

**MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Tuesday, March 26, 2019

Board President Ren Baldwin called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Other members present: Treasurer William Engel, and trustees Mimi Elwell, James Kodis, Patricia Rose, Melissa Clapper, and William Ast.

Members absent: Vice President Liz Darato, Secretary Stephanie Mack.

Staff members present: Director Stephanie Masin; Paula Stakley, assistant director; Sue Morgan, administrative assistant.

Guests: Virginia Antonson, Friends of the Library; Lisa Cripps-Downey, Berrien Community Foundation.

In Mack's absence, Baldwin appointed Ast to take the minutes of the meeting.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Antonson told the board that "Friends" of the library book bags are available at the front desk for \$10 and are "selling like hotcakes."

The Friends of the Library plan to hold a luncheon for library staff on April 16, Antonson said.

Antonson said the Annual Giant Book Sale will be held April 25-27 in the Felland Auditorium. Friends President Rebecca Marsden is working on rare and collectible books, to be offered in a separate room, she added.

The Friends of the Library has donated a spring-bottom box, placed in the foyer, for donated books, Antonson said. The bottom rises as books are removed, so staff members don't have to bend over to get them, she continued.

Antonson said the Friends of the Library has sponsored some programs for the Youth Reading Program, worth about \$1,600.

BERRIEN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Cripps-Downey gave a brief history of the Berrien Community Foundation and spoke about the advantages of investing the library's Endowment Fund with the foundation.

Due to current low interest rates, the library's funds are earning less than 1 percent interest, Cripps-Downey said. In comparison, the foundation is averaging 8 percent by investing in mutual funds, she continued.

With the library's level of endowment funds, it could see a 5 to 6 percent return, or around \$35,000-\$40,000, had those funds been managed by the foundation, Cripps-Downey said. Instead, the library saw a return of \$5,000 - \$6,000, she said.

"We don't play the market," Cripps-Downey told the board. "We hire advisers."

Baldwin said the Library Board will discuss the idea and possibly make a decision at the April meeting.

BUILDING SUBCOMMITTEE

Baldwin said there was no report.

MINUTES

Elwell, seconded by Kodis, moved to accept, with a minor correction, the minutes of the February board meeting. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

BILLS

Engel presented bills totaling \$13,166.78.

Masin commented that utility bills are high, and that she intends to contact American Electric Power over a "40 percent increase. That's enormous. That seems outrageous to me."

Engel, seconded by Clapper, moved to pay the bills. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

FINANCE

Engel said the library's fund balance is at \$343,000, or about 40 percent of its annual budget. Financially, the library is in "a favorable position," he told the board.

ANNUAL BUDGET

The board reviewed a proposed budget for fiscal 2019-20, starting July 1. Revenues for the new fiscal year are pegged at \$764,400 and expenditures at \$749,028. That compares to estimated revenues of \$817,900 and expenditures of \$741,536 at end of the current fiscal year on June 30.

The resolution to approve the 2019-20 included the following provisions:

-- amend the end of fiscal year 18-19 budget to “approve an increase in the revenues in the General Operating Fund in the amount of \$109,000 resulting in overall projected operating revenues of \$817,900” and

-- amend the end of fiscal year 18-19 budget to “approve an increase to the expenditures in the General Operating Fund in the amount of \$35,900 resulting in overall projected operating expenditures of \$741,600. This expenditure increase is for the purpose of covering increased utility costs as well as purchases for local history room projects and materials.”

-- “Approve the designation of unspent donations from the George Jaeger trust in the amount of \$48,778 from the operating fund reserve (from FY 17-18) as a restricted fund and approve the designation of additional unspent George Jaeger trust donations in the amount of \$38,038 from fiscal year 18-19 operating fund be added to that restricted fund resulting in a fund balance of \$86,816 to be designated as the ‘George Jaeger Local History’ restricted fund. We authorize the City’s director of finance for inclusion of that fund in the audited financial statements.”

-- Approve a journal entry transfer of an outstanding \$38,000 in revenues from the end of FY 18-19 operating fund to the capital fund

-- Review and approve the FY 19-20 operating budget.

Kodis, seconded by Elwell, moved to approve the fiscal 2019-20 budget and the board voted unanimously to approve it.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Masin said the library’s supper reading program will start in a couple of months. She also talked about the library’s efforts to create “sensory bags” that parents of children on the autism spectrum may check out for six weeks. The bags include weighted blankets, sunglasses, fidget toys, and laminated “social story” cards aimed at helping parents to prepare children for visits to physicians, dentists, restaurants, and libraries. She credited staff member Elizabeth Appleton and her family for donating funds for the bags.

The Brown Family Trust will again help cover the costs of garden maintenance and upkeep, Masin said.

Arcadia had proposed regrading and replanting work on the north and west sides of the library to help prevent flooding, Masin said. But sump pump installation was not finished before the planting season was over, she added.

The Brown Family Trust said it will contribute half the money for the project, or \$4,500, if the library can fund the other half.

Kodis, seconded by Ast, moved to use Dorothy Hawks funds to pay for the library's share of the project, and the board voted unanimously to approve that.

Clapper, seconded by Kodis, moved to approve the project. The board voted unanimously to approve that as well.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Baldwin said he will attend next month's meeting of the Friends of the Library "to pass along our gratitude" for the group's work on behalf of the library.

ADJOURNMENT

Baldwin adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING

6 p.m. Tuesday, April 23.

Respectfully submitted,

William Ast
acting secretary