

Phillips Public Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2023

Trustees present (in person or via zoom):

Galen Azbell, Brian Ernst, Meredith Hueckman, Jenny Markle, Marc Peterson, Kristi Speer, Becky Steinbach, Beth Tenut, Laura Tomaszewski (joined zoom 6:12), Brittany Weisrock (arrived 5:18)

Trustees absent:

Bruce Marshall

Staff present:

Rebecca Puhl, Jody Eckert

Call to order/establishment of a quorum

Meeting opened by Becky S. at 5:06 p.m.

Public Comments

Janene Ravet--Janene gave an explanation of the Brave Books collection--a set of children's picture books that have been requested by multiple patrons due to the books' content and educational value. She presented to the board the Brave Book collection, paid for and donated by the community. Janene and the donors request that the library subscribe to the collection to purchase each monthly book as it is released. Written statement and book information given to each board member.

Norma Brotz--Norma explained the role of the Bible in the lives of Christians. She maintains that God's Word is the authoritative guide for a person's stability in the world.

Shirley Smith--In light of the Director evaluation on the agenda for the meeting, Shirley stated that Becky does a good job of serving the whole community. For example, she makes sure Christians and non-Christians have books they want at the library.

Comments on questions from the public submitted at the previous meeting

None submitted

Communication and Correspondence

None for this meeting

Approval of 5/4/2023 minutes

Motion made by Jenny

Seconded by Brian

To approve the May 4, 2023, minutes as presented

Motion passed.

Reports:

1. Treasurer's Report

No new report. No action needed.

2. Director's Report

Becky provided comments on her written report. The book clubs are doing well. The new sections in the adult collection are in the process of being shelved. The library has a new projector; an electrician is needed to wire it into the community room. The MORE budget meeting is soon; an increase is coming. The county bill has been sent for the 2024 budget; funding is going down, but we can ask for an increase of percentage. New reports are in the meeting packet--Adult and children's programming recaps. Meredith asked about advertising and funding for programming. Puhl stated that FB, the website, flyers, and word of mouth are the primary means. We do have donations from the community. The board discussed mobile checkouts for programming events. We are participating in Girls Night Out--treats, pop-up book sale. Other ideas for promoting circulation included: a book check-out scavenger hunt, raffle, book bingo, etc. No action needed.

3. Staff Meeting Minutes

Report provided. Blue text sections are links. No action needed.

Brian asked about the plan for the Brave Books. Becky asked to discuss them at the next meeting.

4. Circulation report

Becky offered various graphs. March circ was good. April was back down.

Unfinished Business:

1. Discussion/Action on Library Building Project

The magazine racks are here and put into use; they should work well for a while. New quotes for shelving are in. Now we can focus on funding. New furniture can wait for now. The one exception is a nice reading chair in memory of Billie Cox.

2. Discussion/Action on Library Board Bylaws

Motion made by Brian

Seconded by Beth

To adopt the amended bylaws as presented.

Motion passed.

3. Discussion/Action on Library Disaster Plan

Meredith suggested a wording change to indicate that staff would close the library in the case of severe weather and prolonged power outages. Also, instructions to call the power company in the event of an outage along with a current phone number were added. Becky was asked to read over the plan yearly and update any contact information as needed. The board agreed that they do not need to vote on the plan again unless substantive adjustments are needed.

Motion made by Jenny

Seconded by Galen

To adopt the disaster plan as amended.

Motion passed.

New Business:

1. Approval of May 2023 Bills

Motion made by Kristi

Seconded by Brian

To approve the May 2023 bills as presented--\$2750.26 above the line and \$350.00 below the line.

Motion passed.

2. Election of Board of Trustee Officers

Motion made by Brian

Second by Marc

To keep the slate of officers as is for the coming year: Brittany (President), Becky (Vice President), Bruce (Treasurer), Jenny (Secretary).

Roll Call vote:

Galen--yes

Brian--yes

Marc--yes

Becky--yes

Brittany--yes

Jenny--yes

Kristi--yes

Meredith--yes

Beth--yes

Motion passed.

3. Discussion/Evaluation of current book budgets

Overall circ is down, but circ for new items seems to be on track for the children's section. Because circ is down, shelf space is limited. Many weeded books from this year were purchased during 2019-2021 (see report). Becky believes this short time on the shelf indicates a poor use of funding. Jake and Becky both feel that they have plenty of money for books, even with the new budget in place. Jenny suggested slowing purchasing for children's books (aim for around \$600 per month rather than \$900) and monitoring circ through the summer. Also, board members agreed that Jake must be very choosy in purchasing books that will circ well. Board members asked that books be displayed better (cover out) so that older books attract interest and get checked out more often. Also, members suggested putting pictures of new books online to advertise them and increase circ. Brittany suggested that Instagram is a better place to advertise YA materials than Facebook; she offered to help Becky set up the account to make it more user-friendly for Becky and staff.

Motion made by Beth

Seconded by Kristi

To hear another report in September to evaluate how the current book budget is affecting the children's section.

Motion passed.

4. Time for reading of questions from the public for comment at June Meeting

- Shirley Smith--"What percentage of the funding for children's books would be taken up by subscribing to the Christian children's books series the 1st public speaker spoke of?"
- "How does the circulation report put together? How does it affect the budget?"
- 1. "Why brave books not accepted previously?"
- 2. "25% [down] in circ. What's behind [lowered] circ? Obvious? (Covid is done.) Maybe staff?"
- 3. "Why do you feel the need to [raise] budget when you are buying everything you want [and] then some"?
- 4. "Why does one person decide all adult books [and] one for children? Bias would play a role. If they are not being checked out [and] are being weeded, that seems like a waste."
- "A collection of 10 Books from Brave Books publishing was donated by many community members, to the Library, and presented to the Board on May 25, 2023. How will the Library Board monitor the community's requested subscription and ensure this series does not get pulled. This is a request from 'this community'--NOT other systems/communities in the M.O.R.E. system."

5. Director Evaluation

6. Convene into closed session to discuss Director Puhl

Motion made by Kristi

Seconded by Marc

To convene into closed session

Roll Call vote

Galen-yes

Brian-yes

Marc-yes

Becky-yes

Brittany-yes

Laura-yes

Jenny-yes

Kristi-yes

Meredith-yes

Beth-yes

Motion passed.

7. Reconvene into open session

Motion made by Brian

Seconded by Meredith

To reconvene into open session

Roll call vote

Galen-yes

Brian-yes

Marc-yes

Becky-yes

Brittany-yes
Laura-yes
Jenny-yes
Kristi-yes
Meredith-yes
Beth-yes
Motion passed.

8. Discussion/Action on subject of closed session

The Board informed Becky that her job performance is good overall. A full set of documents and comments will be provided to her at the next meeting. Becky asked that any verbal comments be made in closed session or one-on-one.

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

- Brave Books discussion--Director asks the board to review the books this month
- Galen would like to discuss the possibility of board member evaluations
- Jenny mentioned that choosing meeting day/time for the year is in the Bylaws as something the board should do at the annual meeting. Since it wasn't on tonight's agenda, she suggests that we discuss it next month.

10. Set date and time for next meeting

The next meeting will be held *Thursday, June 29, 2023*, at **5:30 p.m.**, in the library community room. A zoom link will be provided.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Jenny
Seconded by Becky
To adjourn
Motion carried.

Brittany adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Markle