

**FREEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
February 14, 2024 – 6:00pm.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Freeport Public Library Board of Trustees was held in the Library Board Room on February 14th, 2024. Board President Alan Greene presided and called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Notice is hereby given that a majority of a quorum of the members of City Council of the City of Freeport may be present at the above-referenced meeting. No action on the part of City Council will be taken.**

**Members Present:**

Alan Greene	Julie Reynolds	Lucas Kramer	Mary Kaufman
Betty Butler	Renee Barr	Tasha Mazique	

**Members Absent:**

RoseMarie Brubaker      LouAnn Stambaugh-Hayes

Also, present, Executive Director Ashley Huffines.

Kya Eckert acted as Recording Secretary.

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**II. CHANGES/CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Motion to push Executive Session Section B to next month's meeting.  
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

**III. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC/MEDIA**

None.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

(Butler/Barr) Motion to approve the January 10th, 2024 Library Board of Trustees minutes.  
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

**V. FINANCIAL REPORT**

The board reviewed the financial reports for the end of 2023 and first month of 2024. Kaufman asked about the Periodicals line being over budget already, Huffines made note to correct the error. Huffines also informed the board that she is working with the city's finance director on getting the savings bond deposited, more on that in New Business.

(Reynolds/Barr) Motion to accept the January 2024 financial report.  
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

## **VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Greene apologized for being absent from January's meeting, and notified the board of his absence from the March meeting as well.

## **VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Huffines presented the Director's report. Last month she noticed more traffic and lots of computer usage. She also conducted interviews and filled the library's two open positions.

Recent Memorials: Huffines told the board about the Bob Logothetti memorial and the funds donated in his name. Huffines said "Bob was our maintenance handyman for many years. I cannot walk around this library and not see the impact he made on us. We're grateful for the memorials his wife, Mary, continues to send in." Between the memorials for Carol Maglietta, Cissy Barney, and Bob Logotherri, the Library Foundation has received over \$13,000 in donations in the last few months.

Library Strategic Planning Proposal: Huffines presented the proposal from the strategic planning consultant, Emily Kloniki. Huffines and the board discussed the proposal and benefits of moving forward with this project, including her very library-focused approach. Huffines went over the budget and pricing for this project and discussed the timeline of the work. The proposal includes a workshop with the board, and Butler asked about what the workshop would entail. Huffines explained it would likely involve exercises and questionnaires to determine the goals and priorities of the library. Greene asked where the expenses would come from, and Huffines confirmed that the project was planned to be taken out of the *other professional services* expense line. Kaufman concurred. Kaufman is familiar with Kloniki's past of working for the Freeport Public Library, so she asked how Huffines feels about having a former employee working on this. Huffines replied she is confident that it is in the library's best interest, the reasoning being that Kloniki is familiar with the community we are serving. The board discussed the process of surveying the community which would include targeting parts of the community that do not use the library. Moving forward with this, Huffines let the board know Kloniki would be present at the next board meeting.

Huffines, along with the city's Finance Director, has been intentional about working on the savings bonds this past month, which will be sent within the next two weeks. The current value is at \$46,000. Foundation: At the last Foundation meeting, Huffines presented the library's need for carpet replacement and new furniture in the meeting room. Huffines expressed the meeting room is a huge priority as it reflects the library to the several community organizations that utilize the space every week. The Foundation board approved this request and also the purchase of a new sound system for the space.

Huffines also talked about Cissy Barney's family's wishes to use the money donated in her name to start the Bookmobile project. So, the \$13,000 from the above-mentioned memorials will be used to match the amount raised through fundraising by the Foundation. This project would include obtaining a vehicle and getting it customized for hauling library materials to different locations in Freeport. This way, people with limited mobility/transportation can get a library card and use the library's resources. Kaufman asked the overall cost for something like this and Huffines replied that the Admin team will work on preparing those details or the next Foundation meeting is in May. The board all sounded their support for the idea. Greene asked if it would involve more staff. Huffines said it could, but there is also a possibility that managers could take that on. More on this topic will be discussed further in the strategic plan process. Butler brought up insurance for the vehicle. Huffines agreed we would have to have all of our ducks in a row before we start campaigning.

Facilities: Huffines contacted a company to repair the sagging carpet on the stairs. She will keep the board updated on the process. The quote to re-carpet the meeting room came to an estimated total of \$7,000. Huffines asked the board if they wanted more quotes or to go forward with recarpetting the meeting room. The board discussed budgeting for these repairs.

Through the tuck-pointing analysis, we learned that the work will be minimal. Huffines is ready to reach out to a couple of businesses and have the repairs completed and invoiced as normal.

Parking Lot: Darin Stykel with Fehr Graham gave a free estimate on the parking lot. In the past 5 years, there has been significant buckling, cracking, and sinking. Also, the patchwork on sewer grates is deteriorating at a faster rate. Huffines said we are fortunate to not have any accidents due to the state of our lot. This project is required to go to bid as it exceeds the \$25,000 threshold. If the board chooses Ferh Graham, there would be an additional \$10,000 - \$12,000 cost. Huffines informed the board that she spoke with the city manager about the bidding process. She also talked about the structure under the parking lot failing, meaning the concrete will have to be ripped up and relaid with better support underneath. She is expecting to get quotes from other firms. Huffines explained that this project would be paid for out of reserve accounts. Also, the library will be receiving about \$46,000 from the savings bonds, which helps immensely. Butler said it would be money well spent because the parking lot is just as important as everything else. Kramer asked if a consultant would have a timeline for this project and if it would be wise to wait for their guidance on this. Huffines agreed. She explained the process would start with selecting the firm, then we could pause as long as we needed before beginning the work. Huffines said she will spend more time working with firms to get more information to bring to the next meeting.

Huffines provided an update about document retention including electronic files.

### **MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

Adult Services: Huffines reviewed statistics for the Adult Services department including the ILP watch party, notarizations, tech help appointments, and book donations taken to Voice's Book Nook.

Circulation Department: Statistics show that the library's circulation has rebounded. Huffines commented again that things have picked up lately and that we are seeing a steady increase in all digital collection usage as well.

Youth Services: The previous Youth Librarian's Assistant Charissa Cady left the library team last month. In February, the management team interviewed 5 candidates for the position. Huffines also reviewed Amanda Meyers's program statistics including 9 teen attendees for programming!

### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

The board discussed the necessary carpet repairs and budget.

(Barr, Kaufman) Motion to approve carpet repair/replacement with discretion up to \$10,000.

7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

(Reynolds, Mazique) Motion to approve the proposal from the Strategic Planning Consultant as discussed.

7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

(Kaufman, Reynolds) Motion to move into executive session.

7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

### **IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

***Pursuant to 5ILCS 20/2 (c) 1 the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body.***

(Butler/Reynolds) Motion to go back to open session at 7:11pm.

7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

### **X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **XI. DISCUSSION**

Butler asked about insurance and liability in case someone gets hurt. She described a hypothetical in which someone were to sue the board or a board member. She asked if someone could sue an individual board member. Huffines confirmed that the library does have insurance on all members of the Board of Trustees.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

(Kaufman/Reynolds) Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:14pm.  
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion Carries.

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Submitted by Kya Eckert