

MINUTES OF THE JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

April 12, 2021

The regular meeting of the Jacksonville Public Library Board of Directors was held April 12, 2021 in the meeting room of the Jacksonville Public Library. The meeting was also made available virtually via Zoom. Present were President Mary Ferguson, Forrest Keaton, Noel Beard, Katie Weeks, Elizabeth Kennedy and library director Chris Ashmore. Craig Albers, Kevin Eckhoff and Lisa Haley were present via Zoom. Absent was Ted Roth.

President Ferguson called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Guest Jamie Cosgriff, from Graham and Hyde Architects, explained three issues that needed to be worked out with the Courtyard Renovation Project. One was a minor plumbing issue that will cost the library about \$1,000 more than anticipated. Two was the fact that subcontractor Morthole did not include both landscape retaining walls when making his bid and thus underbid by approximately \$8,000. Three was reluctance on the part of subcontractor Gano to proceed with the ice melt installation without some type of "guarantee" by the manufacturer.

After some discussion it was decided by the board that 1) The slight increase in plumbing cost was not an issue, as we built \$10,000 into the contract for unforeseen circumstances. 2) Jamie would go back to Steve Morthole and ask him to make an offer as to how the \$8,000 should be allocated between himself and the library. 3) Jamie would go back to the ice melt manufacturer and see what type of "guarantee" he could provide Gano and if that would satisfy him.

It was moved by Beard and seconded by Keaton that the minutes of the March Board Meeting be accepted as submitted. A roll call vote was taken. 7 Yea, 0 Nay. Motion carried.

It was moved by Weeks and seconded by Kennedy that all financial reports for April be approved and that all properly approved bills for April in the amount of \$51,628.34 be paid out of general funds as funds are available. A roll call vote was taken. 7 Yea, 0 Nay. Motion carried.

Keaton reported on the Endowment Fund balance as of March 31, 2021.

Director's Report

March was a great month at the Jacksonville Public Library. Most of our staff have received at least one vaccination shot and we can see the light at the end of the long

Covid-19 tunnel. We are trying to find the perfect balance between easing some guidelines/opening up a bit more and not jumping the gun, but continuing with the essential safety measures of mask wearing, social distancing and capacity limits.

In late March, I met with the library supervisors to discuss what changes we might make to our safety guidelines. Beginning April 1, the library will return to its normal business hours and will be open until 9:00 PM Monday through Thursday. We also eliminated the Seniors Only hour from 9-10 AM. All patrons are allowed any time the library is open. Library capacity was increased from 50 to 78. We had been operating at below 50% capacity and decided we could up this to an actual 50% capacity limit. Because of the increase in capacity, we eliminated the one-hour time limit on library visits and the four person size limit on groups visiting the library. Both of these guidelines were to help with limiting capacity, but with the increase in capacity, we felt that these limits could be eliminated.

As I mentioned above, we will be enforcing masks, six-foot social distancing and capacity limits (for both the building in general and at library events or group meetings) until the state moves to Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois Plan. The plan does not refer to libraries in particular, but like most libraries, we have been following the guidelines which are the closest match to our situation. We follow Retail guidelines for the library proper and we follow the guidelines for meetings and for social events for events at the library.

The staff moved a lot of the chairs that were being stored in the meeting room to some empty space we had on the top floor. This opens up a bit more room in the meeting room. We thus changed the maximum number of people allowed in the meeting room from 8 to 16. This applies to groups using the room and to any library programs we may start to hold indoors. For example, Cindy will begin in-person story times in April and will now be able to accommodate 16 people and still enforce proper social distancing.

As we move into warmer weather and Summer Reading, we will be holding events outdoors in order to allow for more people than inside limits will allow, but still following the basic guidelines of masks and social distancing. Of course, we will be continuing with virtual programming even when we enter Phase 5 and the (warning cliché) “new normal”.

We had a couple of outside groups use our new videoconferencing equipment to hold hybrid Zoom and in-person meetings. Both the Morgan County Historical Society and Jacksonville Main Street used the equipment and were very impressed. Lisa Musch, from the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce, also dropped by to take a look at our equipment. The Chamber is likely going to use Matt Martin and go with a similar setup for their conference room. As we gradually open up and eventually go back to normal, we will advertise the use of this equipment more widely.

The library's book club met via Zoom on the evening of March 25 to discuss *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. A lively discussion was held on this very interesting novel. Sarah and I visited the Hochstadt/Tobin home to go through their large collection of books that they were thinning. We selected many to add to the library. I also spent time in March with a radio appearance on WLDS, web site and Facebook maintenance, and maintaining the day-to-day operations of the library – which ranged from computer issues to plumbing problems.

Adult Services

The Adult Services department had a great month. Sarah had 8 technology appointments and helped patrons with other daily technology questions. Cindy and Sarah worked together to get the Youth Services programs uploaded onto Facebook. Sarah spent time promoting events and library services using social media, sending items to local media outlets and more. She also worked on research projects with patrons relating to local history and genealogy and helped with other daily reference questions. She updated the blog, social media and the website as time permitted.

Sarah continued weeding books to create room on the shelves upstairs. She had three live virtual events on Zoom in March. One was about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott—this event was supported by a Healing Illinois grant. The second program was about notable women of Illinois history with Tom Emery in celebration of Women's History Month. The last program was about Motown music. Sarah also facilitated a Zoom program with the Young Explorers Club with Allen Yow and Ed Anderson about monarch butterflies. All of the events were well-received and well-attended. Sarah also researched items to purchase for the collection and placed book and AV orders as needed.

Interlibrary Loan/Holds

In March, there were 1,368 items borrowed from other libraries; 1,057 items lent to other libraries; and 405 reciprocal circulations.

Circulation Services

The library provided amazing service to every patron that walked in the door during the month of March. The Circulation Staff was very busy sanitizing everything and helping people on the computers and microfilm. Diane Hequet was very busy cleaning disks, fixing books, and helping patrons. Andy Mitchell was busy helping patrons and pulling books for patrons with health issues so they could just check out their books and not have to look around during Covid.

Bridget pulled books from the 'new' shelf that were no longer new and changed their locations in the catalog. She also worked on the library's Pinterest account and kept the Pinterest pages up to date. Bridget kept track of the ISD and ISVI books to see if they have been turned in at the student's home libraries. Bridget mailed out overdue notices every day, comparing the information with the patron's account to make sure the items had not been turned in yet. She continued to work on weeding books to make room for all the new books that have been switched over. Bridget also removed and updated patron emails based on reports sent by RSA. Finally, Bridget began preparing for this summer's Books on Wheels program, of which she will be in charge.

Extension Services

In March, Extension continued adding new individuals to serve. Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes were still restricting visitors, but Heidi was able to bring packages of books to the residents with the help of the Activity Directors. A consistent schedule was worked out for 2021 and Heidi created calendars for the various facilities. Books requested by homebound individuals in March covered a range of topics: history, biography, cooking, gardening, nutrition, and humor. Most popular were novels: mystery, thrillers and romance.

When she was not selecting and delivering books, Heidi worked in the Library's Large Print room. She withdrew older books and rearranged the shelves to make room for newly purchased items. With Bridget's help, "Mark of the Reader" labels were added to the Large Print books to aid readers in knowing which books they have already read.

Youth Services

Youth Services continued to have regular videos of Story Time and STEAM sessions in March. Cindy attended a gardening webinar to gather ideas for Garden Club. Boy Scout Pack 103 will come help prepare the garden for this year, which is greatly appreciated. Cindy started making videos for Summer Reading Story Times and STEAM sessions and made preparations for Summer Reading in general. Beginning April 7, Youth Services will begin to have in person Story Time at 10 AM each Wednesday. The plan is to add a Wednesday afternoon Story Time in May. This will serve as a good test run for Summer Reading, seeing what is possible for in-person events.

Technical Services

Lauren continued to excel in her role as cataloger. With Linda's cataloging assistance and Kim's efficient processing of materials, things ran very smoothly in Technical Services.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Automation/Technology

None

Building and Grounds

None

Finance

None

Personnel

None

Public Relations

None

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

None

RAILS/RSA

None

Old Business

None

New Business

The board revisited its voluntary extension of the Covid-19 paid leave provisions of the FFCRA that are due to expire at the end of April. No action was taken. The paid leave extension will expire at the end of April.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM on a motion by Beard, seconded by Weeks.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Ashmore