

MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD
Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023
DRAFT

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

Other board members present: Vice President Melissa Clapper (St. Joseph Charter Township); Treasurer Emily Zito-Desimone (City of St. Joseph); Secretary Rick Ast (City of St. Joseph); Betty Mundy (St. Joseph Charter Township); Kathy Buursma (City of St. Joseph); Mimi Elwell (St. Joseph Charter Township); and Patrice Rose (St. Joseph Charter Township).

Absent: Barbara Thompson (City of St. Joseph).

Also present: Library Director Paula Stakley; Leigh Ann Vallone, library administrative assistant; Curtis Osmun, library systems supervisor; Sally Huling, Friends of the Library; Kevan Truman, Friends of the Library; and, by remote, Nicole Gibby.

Friends of the Library: Huling said the Friends' recent book sale was "a big success" and resulted in sales totaling \$3,256. The Friends also sold \$140 in library tote bags and garnered donations totaling \$310, she added.

The spring and November sales together brought in \$7,686, Huling said.

Huling also said the Friends will elect officers at their meeting in December. Gibby is the candidate for president, she added.

Minutes of Oct. 24 meeting: Clapper said the minutes incorrectly said she was present at that meeting.

Elwell moved to approve the minutes, as corrected, and Zito-Desimone seconded her motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as corrected.

Bills: Clapper moved to approve the monthly bills, totaling \$11,042.61, and Mundy supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Financial report: Clapper, supported by Elwell, moved to approve the financial report. The board in a unanimous voted approved the motion.

Baldwin said the library garden had recently been used for a wedding, but he did not see a payment in recent financial reports. Stakley said that wedding had been paid for in November 2022.

Strategic planning: Baldwin thanked board members who had submitted ideas for strategic planning. The first step should be the board "getting a handle on finances," he said.

Baldwin also asked whether a mass mailing of an informational sheet is “doable.” Mundy asked whether the Friends of the Library might “stuff letters” for the mailing, and Stakley said, “I think our Friends are pretty friendly.”

Second reading of Local History Room policy: Elwell moved to approve updates to the policy, and Buursma seconded her motion. The board in a unanimous voted approved the updated policy.

Crowder update: Stakley said the majority of the company’s outdoor work has been completed, but she is “still waiting for the end of the fall cleanup.” In the meantime, the company “came to us with a detailed maintenance plan,” she added.

Budget proposal: Stakley said the library some nine years ago bought “educational work stations” for the children’s department, which proved very successful but now need to be replaced. The AWE Learning devices are “preloaded” and do not require internet access, she said.

The new equipment will cost \$14,240, Stakley said.

Baldwin said the request did not require board action, but would require a vote of approval from the St. Joseph Township Board.

Resignation: Ewell moved to accept the resignation of board Trustee Barbara Thompson (City of St. Joseph), and Mundy supported her motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Thompson had disagreed with the board over the investment of library funds with the Berrien Community Foundation. Stakley said she will contact the City of St. Joseph to name a replacement.

Director’s report: Stakley said the recent “Book Fair for grownups” brought in \$1,217.64. The event “was amazing” and was “jam packed well before we opened,” she added.

Stakley also said she has to hire two new pages.

Library tour: The board started a tour of library rooms and facilities at 7:03 p.m. The tour included basement utility rooms, staff rooms, and all the public library rooms.

Adjournment: The board reconvened in the meeting room for adjournment. Ast moved to adjourn, and Elwell supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion, and Baldwin declared the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
William Ast, board secretary.

Next meeting: Jan. 23, 2024