

MINUTES OF THE JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

August 10, 2020

The regular meeting of the Jacksonville Public Library Board of Directors was held August 10, 2020 in the meeting room of the Jacksonville Public Library. The meeting was also made available virtually via Zoom. Present were President Mary Ferguson, Kevin Eckhoff, Forrest Keaton, Noel Beard, Katie Weeks via Zoom and Library Director Chris Ashmore. Absent were Robert Underbrink, Elizabeth Kennedy, Ted Roth and Craig Albers.

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

Guest Jamie Cosgriff from Graham and Hyde Architects, Inc. discussed two projects with the board: 1) The repair of the east and west landscape maintenance walls and 2) The conversion of the west side patio from brick to concrete.

Jamie and Steve Morthole do not think that the maintenance walls can be repaired using the existing stones. Steve had an idea to repair the walls without actual stones, but the board decided it would rather replace the stone so that the walls look like they did originally, even if this will place the project over the bidding threshold.

Jamie then discussed with the board what they would like to do with the brick patio. He suggested that the pavers could be removed, concrete laid and temperature controls placed, and then the pavers could be put back. This would alleviate the freeze/thaw issue that caused problems with the patio itself and the drains on the patio.

The idea of bidding both projects together was discussed, because concrete and stone work can often be done by the same contractor (e.g. Steve Morthole). Jamie will attend our September meeting to report back on any progress in putting together specs and preparing to bid this project(s). We hope to do the work this fall, but the Covid pandemic has backed a lot of work up and completion this year is not a certainty.

It was moved by Beard and seconded by Eckhoff that the minutes of the July Board Meeting be accepted as submitted. Motion carried.

It was moved by Keaton and seconded by Beard that all financial reports for August be approved and that all properly approved bills for August in the amount of \$55,966.65 be paid out of general funds as funds are available. Motion carried.

The Endowment Fund numbers for end of July were given.

Director's Report

July was a busy month at the Jacksonville Public Library – not so much because of the number of people through the door, but more due to the new duties brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. We revamped our cleaning schedule so that staff members, including myself, have an assigned time that they are to clean frequently touched surfaces throughout the day. As the public grows weary of mask-wearing, we remained vigilant in politely asking patrons to wear their mask correctly. If your nose is hanging out, the mask is not doing much good.

We have also adjusted to creating virtual programs vs. having in-house events. Cindy did a fantastic job with the Children’s Summer Reading virtual programming, holding a program six to seven days a week. In July, we also picked back up with more adult virtual programs, including poetry readings from Andy; craft programs with Bridget; several different educational programs from Sarah; and a virtual book club via Zoom that I hosted.

Towards the end of July, I held a meeting with Cindy, Sarah and Bridget to talk about where we are at this point in time and when things might be able to loosen up a bit. Unfortunately, we don’t have a crystal ball, but are trying to take it one month, one week and sometimes one day at a time. It does not look like we will be loosening any of our safety guidelines in the near future, but I will continue to monitor things and will loosen guidelines whenever possible. We are even looking into some outdoor on-site programming later this fall if safe to do so.

Since it seems that we will be doing virtual programming for the foreseeable future and will continue with virtual programs in addition to in-house programming in a post-Covid world, we also talked about improving the production quality of some of our videos. This is something Noel brought up at one of our Zoom meetings a couple of months back. The staff and I will be looking into video editing software, green screens and anything else that could provide a more polished product. We may have to take a workshop or class, because none of us have any training in doing things beyond what we have been doing. I think the quality of our videos so far has been good and that we have done as much or more than any other libraries our size or even bigger, but there is always room to improve, especially if we have the time and money.

In other news, we had our annual elevator inspection on July 20 and passed with flying colors. I am in the process of completing the elevator registration so that we will be compliant with state law for another year. On July 21, Andy and I visited a patron’s home to pick up some donated books. We quarantined the books for three days before looking at them, but there were some good selections that we can add to the collection while others will go to the Friends of the Library book sale.

In July, we did make one small change and opened up the half of our meeting room that is not full of chairs to small groups. We can safely social distance eight or fewer people

in the meeting room and we do ask that patrons using the room social distance and wear face coverings. We only had three small meetings in July, as most people are still not holding unnecessary gatherings.

Other tasks keeping me busy in July included collection development, web site maintenance and helping out Illinois College with a "History Harvest" grant by writing a letter of support. Overall, I am very pleased with our first two months of being reopened. Patrons have been very good, the staff has worked very hard in new ways and we all are adjusting to the "new normal" while continuing to look forward to when things can get back to some semblance of normalcy.

Adult Services

July was another busy month in Adult Services. Staff worked together to create more virtual programs in July as we all got back into the swing of things. Sarah worked on creating more technology tutorial programs and a local history program. Sarah had 11 technology appointments in July and also helped people with more informal technology issues each day. She also worked on many research projects with patrons including local history research and genealogy as well as general reference. Sarah also continued weeding and updating the blog as time permitted. She worked on getting videos uploaded and sorted for Youth Services. Sarah worked on finding an outside presenter(s) that would be willing to reschedule their previously scheduled programs via Zoom.

Sarah spent time working with a few teachers that were worried about database access that they would normally get through Illinois College. She offered several solutions including a free database trial that the state offers each year as well as the possibility of going into the classroom to show students how to research using various databases. Sarah also researched items to purchase for the collection and placed book and AV orders as needed. She also spent time updating the website and social media. Sarah attended a RAILS meeting that discussed a variety of issues mostly related to COVID. One interesting thing to watch is a study that is looking into how long the virus lives on various library materials. Further studies will provide even more information. Last but not least, Sarah put up a display of self-care books.

Interlibrary Loan/Holds

In July, there were 1,653 items borrowed from other libraries; 1,071 items lent to other libraries; and 357 reciprocal circulations

Circulation Services

The library provided amazing service to every patron that walked in the door during the month of July. The Circulation Staff was very busy with sanitizing everything and helping people on the computers and shelving every day. Diane Hequet was very busy cleaning disks, fixing books, and helping patrons. Andy Mitchell was busy helping patrons and making poetry videos. 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 to keep the new books up to date and add books of interest to certain pages. She has also been keeping track of the ISD and ISVI books to see if they have been turned in at the student's home libraries. Bridget mailed out the overdue notices every day comparing the information with the patron's accounts to make sure the items had not been turned in yet. She was also busy working on a craft video. Bridget removed and updated patron emails based on reports sent by RSA.

The adult summer reading program was a little slow this year. We had 102 patrons participate and all combined they read 1,170 books. The patrons that participated had a lot of fun and found some new favorite authors. We had 3 grand prizes of \$50 chamber checks.

Extension Services

July finished up the Adult Summer Reading Program for homebound patrons with 29 participants reading 295 books. Covid-19 restrictions continue to affect access to local nursing homes and senior living facilities. Jacksonville Skilled Nursing & Rehab joined Aperion Care in significant numbers of residents/staff falling ill, so most library materials have been retrieved and deliveries suspended there until further notice.

The Morgan County Professionals for Senior Wellness held a Zoom meeting on July 2, with most agencies reporting cancelled fundraisers and events. Diane attended an open house at Cedarhurst on July 23 to celebrate the opening of the new memory care wing.

Large print distributors have resumed shipping orders, so Diane has been busy cross-checking lists from April/May/June with the boxes of books that have arrived.

Youth Services

The end of July brought the end of the Summer Reading Program. With Covid-19 throwing a wrench in the works, Youth Services worked to create the best Summer Reading Program possible. Cindy had several families offer thanks for the programming offered and several said that they liked that the videos could be watched at any time, making it easier to fit into families' schedules.

So, how did this year's Summer Reading Program pan out? Well, we definitely had fewer participants (93 vs. an average year of 300), but we had a lot of active readers in

this smaller group. More than half of the participants turned in time, which is way more than what we see in a usual year.

The winners of Summer Reading prizes were:

Pre-K Program

Top Reader: Leo Bendorf

2nd Place: Nellie Walker

3rd Place tie: Louis Dichsen and Alexander Comacho

Grand Prize Winner of passes to Ergadoozy: Nora Arnold

K-5th Grade Program

Top Reader and winner of the Ray Award: Lexi Laumakis (The Ray Award allows her to pick \$100 worth of materials for the Library's collection.)

2nd Place: Silas Bendorf

3rd Place: Thea Laumakis

Grand Prize winner of a trip to Chicago: Danny Devine

Teen Program

Top Reader: Amanda Laumakis

2nd Place: Eli Walker

3rd Place: Marilyn Dichsen

4th Place: Bram Walker

We want to thank the Friends of the Library for sponsoring the entertainers and McDonalds for sponsoring the K-5th grade Grand Prize and providing other prizes. Each year we let the kids vote on the theme for next year's program and the resounding winner for next year's theme was "Reading Colors Your World".

Looking forward, Cindy has made videos for Story Time, the three STEAM programs, and has plans for Lego Club and Lap Sit for August. She also plans to continue making videos even when in person programming resumes for families who can't attend the program.

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

Ashmore brought up a couple of proposals he had received for sealing and restriping the library's parking lot. It was suggested that he get a couple of other proposals as there was no rush on this project.

Finance

None

Personnel

None

Public Relations

None

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

None

RAILS/RSA

None

OLD BUSINESS

Ashmore reported that he informed Mayor Ezard about the resignation of Robert Underbrink from the library board and suggested the names of both Lisa Haley and Greg Neff to him as possible replacements.

New Business

None

With no further business to discuss, meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Keaton, seconded by Beard. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Ashmore