

Phillips Public Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2023 (regular August meeting)

Trustees present (in person or via zoom):

Galen Azbell, Brian Ernst, Meredith Hueckman, Jenny Markle, Bruce Marshall, Marc Peterson, Kristi Speer, Becky Steinbach, Beth Tenut, Laura Tomaszewski (zoom)

Trustees absent:

Brittany Weisrock

Staff present:

Rebecca Puhl, Jody Eckert (zoom), Evelyn Azbell (zoom)

Call to order/establishment of a quorum

Meeting opened by Becky S. at 5:30 p.m.

Public Comments

Shirley Smith--A small group of Christians have been organizing to attack children's right to read at the public library for more than a year. They don't really love others; they are haters. They bullied board members and staff members. This month, *Flamer* is being challenged. Shirley is asking the board to be fair and treat this challenge the same way as *Elephants Are Not Birds*.

Comments on questions from the public submitted at the previous meeting

- None submitted

Communication and Correspondence

Approval of 8/1/2023 minutes (regular July meeting)

Motion made by Jenny

Seconded by Kristi

To approve the August 1, 2023, minutes with one correction: The issue of the LGBTQ stickers was put on the agenda at the request of Marc Peterson rather than Becky Puhl.

Motion passed.

Reports:

1. Treasurer's Report

Report provided through the end of July. No action needed.

2. Director's Report

Becky provided comments on her written report. No action needed.

3. Staff Meeting Minutes

Report provided. No action needed.

4. Circulation report

Becky offered various graphs. Increased programs in August correlated with increased (above Park Falls) circulation. Kristi asked for a breakdown of materials checked out by category in order to see what materials are circulating well and where they are not. A discussion occurred regarding contacting the DPI to ask for credit for ebook circulation. No action taken.

Unfinished Business:

1. Discussion/Action on Library Building Project

Becky presented a new quote for shelving and furniture for the adult and children's areas. Bruce is concerned about the total funds and the ways the funds would be spent. Rolling shelving is pricey--do we need all the shelves to roll? Kristi asked what the price difference would be for stationary versus wheeled shelves. Becky will look into it.

Laminated ends and tops account for much of the cost also. Would we want to consider anyone local for this work? Custom office desks could be built by Mr. Jesunas or Jeff Kemkis (spelling?). A cabinet business in Rib Lake is another possibility. Bruce mentioned the need for storage; he wonders whether some staff window space could be covered by storage units. Jody says the windows are important to see into the children's area and the front door. Evelyn agreed.

The board toured the library and compared it to the layout plan. Becky will look into options and questions and give an update next month.

2. 2024 Budget update

Marc and Becky P. recently presented appeals to the City for a 6% budget increase. September 26th is the next budget meeting, and Becky will attend.

New Business:

1. Approval of August 2023 Bills

Motion made by Meredith

Seconded by Galen

To approve the August 2023 bills as presented--\$4241.86 above the line and up to \$543.19 (includes provision for wall display units for children's area) below the line.

Motion passed.

2. Discussion/Action on statement regarding stickers

Becky Puhl had sent out a sample response by email. Jenny expressed concern that the statement makes sense coming from Becky but not as an official board statement. Bruce says Becky's statement begs people to continue the discussion, and we have already addressed the issue twice. Becky says her statement is meant only as her personal comments and not as an official board statement. No action taken.

3. Discussion/Action Library Friends Group

Becky S. would like to see a Friends group established to help with book sales and other things that fall on the shoulders of staff but don't need to. Becky P. would like to see this group take over for the Foundation. Bruce explained that the purpose of the Foundation is for fund-raising, primarily. A Friends group could be more hands-on. Becky thinks our city is small enough to merge the two purposes into one group. Bruce and Kristi explained further that the Foundation allows for donations under a 501C3 with different tax treatment than may be available otherwise.

Becky S. reiterated that she saw the Friends group at Cadot and loves the idea for Phillips. The board discussed: How would we get one started? Who would be the face of the group? Bruce will contact Neenah regarding their group. Becky S. will contact Cadot. Becky P. will contact PF.

4. Discussion/Action on Library Mission/Future

Current mission is in packet on p.35.

Regarding circulation and the library's mission, Becky P. feels that circulation is a by-product of the mission rather than the goal in and of itself. Jenny suggested an update and will email it to Becky. *The mission of the Phillips Public Library is to enrich lives by promoting literacy, learning, and community.*

Survey discussion: Should we conduct another survey to help us reach the needs of our community? Perhaps a combination of an online survey, an in-person question of the month, and a monthly meeting would bring in feedback. Could we distill our questions down to 12?

Long-range planning: Meredith is interested in tracking material use by type with yearly reports. Becky can get reports for broad categories but not specific aspects of non-fiction (not Dewey numbers, for example).

5. Discussion/Action on challenged materials policy/procedure

Becky presented an idea and proposal in writing in the meeting materials packet. The Board likes step 1 and step 3. The consensus is to eliminate step 2 as it does not involve the board as a whole. The last line should be modified to reflect that materials decided on by the board will not be revisited. Becky will make changes and bring the proposal back to the board next month. Sending any suggestions to Becky by email will be helpful. Bruce reminded everyone to be careful of email; avoid replies that create a walking quorum. No action taken.

6. Challenged materials to be discussed at September meeting:

Elephants Are Not Birds by Ashley St. Clair

Flamer by Mike Curato

7. Time for reading of questions from the public for comment at the Sep. Meeting

None submitted.

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

None proposed.

9. Set date and time for next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 28, 2023, at **5:30 p.m.**, at City Hall. A zoom link will be provided.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Brian, Seconded by Beth, To adjourn. Motion carried.

Becky S. adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Markle