

Phillips Public Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 30, 2023

Trustees present (in person or via zoom):

Becky Steinbach, Brittany Weisrock, Bruce Marshall, Galen Azbell, Jenny Markle, Laura Tomaszewski (zoom), Marc Peterson, Meredith Hueckman

Trustees absent:

Staff present:

Rebecca Puhl, Jody Eckert (zoom)

Call to order/establishment of a quorum

Meeting opened by Brittany at 5:05 p.m.

Public Comments

Shirley Smith--Smith commented on the evaluation of Director Puhl on the agenda. Smith claims that Director Puhl meets the ethics requirements of the ALA for library directors. Smith asks that board members keep in mind Puhl's efforts to create an inclusive place with materials for the whole community as the board considers Puhl's evaluation. Smith views Director Puhl as a hero for championing minorities.

Pastor Enderle--Enderle pointed out that over the past year, persons objecting to certain materials based on their moral objections have been labeled "book banners." Enderle attended a county board meeting where Director Puhl claimed that she would not purchase books that contain "hate speech." Enderle asks: "What is the difference between members of the community objecting to certain books based upon their sense of morality and our Head Librarian refusing to purchase books based upon her personal sense of morality?"

Comments on questions from the public submitted at the February meeting

None submitted

Communication and Correspondence

Becky received a phone call from the IFLS office. A borrower was upset that an LGBTQ sticker was inside one of our books. Becky spoke with the IFLS personnel and with the borrower and explained the board's decision regarding the issue. This incident bothered Becky.

Approval of 2/23/2023 minutes

Motion made by Bruce

Seconded by Marc

To approve the February 23, 2023, minutes as presented

Motion passed.

Reports:

1. Treasurer's Report

Reports of board funds provided through February. No questions. No action needed.

2. Director's Report

Becky provided comments on her written report. Adult book clubs are expanding. An author is zooming in for Books to Movies next time. Storytime is still struggling, but Head Start is coming regularly. Kim has been filling in for Jake (on vacation). Becky has applied for grants to provide better shelving, but nothing has come in so far. Becky would like to create a section called "New Adult" for older teens up to age 26. Jody would also like to create a new section called "Inspirational" so readers looking for those materials can find them better. This would require moving some shelving around. Meredith asked about plans for the summer children's program. Becky says Jake is working on it--lining up the kick-off party entertainment, reading programs, etc. No action needed.

3. Staff Meeting Minutes

No staff meeting this month. No action needed.

4. Circulation report

Ebooks check-outs are increasing. Overall circulation is still down for February. Meredith noted that March circ is definitely up. Brittany thinks circ would go up if we reorganize books in the adult section by topic (similar to a bookstore). Becky is interested in any additional ideas.

Unfinished Business:

1. Discussion/Action on Library Building Project

a) Discussion/Action on funding new magazine racks. Bruce suggested asking Jesunas or any other local fabricator about making a similar piece; perhaps we could get a better price. Beth suggested Northwoods Fabrication from the Home Show. Becky is concerned that the magazines are not on display and patrons are getting frustrated. Would local items take too long? Jenny suggested purchasing less expensive racks for a short-term solution if local options take a while. No action taken.

New Business:

1. Discussion/Action on PPL Disaster Plan

Becky P. provided a preliminary version of a disaster plan. Bruce suggested talking to the emergency government director for tornado safety information. We might be able to contact someone through the Sheriff's Department. Jenny suggested pairing down the document as much of it does not apply to our library and materials. Also, perhaps looking into proper storage for at-risk items (ie the paper microfiche and yearbooks) is more effective than flood planning. Galen and Bruce suggest digitizing historical records; perhaps the historical society can help. The cost has been prohibitive in the past. Becky will continue to work on the inventory, phone number lists, etc. Bruce reminded Becky that a video inventory would be best; it should be stored off-site or in the cloud.

2. Discussion/Action on Phillips Public Library Board Bylaws

Wording of Article IV, section 8 adjusted to “guided” rather than “governed.” Bruce suggested a simplified version of Article V, section 1. No action taken.

3. Approve March 2023 Bills

Motion made by Galen

Seconded by Becky

To approve March 2023 bills “above the line” in the amount of \$5981.87 and “Below the line” in the amount of \$139.82.

Motion carried.

4. Director Evaluation

Bruce mentioned that we need to get the Director Job description out to the board members. Also, Bruce suggests that the board go over the form then get the finalized document out to board members, Becky, and to the staff. Becky S. is willing to go over the form and compare it with the job description. Updated forms should be sent out prior to the next meeting.

5. Convene into closed session to discuss Director Puhl--not needed

6. Reconvene into open session--not needed

7. Discussion/Action on subject of closed session--not needed

8. Reading of questions from the public for comment at the April meeting

- Question: none submitted

9. Other new business to add to the agenda for the next meeting

- None suggested

10. Set date and time for next meeting

The next meeting will be held *Thursday, April 27, 2023*, at 5:05 p.m., in the library community room. A zoom link will be provided.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Jenny

Seconded by Brittany

To adjourn

Motion carried.

Brittany adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Markle