

## WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Directors  
August 21, 2018.

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, August 21, 2018 at the Advanced Learning Library with the following present: Mr. Lamont Anderson, Mr. David Babich, Ms. Erinn Bock, Ms. Lee Gee, Ms. Jennifer Goheen, Dr. Justin Henry, Ms. Kellie Hogan, Mr. Randall Johnston, Ms. Shannon Littlejohn, Mr. Kevin McWhorter, Ms. Tadonne Neal, Ms. Shelby Petersen, and Mr. Jonathan Winkler.

Staff Present: Cynthia Berner, Director of Libraries; Kristi Dowell, Customer Services Manager; Cari Eagles-DeVous, Administrative Assistant; Sarah Kittrell, Collection Development Manager; Jennifer Lane, Communications Specialist; Tammy Penland, Support Services Manager; Julie Sherwood, Partnerships and Community Engagement Manager; Jeff Tate, Digital Services Manager; and Larry Vos, Information Services Manager.

Guests Present: Tom Borrego, Jim Byrum, Darla DeSpain, and Marge Zakoura-Vaughan.

### Call to Order

President Kevin McWhorter called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m., a quorum being present.

### Introductions

New board member Erinn Bock, an appointee of Vice Mayor Bryan Frye, was introduced.

### Approval of the Agenda

Kellie Hogan moved (Neal) to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### Public Comment

None

### Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting held on July 17, 2018 were presented. Shannon Littlejohn moved (Gee) to approve the minutes as included in board packets. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### Finance Committee Report

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. McWhorter moved to approve the revenue report, the 204 report of expenditures, and the report of bills for July 2018 in the following amounts: General Fund operating bills of \$718,843.68; Grant Fund Bills of \$1,056.00; prior year Grant Fund bills of \$32,429.59; and Gift & Memorial Fund bills of \$797.11, for a total of

\$753,126.38. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Operations Committee Report**

On behalf of the Operations Committee, Chair Jonathan Winkler moved to accept the revisions to policy REF-009.2 AV Maker Studio as included in board packets. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Planning & Facilities Committee Report**

Committee Member Randy Johnston reported that the Comotara branch library is now officially closed and the space has been turned back to Dillon's.

Landscaping work continues at the Advanced Learning Library. Moisture sensors have been installed with the sprinklers. Recent rains have exposed a few roof leaks and work continues on the HVAC systems in the conference center.

The auction for surplus items at the Central library has begun and will close on September 18.

### **Public Affairs Committee Report**

Committee Chair Lamont Anderson reported that the committee did not meet. Mr. Anderson mentioned that the Back to School event that took place at the Angelou branch library was well-attended and thanked all of those involved for the great work that was done on this event.

### **Special Committee Reports**

*Friends of the Library* – Marge Zakoura-Vaughan reported that the Friends of Library Board is reviewing member benefits.

*David Babich arrived.*

*Library Foundation* – Tom Borrego reported that nominations for the Foundation Board are being reviewed for election in November.

*Wichita Genealogical Society (WGS)* – Jim Byrum reported that the WGS will again partner with the library for the Big Read. Membership is steady at 207 members. Monthly meetings will continue to be held at the Alford branch library, although the WGS board meetings are now being held at the Advanced Learning Library.

### **Director of Libraries Report**

Director Berner reported that the agenda for the September Library Board meeting will include items of business that need to be completed in advance of the Foundation annual meeting. These include a review of the spending policy for the checking account and an affirmation of nominated Library Directors to the Foundation Board.

The library continues to pay e-rate funds back to the federal government. The total amount required to be paid back is just under \$150,000. This money was received in respect of broadband Internet in the branches, which the library sourced through a series of requests for proposals. The grants were rescinded because the RFP evaluations failed to show that cost was the ruling criterion for contract award, although cost was considered and the cheapest vendor was chosen in all cases. The library has now exhausted all appeals short of the Federal Communications Commission itself. Shelby Petersen recommended that contact to the office of a US Senator or Congressman be made to see if assistance with the appeal of the repayments might be provided.

In addition to the ongoing strong interest in tours of the Advanced Learning Library, several new partnerships for programming and services have been developed:

- A Memorandum of Understanding with Wichita State University for GoCreate maker programming in the TEC-novation Room has been scheduled for City Council review on September 4.
- The American Society of Civil Engineers will be presenting monthly STEM programming for youth in exchange for using the conference center for the group's monthly meetings.
- The partnership with Peer to Peer University is expanding with Wichita to receive some additional funding through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- Starting in September, the 1 Million Cups weekly events will be held at the Advanced Learning Library.

### **Unfinished Business**

None

### **New Business**

Director Berner presented information about recently announced changes to the membership benefits of the Friends of the Library. The gold card membership program was created in 1995 as a way to promote awareness of the Friends, and the principal benefits are free (unmetered) holds and three days' grace before fines begin accruing on overdue materials. While these are popular with library customers, they appear to have done little to create affinity between these individuals and the Friends organization and its purpose. As budgets have become more restrictive, the Friends Board was asked to evaluate whether benefits tied to library accounts still make good business sense for both the Friends and the Library. In late July, the Friends announced a restructuring of the gold card program that phases out free holds and overdue grace. Two groups expressed strong displeasure with these changes: homeschooling families and high-volume readers. It was also observed that Wichita is nearly isolated among large US urban library systems in charging a hold fee at all. The Friends have since delayed implementation of any changes until at least the end of the year.

Director Berner asked for feedback on the topic. Conversation included a discussion of whether or not holds should be considered part of the base package of library services, or as specialty provision that should be subject to cost recovery following the same principles as turnpike tolls and medical co-pays. Issues of equity were also raised. It was suggested that it is inequitable to

assess hold fees for some customers but not others; conversely, it was argued that the gold card holds benefit promotes equity by making access to large numbers of holds affordable for those who might not be able to afford fees per item.

It was noted that the library board had previously considered options for modifying the gold card program at its meetings in April and May of 2012. Besides outright elimination of the benefits, the board considered raising the fee per hold to \$0.25 for gold card holders and \$0.50 for other library users. No action was taken on any of these proposals and the program was left unchanged. Total circulation, total number of holds, and the split in holds between Friends card holders and other library users were essentially the same in 2012 as in 2017. Renewal fees remitted by Friends card holders are approximately equal to the standard hold fee multiplied by the number of holds they place, so there is little if any cross-subsidy between Friends card holders and other library users, although the library subsidizes holds for both groups since the estimated average cost to fill each hold (\$0.314) is higher than the hold fee (\$0.25). Moreover, all but five dollars from each renewal goes to the Friends and so is not immediately available to meet the cost of filling holds.

Since current policy allows just a two-dollar window within which fees can accumulate before an account is blocked, concern was also expressed about the staff resource required to collect fees from each volume user of the hold function through a series of small cash transactions.

*Tadonne Neal left.*  
*Randy Johnston left.*  
*Justin Henry left.*

It was agreed that staff would take the information from the discussion and return to the Board in a future meeting with proposals for further action.

### **Announcements**

Director Berner introduced Jennifer Lane, the Library's new Communications Specialist.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be September 18, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Berner  
Director of Libraries