

NORTHVILLE DISTRICT LIBRARY (NDL) BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March. 25, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
Video Conference Meeting-Online

1. Call to Order: Chairperson Nick Vlisides called the Regular Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call - Present: Trustees Joe Corriveau, Carol Doyle, Robert Sochacki, Alan Somershoe, Deborah Stanifer, Thomas Thompson and Nick Vlisides. Also present: Laura Mancini, Library Director; Maria Williams, Assistant Library Director, Carla Eggert, Business Operations Specialist; Michael McEvoy, Head of Information Technology; Wendy Mutch, Head of Adult Services; and Martha Nork, President, Friends of the Northville District Library.

1.2 Approval of the Agenda: MOTION: Alan Somershoe made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Deborah Stanifer seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote

1.3 Approval of Meeting Minutes, 02/25/21: MOTION: Alan Somershoe made a motion to approve the February minutes as presented. Deborah Stanifer seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

2. Correspondence: Laura Mancini read an email received for the Board of Trustees from library patron Christine Whitman. She wrote in regard to plans to stop publishing certain Dr. Seuss books due to objectionable illustrations and the library's responsibility to continue to have those items in its collection.

3. Director's Report:

Welcome to Maria Williams: Laura introduced Maria Williams, the new Assistant Director of the Library, to the Board members who had not already met her. Maria began her position on March 1st. The Board gave a warm welcome to Maria and look forward to working with her.

Covid-19 Operating Level: Laura reported that Covid-19 cases have significantly increased in both the City and Northville Township. Due to this the Library remains at the Level 3-Grab and Go phase of its reopening plan. Vaccines are becoming more available and many staff members have started to get vaccinated as appointments have become available to them.

Quarantining of Materials: Current public health recommendations are that libraries should quarantine library materials for a period a time after they are returned. Since the beginning of the pandemic several studies have been conducted to determine how long the virus can live on library materials with differing results. Libraries in Michigan are currently quarantining materials anywhere from one day to one week after they are returned from check out. Northville District Library is currently quarantining materials for 96 hours per the recommendations of the REALM (Reopening Libraries, Museums, and Archives) study that was conducted in partnership with the Institute of Library and Museum Services and OCLC. The Library of Michigan has requested a formal opinion from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services as to how long items should be quarantined. Laura continues to monitor this topic and will make modifications to the quarantine period as information becomes clearer from public health authorities.

Online Board Meetings: The amendment to the Michigan Open Meeting Act that is currently allowing public boards to meet online with expire at the end of March. A public health emergency needs to be declared in the geographic region where a board resides in order to continue to meet online after April 1st. Both the City of Northville and Wayne County have proposed resolutions extending the health emergency in their jurisdictions that are very likely to pass prior to April 1st.

Arts and Acts Festival: The Northville Art House will hold its annual Arts and Acts Festival June 18-20, 2021. Normally, this event is held in downtown Northville, but it is not possible to hold it there due to the establishment of the social district. The Art House has decided to hold the event in the parking lot used by the Northville Schools, the Northville Community Center and by the Library. The Library was not consulted regarding this decision and it is problematic for the library for two reasons. The first is that is the weekend that traditionally kicks off the summer reading program, which we have decided to begin a week earlier due to this event. The second cause for concern is a gathering of large crowds right outside the library doors, including 70 vendor booths in the parking lot. Cady Street will be completely closed for this event making it very difficult for library patrons to access the Library. Since Covid-19 is still occurring, it may be a good idea to close the library for this weekend, a decision that can be made closer to the event.

Dr. Seuss Controversy: Dr. Seuss Enterprises has decided to stop publishing six of his children's books that contain illustrations that are not socially acceptable in 2021. The Library has been approached by many patrons as well as the news media as to whether or not the library will remove those titles from its collection. The Library will not remove any Dr. Seuss titles from the collection, the titles in questions were checked out after the announcement was made, and we hope that they are returned.

Battle of the Books: The Library held our annual Battle of the Books competition on March 10. For the first time ever, the event was held on-line due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Converting the event from in-person to online, was a feat of logistical and technological planning. Many local libraries did not hold this event this year due to this, but the NDJ team was determined to hold the event and make it work online. Thanks to their tenacity and creativity the event was a success. Laura read a letter from a parent whose child was involved thanking the library staff for holding it online. Laura is very proud of the staff.

Oakland County Executive David Coulter Community Conversation: Oakland County Executive David Coulter is doing an online series called Community Conversations. Several libraries in the county have partnered to host these events. The Northville District Library has partnered with Novi Public Library to offer patrons an opportunity to chat with Mr. Coulter. The talk will be held on March 31 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and those interested can sign up on our webpage.

March is Reading Month: March is designated Reading Month and the Youth Department is offering its annual Book Bingo game this month. Instead of in-person programming, we are offering online Storytime with guest readers from the community. Our latest reader is Northville's State Senator, Dayna Polehanki. Senator Polehanki is a former teacher and was delighted to record a video for our patrons.

Statistics: An error was discovered in the circulation data the Library received from The Library Network, which has been corrected, and has improved our circulation numbers. While still down from pre-pandemic levels, circulation is now down 30% as opposed to the 50% decline previously reported. Database numbers saw a large increase in usage this month, largely due to the remote access to Ancestry.com that the company has allowed due to the pandemic. Adult programs, e-content downloads, and social media continue to show growth.

5. Friends of the Northville District Library Report: Friends President Marth Nork reported that the Friends held their annual meeting last week. There will be new members in the positions of Treasure, Secretary and Memberships. The Friends will hold an outdoor Used Book Sale on May 15, the rain date is May 22, in the park in front of the Library. May is the Friends membership month. The Friends newsletter will go out in April, featuring a contest to win a Chamber of Commerce gift card for recommending a new member to the Friends. A drawing will be held for those Friends who recommend someone in which both parties will win a gift card.

6. Finance Report:

6.1 Bills over \$1,000 for approval: Deborah Stanifer presented the List of Bills over \$1,000 for March 2021. **MOTION:** Deborah Stanifer made a motion to approve these bills in the amount of \$384,651.82 for payment. Thomas Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. The bills include the \$283,000 special pension payment to the Municipal Employees Retirement System authorized by the Board at the February Board meeting.

6.2 Financial Report: Deborah Stanifer reported that we are 25% through our fiscal year and we have received the majority of our tax revenue from the City of Northville and Northville Township though we will continue to receive some tax revenue in March and April. The current balance in the Reserve Fund is \$2,489,247. The Library is moving forward with the plan to the Board by the Finance Committee, to invest \$1 million from Reserve Fund in a \$500,000 Certificate of Deposit and a \$500,000 Money Market account with Comerica Bank.

6.3 First Quarter Budget Amendments: Deborah reported that the library installed a new telephone system in November 2020, as the technology for the old phone system was no longer supported by the manufacturer. The new system, while offering current technology and improved functionality, is more expensive than the old system. When the current budget was drafted in the summer of 2020, pricing for the new system was not yet available. It is now estimated the annual costs for the telephone system will be \$14,600.

MOTION: Deborah Stanifer made a motion amend the budget for the Telephone account to \$14,600. Alan Somershoe seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

6.4 Community Foundation Endowment Funds: The Library has received the annual report on its endowment fund with the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan. As of Dec., 31, 2020 the market value of the fund was \$806,835. Each year the library is allowed to receive a distribution from the fund which is equal to 4.5% of the prior twelve quarters-end market value. For 2021, this amount is \$29,764. Deborah Stanifer recommended that the Board reinvest the distribution of the fund with the Community Foundation, as has been the past practice of the Board. Thomas Thompson requested that the library staff come up with a plan for using these funds for library programming for future distributions. There was discussion about whether this was the direction the Board should take with these distributions. Nick Vlisides recommended that the Board plan a meeting for strategic planning sometime this year and discuss this further. **MOTION:** Deborah Stanifer made a motion to reinvest the 2021 Community Foundation Endowment distribution back into the Endowment Fund. Robert Sochacki seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

7. 2022 Millage: Deborah Stanifer and Alan Somershoe have discussed establishing a committee for planning the 2022 millage campaign and are gathering information from previous millage campaigns. Deborah, Alan and Nick will meet in early April to continue the discussion on planning for the millage.

8. Committee Reports

8.1 Facilities Committee: Alan Somershoe reported that while the roof replacement is complete the gutters have not been repaired to our satisfaction, they continue to leak when it rains. We have had another roofing company out to inspect the gutters and although Butcher and Butchers stated they sealed the gutters that is not what was found upon

inspection. **MOTION:** Robert Sochacki made a motion to refrain from signing the warranty documents and submitting the final payment to Butcher and Butcher until the gutter work has been completed satisfactorily. Alan Somershoe seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote of the Trustee's present.

9. Announcements and Comments:

9.1 The Facility Committee will meet Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

9.2 The Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

9.3 The next Board Meeting will be on Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Adjourn Regular Meeting: MOTION: Robert Sochacki made a motion to adjourn the March Regular Board Meeting. Alan Somershoe seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert Sochaki, Secretary
03/30/2021

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