



SHOREWOOD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
August 9, 2023 Approved Minutes

Trustees Present: Donna Whittle, Alex Dimitroff, Ling Meng, Jon Smucker, and Kara Espera

Attended via Zoom: Elvira Craig de Silva

Excused: Alex Dimitroff

Others Present: Library Director Jen Gerber, Library Office Manager/ Confidential Secretary Angela Andre, and Shorewood Village Manager Rebecca Ewald

Guests observing: Library Clerk Sarah Grummert and Adult Services Librarian Hayley Johnson

1. **Call to order:** at 5:15 pm, the meeting of the Shorewood Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order by Board Vice President Jon Smucker.

2. **Statement of Public Notice:** Ms. Andre confirmed that the meeting had been posted and noticed according to law.

3. **Citizens to be heard on items not on the agenda**

Shorewood Village Manager Rebecca Ewald made a public statement. Ms. Ewald expressed gratitude for all of the work that the trustees have been doing this year. She stated that it's been a valuable experience transitioning with the new Library Director and said it has offered the opportunity to look through the lens of the library.

Secondly, Ms. Ewald offered herself and the other village administrators as a resource to the Library trustees for clarification on meetings law, postings, and notification requirements, etc. The Village administration conducts meetings every week, so they are well versed in the guidelines around public meetings. Lastly, she noted that she is glad for the opportunity to sit in on a Library Board meeting.

4. **Consent Agenda:**

ACTION: Trustee Espera motioned for approval of the entire consent agenda. Trustee Meng seconded. All voted in favor; motion carried.

5. **No items pulled from the consent agenda**

6. Additional topics not on the agenda

Director Gerber reported that a long-time patron and former library staff member, Pat Albrightson has passed away. Pat worked closely with Youth Services librarian, Heide Piehler. Pat's wishes were to have memorial donations made to Shorewood Public Library in lieu of flowers. Jen has been in contact with Pat's husband Bob, who has visited the library multiple times this week to drop off donation checks. Donations have been made in person as well as online through a link on the library's website. Online donations are going to the Friends of the Library who will then transfer them to the Library. Director Gerber wanted to take this opportunity to thank the many generous donors as well as the Albrightson family.

After a question from Trustee Smucker, Director Gerber explained that the funds are being deposited in the library's general gift account.

7. Library Director's Report

- **New Librarian**

Quinn Brakob (they/them pronouns) has been hired as the new Inclusive Services Librarian. This is their second day of work and they have expressed their excitement to be working here. Over the next few weeks, Quinn will be get acclimated to the library and our patrons through reference services. They will then be trained on the library's digital resources and assigned their areas of collection development which will include young adult, graphic novels, science fiction/fantasy, parts of non-fiction, movie and TV DVDs, and music.

Further down the line, Quinn and the rest of the staff will have conversations about programming and what is needed in terms of young adult and inclusive services.

Director Gerber welcomed the trustees to introduce themselves to and welcome Quinn.

- **Assistant Director Search**

There are eleven qualified applicants for the Assistant Director Position. The interview panel consists of Director Gerber, Dr. Deborah Blanks who is the EDI consultant contracted by the Village, Youth Services Librarian Heide Piehler, and Shorewood Village Assistant Manager Chris Anderson.

The group met last week to narrow down the applicants. Several of the candidates were sent questions to answer via email to further narrow down the pool. Five candidates have been selected to be interviewed. They are receiving five of the fifteen interview questions in advance of the panel interviews, all of which will be held next Monday. If further interviews are required, they will then be scheduled, or, if a choice is made, Director Gerber is prepared to make an offer next week.

- **Summer Celebration**

This was another very successful year for the annual Summer Celebration due to the hard work and dedication of Librarian Heide Piehler. Also essential was the participation from community volunteers and other library staff including Youth Services Aide Nancy Beck. It is an “all hands on deck” event for library staff. Attendance was reported to be back to pre-pandemic levels with approximately 1,265 people enjoying the festivities.

Trustee Smucker gave a specific shout out to Heide for crawling under the stage to unlock it because she was the only one who knew how to do that.

- **Budget and Budget Timeline**

Documents presented to the board listed requirements asked of Village department heads by the Village Manager and Finance team as well as Jen’s own priorities for when information will be presented to this Board and the Village Finance Committee. GMF plans to give their estimate of the Permanent Endowment spendable amount early next week. The Friends of the Library have been very generous with a \$33 thousand donation for 2024. Lastly, Jen has connected with Wells Fargo to settle the portion of the bequest monies being held there.

Trustee Whittle asked when the Board would see a draft of the budget. Trustee Smucker, chair of the Library Board’s Finance Committee, explained that he had hoped to have some information for today’s meeting but that was not possible because as they are waiting for some essential budget reports from the Village. Jon noted that they should have the necessary reports by the next meeting of the finance committee and will therefore present more information at the September library board meeting.

8. Action: Library Board Bylaws - Revision

A minor change to the bylaws (on page three of the document) was proposed. This would change the number of members on the Personnel Committee from two to three.

Section 4. Personnel Committee.

- a) The Personnel Committee shall be composed of ~~two (2)~~ three (3) members of the Board chosen ideally for their knowledge and experience in personnel matters.

ACTION: Trustee Whittle motioned to amend the Library Board Bylaws as recommended and circulated to the Board. Motion seconded by Trustee Espera. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

9. Informational: Personnel Committee Report

Trustee Craig de Silva reported that at their last meeting, Director Gerber spoke about the first days and orientation of the new Inclusive Services Librarian. Jen also reported on the schedule reorganization that she and Interim Circulations Services Manager Carolyn Curran have worked very hard to complete. The new schedule will provide a structured model so that staff members will have more regularity and know the times and days they are scheduled.

They also discussed the Assistant Director hiring process.

Trustee Whittle reported that there were twelve responses from staff to the Director evaluation form. There were four paper responses and five responses from Board trustees. She stated that it has been past practice for the trustees to meet to discuss the results in a closed session. The Personnel Committee then has a separate meeting with the Director to present a summary of survey responses and to discuss any board recommendations and future goals.

10. Informational: Finance Committee Report

Trustee Smucker gave an investment update; reporting that all three GMF/Lange Bequest accounts have grown this year and are up between 8 and 11 percent.

The committee also has a recommendation to bring to the Board. Money intended to be used towards renovation was pulled from the GMF accounts last year and is currently sitting in a Village account. The committee proposes that the money assigned to the renovation which is currently being held by the Village, be returned to the Board Directed Reserve fund at GMF so that it can be invested and possibly collect additional dollars. This will be an action item to be voted on at the September Board meeting.

Trustee Smucker explained the reasons for this recommendation:

- the delay of the renovation project as decided upon by the Board,
- the installation of a new Director with different visions for the renovation,
- and a significant amount of time having passed since the original pricing estimates.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Finance Committee that, rather than using the pulled funds to push forward with an outdated renovation plan, they instead look at the project with fresh eyes and with new estimates.

Part of the reason the Finance Committee is confident with this action is that GMF has confirmed that they have no problem with the Library writing checks directly from our account as needed (to pay specific bills of specific amounts). This would be Trustee Smucker's recommendation for best practice going forward so that all of the money is held by GMF and not in transit through the Village. Previously, a large chunk of the money was withdrawn based on estimates and allocated afterwards.

11. Informational: DPI Trustee Essentials: TE 14: Library Board & Open Meeting Law <https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/trustees>

12. Communications

None.

13. Items for Future Consideration

None.

14. Adjourn: Trustee Whittle motioned for adjournment; seconded by Trustee Espera. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.