

MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2022
DRAFT

Call to order: Board President Ren Baldwin (City of St. Joseph) called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Other board members present: Treasurer Jim Kodis (City of St. Joseph); Secretary Rick Ast (City of St. Joseph); Melissa Clapper (St. Joseph Township); Patrice Rose (St. Joseph Township); Mimi Elwell (St. Joseph Township). Barbara Thompson (City of St. Joseph). and Betty Mundy (St. Joseph Township). Kathy Buursma (City of St. Joseph) was absent. Baldwin introduced Mundy to the board, as this was her first meeting. Libraries “have always been my passion,” Mundy told the board.

Also present: Director Stephanie Masin; Assistant Director Paula Stakley; Administrative Assistant Sue Morgan; Curtis Osmun, library assistant for computer services; and one member of the public, attending remotely by Zoom.

Public comment: No Friends of the Library representatives were present. Masin said the Friends will meet in March and will determine their wish list at that time.

Minutes: Clapper moved to accept the minutes of the Jan. 25, 2022 board meeting, and Elwell supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Bills: Kodis told the board that January had been “a pretty hefty bill month,” but much of the total cost was because of computer purchases funded by a donation from St. Joseph Township. Clapper said that donation was some \$20,000.

The bills stood at \$43,589.80 for January, Kodis said. Kodis, supported by Clapper, moved to pay the January bills, and the board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Financial report: Kodis reported that the Endowment Fund was at \$1,061.62 year to date as of Dec. 31, 2021. Bank deposits were \$461,771.70 (\$460,710.08 at the year’s start), with an annualized return of 0.395 percent.

Kodis gave the following figures for Berrien Community Foundation (BCF) growth since Jan. 1, 2021: for BCF Endowment Fund #00577, \$446.07 of the balance is currently spendable, \$4,150 in gifts during 2021, the annual return without gifts is 15.21 percent, and total growth is 190.7 percent; BCF Endowment Fund #00573, \$58,577.55 of the balance is currently spendable, \$20,000 drawn for library collection, annual return w/o draw 12.89 percent, with draw, 5.82 percent; for BCF Growth & Use Fund #00609, \$906,878.92, all funds are currently spendable, annual return is 13.34 percent.

Kodis reported the following for the Endowment Fund: revenues of \$1,061.62 year to date as of Jan. 31, 2022; expenditures, \$0; net gain, \$1,061.62 (numbers do not include BCF gains/losses).

Kodis said the Library Fund had: revenues of \$741,894.99 year-to-date as of Jan. 31, 2022, 95.54 percent of the budget versus 58.33 percent for the fiscal year; expenditures at \$391,658.29 for 47.04 percent of the budget, and a net gain of \$350,236.70.

“We’re still hanging in there pretty good,” Kodis told the board. “We should be right around the budget at the end of the year.”

Kodis moved to accept the financial report, and Elwell supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to accept the report.

New business: The board conducted a first reading of updated staff job descriptions. Masin in the board packet had given information about those proposed updates. At the meeting, she said she would give more information regarding an organizational chart, current wages, and how the proposed pay increases would impact the budget.

In the Board Building Subcommittee Update, Baldwin gave new board members a brief history of ongoing efforts to maintain the library building. An Abonmarche assessment some 10 years ago pegged essential repairs and updates at about \$1.3 million, he said

The City of St. Joseph owns the library building, but state law apparently says the library is responsible for those costs “even though we don’t own it,” Baldwin said. But library revenues are insufficient to handle major repair problems, such as the aging elevator which has been experiencing frequent breakdowns. Baldwin said the library was built in 1956, and the elevator is the original one.

Kodis suggested contacting other elevator manufacturers and considering getting a new elevator. “I kind of think we’re going to head that way before it’s over,” he said.

“I’d just like to ride the elevator without crossing my fingers,” Masin said.

Director’s report: Masin said that with COVID infection rates “plummeting,” she planned to reopen the library and return to regular hours on Monday, Feb. 28. The library will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

“We’re now fully staffed,” Masin said.

Masin said she and employees are working on summer programs, and hope to have most in the garden. “We’ve got some really cool programs planned,” she said.

Michigan’s population figures have dropped, and that’s going to have an impact on the library’s state income from traffic tickets, Masin said. That income, which comes “mostly from overweight trucks,” can “vary drastically from one year to the next,” she added.

Masin said she included updated job descriptions for library staff in board members’ packets, and had marked those that included significant changes in pay. She asked board members to “contact me if you have any questions on job descriptions” for library staff.

Nominations for vice president: As former board Vice President Liz Darato had resigned from the board at the January meeting, Baldwin requested opening nominations for her replacement. Elwell, supported by Kodis, moved to open nominations.

After some discussion, the board agreed by consensus to hold the nominations at the March board meeting. “Nothing says we have to do it tonight,” Baldwin said.

Elwell withdrew her motion, and Clapper asked that the matter be on the agenda for the March meeting.

Adjournment: Kodis moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Ast supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion, and Baldwin adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 22.

Respectfully submitted:

Secretary Rick Ast