

**MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022
DRAFT**

Call to order: Board President Ren Baldwin (City of St. Joseph) called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Other board members present: Vice President Liz Darato (St. Joseph Township); Treasurer Jim Kodis (City of St. Joseph); Secretary Rick Ast (City of St. Joseph); Melissa Clapper (St. Joseph Township); Patrice Rose (St. Joseph Township); Kathy Buursma (City of St. Joseph); Mimi Elwell (St. Joseph Township), and Barbara Thompson (City of St. Joseph).

Also present: Director Stephanie Masin; Assistant Director Paula Stakely; Administrative Assistant Sue Morgan; and Berrien County Commissioner Rayonte Bell, representing District 5.

Public comments: Bell introduced himself to the board. Masin said he has attended many local board meetings.

New employees: Masin said new hires include: Nancy Steinmetz, Children's Services Supervisor; and Kay Williams and Nathan Paul-Bonham, both PT Children's Library assistants.

ABM solar panel update: Paul Reitz of ABM, attending remotely by Zoom, responded to concerns that the library's Solar Array does not show the library's electrical consumption as well as its solar panel electrical intake. That's because its design is "more residential than commercial," he said.

Reitz said ABM "had never intended to show consumption," adding the library "consumes more power than the solar panels produce." ABM would absorb the costs of showing intake, but it would cost the library some \$2,800 a year for maintenance, which would be "a lot of money ... for little added benefit," he continued.

Baldwin said he was disappointed as the Solar Array kiosk is intended to be educational. Reitz said ABM is willing to install a remote consumption display at its own expense.

Kodis, supported by Buursma, moved to accept that proposal. Voting in favor were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

Minutes: Kodis, supported by Darato, moved to accept the minutes, as corrected, of the Nov. 23 meeting. The minutes had one misspelling of Kodis' name, and had some incorrect municipal designation of board members.

Voting in favor of accepting the minutes were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

Friends of the Library: There was no representative of the Friends at the meeting. However, Masin said she received a report from the Friends stating they had re-elected their current board officers to new terms. The Friends are also planning to hold their Spring Book Sale, she added.

Elevator: Masin reported that the library's elevator is still "breaking down every other week," even though the elevator company says "its fine." She said she feels a new elevator is needed, but added that would cost around \$100,000.

Kodis said the board needs more details "on what's wrong," and Clapper said, "We need some options." Masin said she will relay that to the elevator company.

Bills: Kodis, supported by Thompson, moved to pay bills totaling \$12,416.40 for November, and \$11,191.60 for December. Voting in favor were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

Financial report: Kodis reported the Endowment Fund had: \$1,057.75 year-to-date as of Dec. 31, 2021; \$461,767.85 in bank deposits (\$460,710.08 at the year's start), for an annualized return of 0.459 percent. *in interest earnings*

For the Berrien Community Foundation since Jan. 1, 2021: BCF Endowment Fund #00577 - \$496.07 of its balance currently spendable; BCF Endowment Fund #00573 - \$65,129.05 of its balance currently spendable; BCF Library Growth & Use Fund #00609, all funds are spendable.

In Financials: the Endowment Fund had revenues of \$1,057.75 year-to-date as of Dec. 31, 2021; expenditures of \$0; and a net gain of \$1,075.75 (numbers do not include BCF gains/losses).

The Library Fund had revenues of \$717,453.82 year-to-date as of Dec. 31, 2021 (92.4 percent of the budget vs. 50.41 percent FY); expenditures of \$317,257.02, or 38.1 percent of its budget, for a net gain of \$400,196.80.

Utilities year-to-date were \$7,854.69 versus \$12,324.44 in 2020 and \$17,661.71 in 2019.

Repair expenditures year-to-date were \$15,065.54 versus \$6,868.33 in 2020 and \$17,176.15 in 2019.

Kodis moved to accept the financial report, and Clapper supported his motion. Voting in favor were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

Old business: On Revised Staff Positive COVID Response Protocols, Masin said she is recommending updates on how to respond if staff or volunteers have come into contact with an infected person, or have COVID. The recommendations come from the Center for Disease Control web site, she said.

The library has had two staff COVID cases since the New Year, and potentially has one more, Masin said.

"We're trying everything possible," Masin said. "It is what it is."

Kodis, supported by Darato, moved to accept Masin's updates. Voting in favor were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

On the Review of second draft of Board By-laws, Masin said the draft doesn't appear "quite ready still, but they are closer to what we want."

Clapper said the draft requires clarification. On purchasing policies, Baldwin said the library has been following the city's policy, but he recommends the library develop its own policy.

Baldwin also said the draft includes three different sets of initials, and that needs to be clarified. "I want to make sure we are not getting charged by three attorneys," he said, adding that the draft is not ready for approval.

"This is all costing us big bucks," Elwell said.

Baldwin said the board consensus is that further clarification is required from the library's lawyer.

Audit: The board received and discussed the City's audit of library finances. Kodis said no Library Board action is required, since this is the City's audit.

Director's report: Masin told the board that, regarding the Library's response to the COVID crisis, she has received far more compliments than complaints from the public. Staff has done "a really outstanding job" in dealing with the situation, she added.

New board member: Baldwin introduced Trustee Barbara Thompson, who was attending her first meeting.

Thompson said she was a librarian in the New York City school system, and that she has master's degrees in both library science and business administration.

Resignation: Baldwin said he received a letter from Darato, announcing her intention to retire from the board on Jan. 31.

Darato said she lives in Florida during the winter, and the State of Michigan no longer allows board members to attend meeting remotely (except for illness or military service).

"We will miss you," Baldwin told Darato. "We have been blessed by your participation."

Adjournment: Kodis, supported by Ast, moved to adjourn the meeting. Voting in favor were Kodis, Buursma, Baldwin, Clapper, Rose, Elwell, Thompson, Darato, and Ast.

Baldwin adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 22.

Respectfully submitted:

Secretary Rick Ast