - We used more overtime than budgeted
 - But we're under budget overall with salary and benefits
 - Will have leftover benefits line, which can transfer to contractual expenses
 - Contractual Expenses
 - Building and Grounds supplies will end up negative
 - Electronic Access Materials will be way over budget, hence the increase in the 2025 budget
 - Copy machine rentals are way over budget - we owned our public printers and were buying ink. We switched to leased printers from Toshiba, which is managed by IT, including ink. When they were first set up, the printer was default set to print in color, which is 6x more expensive than black and white. This led to major overages. The problem has been fixed (the setting has been changed to black and white).
 - Were able to do many things this year we didn't directly budget for, and still stayed on budget.

- Director's Report
 - Staffing - progress is being made, but we are still in a difficult position.

- Emergency hours will be in place for likely another month or two more.
 - We are hiring a new clerk soon and will be beginning interviews for a Librarian 1.
 - We also have a temporary PT librarian (30 hours/week), and she's been a big help.
 - Josias and Sherry have been helping cover reference desk phones, everyone is doing more than their job description right now. We are trying to move quickly to not burn out staff.
 - Need to more widely post the Librarian 3 job to increase the applicant pool.
 - Misinformation has been spreading about how the library handles homelessness and bans
 - Info is being spread in part by banned patrons
 - We are very careful not to abuse our code of conduct ban policy. People get banned for violent behavior, stalking, multiple instances of verbal harassment of staff and patrons, etc. Patrons are banned for violations of our Code of Conduct, they are *never* banned for their housed/unhoused status.
 - It's upsetting to see the library brought up repeatedly as an example of why the unhoused rights legislation is needed, considering how much work we do to make the library a space for all members of the community, including the unhoused population.
 - It is noted that the library may be coming up as an example during this City Council debate in part because of our uniqueness as an institution - there is no other place to hang out and get resources without having to buy something, other than the parks (sort of. They don't have the indoor space/computers/internet/etc that the library does).
 - Facilities
 - Air handlers are here and ready to go in! Looks like it will happen during the week of Indigenous People's Day. Library will have to be closed to the public. Will be an opportunity to do offsite training with staff.
- Staff Reports
 - Reports are stripped down because everyone is super busy due to the staff shortages
 - Drop in programs (expected) due to reduced staff/hours
- Committee Reports
 - Strategic Plan Committee
 - Laura Haynes met with all departments for feedback, some goals have been moved to 2025 due to staffing
 - Garden grant is in place
 - Youth Services updates are going out to Educators
 - Seed Library is in place
 - Report will come out in November
 - Finance Committee
 - Reviewed the budget, as you saw
 - Nominating Committee
 - Been working with Emily Pape and Kelly Sullivan
 - Personnel Committee
 - Taking notes on the new performance review plan
 - Marketing Committee
 - Thank you for your work to get the new trustee candidates!
 - No current action items

- Going to work with Laura to identify action items in a couple months
- DEI Committee
 - Meeting next Tuesday
- Policy Committee
 - Spoke about current activities/plan above.

Motion to move into Executive Session at 7:09pm: Charm Foster, Second Jeffri Boisvert. Passes unanimously.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:22pm: Sarah Glose. Second Al Buyck. Passes unanimously.

7:23pm pm Motion to Adjourn: Sarah Glose, Second Jillian Sandy. Passes unanimously.

ATTACHMENTS

- June minutes
- 2025 Budget Proposal
- Policies
- Performance Review
- Code of Conduct
- Bylaws
- Lost items notice
- Resumes - Kelly Sullivan, Emily Pape, Jeremy Liss (Trustees only)