

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting Room Side A**  
**Monday, August 21, 2023**

**Present:** Elizabeth Greenberg (Vice Chair), Caitlin Powers (Treasurer), Monica Cataldo (Secretary), Lorraine Lindenberg, Pete Marcotte, Meryle Zusman (Trustee Alternate), Erin Spencer (Town Council Liaison), Victoria Austin (Trustee Alternate), Eric Stern (Director), Lisa Carvalho (Recording Secretary)

**Absent:** Rachael Armstrong (Chair), Margaret Ives

The Meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Trustee Greenberg.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

**Amendments to Agenda:**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

- Trustee Powers noted that in the first bullet point of the Treasurer’s Report on page one, delivered by Director Stern in her absence at the July 17th meeting, the words “fine account” be changed to “General Fund.”

*Motion to accept the Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting, with corrections, held on July 17, 2023, by Trustee Greenberg. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 5-0. Trustees Powers and Marcotte abstained.*

*Motion to accept the Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting, held on August 15, 2023, by Trustee Greenberg. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.*

**Treasurer’s Report:**

- Treasurer Powers gave a verbal report. She reviewed FY24. We have expended 10.7% of the budget in the first 12<sup>th</sup> of the year, primarily on annual expenditures such as magazines and the GMILCS annual fee. She noted a recommendation in the amount of “all-in” materials budget. Next month, given the proposed amount and an adjustment for the changes in the new fine policy taking effect September 1, she will propose a FY24 special funds account budget. FY23 has not been fully closed. There may be a reclassification from the special funds account to the general fund for materials to make up for planned-for expenditures of \$8,000.00. There will be an audit and then the books will be closed. The final report will not be completed until October.

**Director’s and Staff Reports:**

- Trustee Marcotte asked for clarification of “fines” on page 2 of the Director’s Report. Director Stern stated that “fines” are also comprised of payments for lost and damaged items. The number in question refers to overdue fines being removed from the budget. Director Stern reviewed the policy change. Trustee Powers stated that she will review the information to come up with a more accurate figure at the next meeting.
- Trustee Greenberg asked for clarification regarding going to Aspen Discovery. Director Stern stated that it is an overlay for the existing catalog, the Polaris database. The Polaris database is aging out, and hasn’t been streamlined for modern users. Aspen Discovery looks and feels more

like Google or Amazon. The response has been positive. It will not change the catalog, but should enhance the user experience. We have reviewed overlays for the past two years that were more expensive. This seemed the perfect fit for our consortium, not adding significant annual expense. If we have to move on from Polaris, Aspen will make the transition seamless for our patrons. The change went live today. If patrons find that they have lost access to saved lists or searches, we will have a month to help them reclaim them from the catalog. Any saved lists that have not been migrated over will be lost. Staff are available to help with this task.

- Director Stern was congratulated on his elevation to Chair of the GMILCS Membership Group.
- Trustee Cataldo commented regarding Unusual Items, that she spoke with Cindy at Yarn & Fiber about the loom. She agreed to mention it to her customers. Trustee Alternate Austin asked if there will be a display of Unusual Items, as they are kept behind the Circulation desk. Director Stern stated that he will suggest a card system with photos of the items (like what used to be seen at a Toys-R-Us, where there would be a picture of the game you want, but the picture remains when a card is taken). In the catalog, the Unusual Items will be pictured online.

#### **Gifts:**

A patron used our phone because her cell phone was hacked. She was allowed to use the library phone to do some business for a few minutes and when she finished, she immediately gave a \$100.00 donation to the DPL.

*Motion to accept any and all unrestricted monetary gifts received between the last Board of Trustees meeting and this meeting by Trustee Powers. Seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.*

#### **Correspondence:**

There was no Correspondence.

#### **Announcements:**

- Trustee Armstrong gave birth to a healthy baby girl!
- Trustee Alternate Austin commented on conversations she'd had recently with patrons from Londonderry and Windham that are glad to be a part of the GMILCS libraries.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no Public Comment.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Vote on staffing recommendations from Personnel Committee meeting of 8/15/23: The Personnel Committee provisionally approved the staffing changes noted in the personnel committee minutes of 8/15. Director Stern reiterated that Mike will be retiring at the end of September, and that Mike has agreed to stay on in a 20 hr/wk part-time role once the necessary 28 days has elapsed after his full-time retirement. It is a win-win for both parties. With Mike at 20 hours, Andy increasing from 10 to 18, and then supplementing with an outside cleaning contractor 2-3 days/week, Director Stern is confident that the library will be well maintained. This change provides funding for a redistribution of hours and responsibilities to other positions. Communications Coordinator Jen Khoury will see an overdue promotion to senior staff/department head, and other part-time positions will see an increase in hours. Reference staff member Octavia Hayes will increase to 20 hrs/wk, Admin Shannon May will increase to 20 hrs/wk, and the Library Page position will increase to a yearly average of 12 hrs/wk. The

Personnel Committee also provisionally approved promoting a substitute to regular part-time status of 24 hours/week, to fill the vacancy left by Dianna a few months ago.

- Trustee Greenberg noted that these changes are enabled by the savings of not paying full-time salary/benefits for Mike's position. She also noted the approx. \$15k savings, even with these changes. Director Stern said that these savings could be absorbed by additional needs as more folks hit retirement age later in the fiscal year.
- Trustee Cataldo asked how Mike's responsibilities would change. Director Stern noted that special projects would be transferred to Andy and Mike will have a routine cleaning schedule. The outside contractor will do more specialized cleaning. She has worked previously for Director Stern and has his confidence.
- Trustee Cataldo noted Andrew Sullivan's resume, which she enjoyed reading. Director Stern clarified that Andrew would be the substitute promoted to regular part-time, and that was the reason for his resume being included in the packet.

*Motion to adopt the proposed staffing changes as recommended by Director Stern and the Personnel Committee by Trustee Powers. Seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.*

- FY24 "all-in" materials budget: Director Stern stated that he met with Susan Brown on the materials budget and reviewed the breakdown of expenses from FY23. The bottom line ask from the fine account is pared down as he felt it was the responsible thing to do, given that we haven't spent up to the limit in the past few years and we will be seeing less fines come in this year. The bottom line ask has decreased. The "ask" is now \$25,100.00, bringing the total up to \$109,688.00 which includes allocating \$1,000.00 to adult programming. William Hobdy Day showed that we can have great results when we put time, effort and resources into an event like this. The event went better than we could have imagined.

*Motion to accept FY24 "all-in" materials budget by Trustee Greenberg. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.*

- HB 321 – regarding unsealing nonpublic meeting minutes: Director Stern explained that House Bill 321, signed into law, provides a required process for unsealing nonpublic meeting minutes. As a board, we will have to adopt a review process or the default language in the statute will kick in in 10 years. He believes we should take care of it while we are thinking about it as it has just passed. Director Stern expressed his personal philosophy regarding transparency. Absent the inclusion of legally protected (HIPAA, other) information in the sealed minutes, he does not see any reason to keep minutes sealed beyond 10 years.
  - Trustee Greenberg asked regarding personnel issues. Director Stern reiterated his belief that they should be unsealed in 10 years. If the board disagrees, it could set a different period, but the minutes must be reviewed every 10 years according to the statute. If the meeting minutes contain legally protected information, those would have to remain sealed or be redacted. The key is that nonpublic meeting minutes that are over 10 years old, per the statute, would have to be available to someone who requested them.
  - Trustee Cataldo asked how often these records are requested. Director Stern responded "very rarely." The statute gives a 10 year grace period to review this information. Right now, there is no formal procedure for unsealing minutes and that is what this legislation seeks to remedy.
  - Trustee Greenberg asked if this should go to the Policy Committee. Director Stern thinks so, sometime before we lose focus on it... perhaps in the next few months.

- Trustee Marcotte asked if the sealed minutes would need to be published after being unsealed. Director Stern stated that in his view, they would be kept in the same manner that other minutes. Trustee Lindenberg clarified that the nonpublic minutes could be released only on request and with redactions.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- Update on sprinkler system repairs: We are still waiting for quotes but will have to decide at the next meeting as these repairs are necessary before the cold weather arrives. The only company to date that has given us a quote that is comprehensive is Impact, the company that replaced ASAP. Their quotes have been very high. We were able to dispel the hydraulic design placards for \$60.00 by talking to the Fire Department and ordering our own placards. That would have been over \$1,000.00 for Impact. Director Stern feels this quote is too high and wants to have at least 3 quotes to choose from. Only one other company took the time to actually inspect the attic space, and he expects this quote soon. Another person simply poked their head up into the attic hatch for 30 seconds, and said that they would provide a quote. Director Stern believes that there will likely be a low, median, and high quote to choose from.
- Update on court-ordered supervised visitations: Director Stern stated that he will have a meeting with the ULAC group this Friday, and ULAC will discuss how we want to move forward. Trustee Marcotte noted that DCYF seems to have sidestepped the issue. Director Stern stated that DCYF is distancing itself from the situation in libraries and to him, this seems irresponsible. He has the Reference Staff working to find out what happened to the closed visitation centers, tracing the how, when, and why they were closed. In his next conversation with DCYF he will have facts at his disposal. Trustee Marcotte asked if we know that meetings are being held at DPL. While Director Stern and his staff haven't engaged with folks directly, through observations we know that they are happening. Director Stern noted that DCYF does not take responsibility for what is happening at libraries because it is not their employees who are bringing supervised visitations to libraries. They have outsourced this to other organizations. It is Director Stern's view that while DCYF may not be the organization actually doing the supervising in the visitations now, to distance themselves from this is irresponsible because at some point in the past decisions made at DCYF helped to create this situation. DPL is not experiencing as much volume of this as other libraries that are closer to the centers that were shut down. Director Stern sought Board guidance, and asked about potential legislative action, involving local reps.
  - Trustee Alternate Austin asked if the DCYF representative stated which private organizations are handling this. The representative did not offer this information. Director Stern called the folks that he had previously met with from DCYF and got a call the next day from Beth Margeson, DCYF General Counsel. Trustee Alternate Austin asked if other actions have been taken. Director Stern reported that some libraries (not members of ULAC) have sent cease and desist letters as they are across the street from a center that has been closed. Trustee Alternate Austin stated that she has reached out to Congressman Pappas' office on another issue and found them easy to work with. They may be a good resource.
- Strategic Planning – bike bookmobile update: Director Stern has involved Jess Delangie, who is very interested, not only in the research to do it, but also being one of the staff to ride the bike and deliver the books. They hope to start by meeting with Mark at the ebike store nearby. If that goes well, there may be inroads there to meet our needs. There are a few stores close by that we could go to if that first store does not meet our needs.

- Trustee Alternate Austin inquired about the trailer piece of the project. Director Stern replied that there are other iterations of the bike-mobile that don't include a trailer and he will talk with the stores about those options. He has contact information for the person that custom designs the trailers that other libraries use. We are still in the exploratory stage, but he would like to have this in place for next spring.
- Strategic Planning – survey update: Director Stern reported that the survey, that was online and in print, is now closed and Jen is tabulating the results and putting them in format. This will be ready for the next meeting in September. People were generally very supportive and happy with what DPL has been doing. There were some very good ideas included.
- Trustee Lindenberg stated that she and Director Stern have been discussing a display case to showcase different events, occasions, and cultures within the community. Director Stern strongly supports the project, noting that DPL had previously had a display case which he took when he was the Director in Nottingham. He suggested using an area on a wall that has a cut-in, perhaps the alcove near the nonfiction end of the library. Trustee Lindenberg suggested having items donated from the community.
- Director Stern commented that there will be a new parody video posted about “Fine Free” on Monday, 8/28. It will be a 7-song medley covering artists from the Beatles to Michael Jackson to the Weeknd. It will aim to provide something for everyone!

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion to adjourn by Trustee Marcotte. Seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.*

- Meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

**Next meeting is Monday, September 18, 2023, at 6:30pm in Meeting Room Side A**  
*Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Carvalho, Recording Secretary*