

MINUTES OF THE JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

July 13, 2020

The regular meeting of the Jacksonville Public Library Board of Directors was held July 13 2020 in the meeting room of the Jacksonville Public Library. Present were President Mary Ferguson, Kevin Eckhoff, Elizabeth Kennedy, Forrest Keaton, Noel Beard and Library Director Chris Ashmore. Absent were Robert Underbrink, Katie Weeks, Ted Roth and Craig Albers.

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

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

It was moved by Keaton and seconded by Kennedy that all financial reports for July be approved and that all properly approved bills for July in the amount of \$62,251.36 be paid out of general funds as funds are available. Motion carried.

The Endowment Fund numbers for end of June were given.

Director's Report

June was a month full of excitement and nervous anticipation, as we reopened the library building to the public on Monday June 1. Public Libraries across the state have been some of the most careful organizations when it comes to reopening to the public, with many not opening until July or even later. Although we were among the first libraries to reopen, I feel very good about our reopening and the safety guidelines we put in place.

The library's patrons have been fantastic. They were so glad to be able to come back to the building and check out materials. Everyone has been very nice. I can count on one hand the number of complaints about following the safety guidelines that we had throughout the entire month, and these were not much more than a mild protest or eye roll. The horror stories you hear about stores trying to enforce mask rules have not happened. I believe for the most part, the patrons of the library are maybe a bit more sophisticated than you might get on a daily basis at the dollar store, Walmart, etc. No employees have had to deal with yelling or screaming.

As the state moved into Phase Four of its reopening plan in late June, I made the decision not to make any changes to our safety guidelines. This was after consulting with staff, other libraries, library organizations, and the Governor's reopening plan. Our guidelines are centered on social distancing, the wearing of masks, building capacity limits, personal hygiene and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces. It appears now that nothing is

going to change much in the immediate future, but I will continue to monitor things on a regular basis and will loosen any guidelines when advisable, while erring on the side of safety.

While June was all about getting reopened and getting staff and patrons used to the “new normal”, we also started talking about increasing our virtual programming this summer. Cindy has done an outstanding job making all of the Children’s Summer Reading Program virtual and we plan on adding more virtual programs for adults this July and August. We are also optimistically planning on having our first in-person library programs this fall – to be held outside with social distancing.

In other news, Sarah and I visited Steve Hochstadt’s office at Illinois College on June 15 and received some quality donations of history books. On June 24, I had a phone conference with librarians from North Carolina about starting a social work student intern program. They had attended our presentation at the Public Library Association Conference in February and contacted me to set up a time to discuss in detail how we did things. The librarians, who are planning on partnering with East Carolina University, told me that they will be the first public library in North Carolina to start such a program.

I had to reschedule our virtual book club meeting from June 25 to July 9, as I unfortunately had another bout of kidney stone problems, which made my participation impossible. The entire staff was kept very busy throughout June with quarantining and disinfecting materials and staying on top of disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, especially public computers. Business really started to pick up on June 29 when delivery of Interlibrary Loan materials resumed statewide. I was very happy with the month of June and really couldn’t have expected things to go any smoother. As we get used to the “new normal”, we look forward to serving our patrons in new and different ways.

Adult Services

June was an exciting month in Adult Services as the library re-opened and staff came back to work in-person. It seemed as if patrons had been holding on to their burning technology questions during the physical closure of the library. Sarah had 16 technology appointments in June—many of the appointments consisted of helping patrons with unemployment and other pandemic-related issues. The same was true of those seeking information about local history and genealogy—many more people than usual were researching family history and other interesting local topics.

Sarah spent much time working on the virtual Children’s Summer Reading Program in terms of uploading videos, describing them, scheduling them etc. Staff plan on working together in July to resume more virtual programs for adults. Sarah also spent time updating the website, blog and social media as time allowed. Sarah and Bridget worked together on a display of outdoor activity books for June. Sarah spent time catching up

with book orders that couldn't be delivered while the library was closed. She also researched items to purchase for the collection and placed book and AV orders as needed. Sarah also continued working on weeding and organizing special collections as time allowed. Last but not least, Sarah helped patrons each day with reference questions, research, technology and more.

Interlibrary Loan/Holds

In June, there were 489 items borrowed from other libraries; 825 items lent to other libraries; and 338 reciprocal circulations. **Note: This was all in two days, as delivery did not resume until June 29.**

Circulation Services

The library provided amazing service to every patron that walked in the door during the month of June. The patrons were all very happy that we were open again. The Circulation Staff was very busy sanitizing everything and helping people on the computers every day. Diane Hequet was very busy cleaning disks, fixing books, and helping patrons. Andy Mitchell was busy helping patrons.

Bridget and Heidi deleted all of the patrons' accounts that had expired 3 years ago or longer. Bridget shelf shifted the fiction books to get them off of the bottom shelf. She also pulled books from the 'new' shelf that were no longer new and changed their locations in the catalog. Bridget also worked on updating Pinterest with all of the new award books and removed and updated patron emails based on reports sent by RSA.

Extension Services

While the library opened for business on June 1, area nursing homes, senior living facilities, group homes, and some apartments were still restricting visitors. Diane worked with activity directors and other staff to arrange for returns and delivery of new reading materials in parking lot exchanges to avoid contact with residents. Most of the nursing homes have new activity directors/staff, so it's been a challenge. Some patrons are ready to accept quick front door exchanges of books, while others are still cautious about any outside contacts.

The Jacksonville Area Senior Center remained closed – no book clubs met. The Morgan County Jail welcomed a delivery of 184 donated paperbacks on June 17 to replace sadly-worn titles in the prisoners' library.

Large print distributors resumed shipments of new books in mid-June. To make room on the shelves, Diane withdrew 65 books from the collection.

Youth Services

When the Library reopened on June 1st, Youth Services was prepared to present a virtual Summer Reading Program and that is what has happened. Cindy presented videos for the Little Learners STEAM group on Sundays, STEAM videos for older kids on Mondays, entertainers on Tuesdays, Story Time on Wednesdays, crafts on Thursdays and other events on Fridays and Saturdays. Cindy had one live performance via Zoom that featured Storyteller Heather Harlan. She had good responses to the videos with both number of views and comments. Cindy had several people tell her that they appreciate that we have the videos (vs. a live performance) because they can watch them at a time that works for their schedule.

Covid-19 has definitely affected Summer Reading. There would normally be 250-300 kids signed up at this point in the summer, while only 85 are currently signed up. Not to be discouraged however, because those who are signed up are actively turning in reading time. So while we might have a smaller group this year, the reading numbers are big.

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

Ashmore brought up name(s) for a new library trustee. The board recommended that he pass on the names of both Lisa Haley and Greg Neff to Mayor Ezard.

New Business

Keaton made a motion, seconded by Eckhoff that the Jacksonville Public Library continue to participate in the non-resident library card program with a fee of \$60 per year. Motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Ashmore