Hinckley Public Library District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2020

At 7:04 pm, Karen Yaggie called the meeting to order. Kari McMurtrie, Amie Carey, Arlen Carls, Carol Kohler, Fran Kriesch, and Tom Lang were present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the September 14, 2020 meeting were approved as presented.

Comments from the Public

No comments.

Secretary’s Report

No correspondence.

Treasurer’s Report

The totals for taxes have been written in, and the auditor now has all the paperwork. She will get back to us for the December meeting. The total received for taxes was $184,840.42. The census grant check as well as the per capita grant was received. The per capita grant is for $3,502.50. Neither are yet reflected in this month's reports. $1,856.78 out of the $2,000 was spent from the census grant, with the original deadline being September 30. The rest will be put as staff time to reflect the work that was done with preparations, fliers, and travel to get the IPads.

Approval and Payment of Bills

A motion was made by Amie and seconded by Kari to accept the financial statements and pay the necessary bills. It passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Director’s Report

Rylie virtually attended a week-long online conference put on by the Association of Rural and Small Libraries. There were five session choices each hour, and lasted for four hours each day. Over 2,000 attendees watched from all across the country. Rylie attended sessions which included policies, homeschool programs, going fine free, community outreach, and more. All sessions were recorded and will be available through the end of the year. Rylie hopes to be able to attend the in-person conference next year in Sparks, Nevada.

Tracey Sanderson, with HBR High School, worked with the DeKalb County Farm Bureau to create a program that’s now available to DeKalb County Libraries. It provides activities and supplies for a monthly ag-related kit. Tracey’s FFA students pick up the supplies and assemble bags, and then drop off to our library. 50 bags were received in September and proved to be popular. Next month the bags will be about pumpkins.

Dungeons & Dragons Club continues to meet until early December, with 4-5 teens attending and enjoying it. Book club is still meeting via Zoom, with the option to attend in person. A community member asked for the library to put out a collection box to help with her Operation Christmas Cards project. The Twisted Stitchers contributed more than 100 handmade cards.

Tomorrow the library will host another homeschool meetup, and the group will be using the library’s microscope and biology slides. The Cricut and the portable PA system have been very popular recently.

In September, 135 items were checked out from OverDrive and 4 from eRead Illinois.

Youth Services Report

47 people attended September’s storytimes. They have been continuing to meet outside with the weather cooperating. The Thursday before Halloween the kids will come dressed in their costumes to read some not so spooky stories with flashlights and treats. It is hoped that field trips can resume at some point, but until then everyone is using their imagination to make adventures.

Library Statistics

Checkouts have increased, as well as holds placed for patrons with interlibrary loans. Attendance continues to be down, but Rylie reports that people are checking out more items at once. There continues to be 3 consistent patrons utilizing curbside pick-up.

Friends of the Library

The Friends currently have $1,791.30. They had income of $25.60 from book sales and $104.91 from Thriftbooks. They spent $117.00 on the quarterly eRead Illinois payment. The Friends will be managing the annual Giving Tree in coordination with the food pantry again this year.

Unfinished Business

The strategic plan was tabled.

The 2021 Library Board Election was discussed. Karen, Tom, and Carol are up for re-election. Paperwork has already been handed out. Petitions were able to be circulated on September 22nd, with 2 signatures required. Paperwork must be filed between December 14-21. The election will be on April 6th.

The board discussed the Proposal for Scheduling Community Building. The final draft was submitted to Squaw Grove Township after the board reviewed and discussed edits at the last meeting. The library board hasn’t heard anything back from the township, but did formally request returned communication by December 14th. The township gave Lori Eberly the letter and she was upset by it. The library board never intended to offend her personally but wanted to voice concerns as a tenant to the landlord. The topic will be touched on again at the November meeting to see if anything is heard back.

The board discussed going fine-free. Additional research was done since last discussed. Fine free libraries support equity. Fines create barriers for some and don’t allow for a system that is equitable. Not all kids can control when they can come to the library or return their books, so fines can be embarrassing and out of their control. 29% of Hinckley patrons currently owe $4,816.61 in fines. 79 of those are kids. 100 patrons owe over $5.00 and are blocked from further checkouts. 149 patron cards are expired with fines attached. If fines are hanging over their heads, how likely are they to return and renew their cards? Patrons would still be held accountable for their checkouts, even with no fines. They would still have to pay for lost or damaged items. In PrairieCat the overdue notice schedule is accelerated for fine free libraries. The item is billed for its full price at 21 days. The patron’s account would be blocked from checking out additional materials but that would be lifted when the item is returned. If the library went fine free, it would laminate the $0.10 and $1.00 day overdue fines. Fines could be left on specific items, such as the library of things, etc. Rylie said more people have been donating money since there’s no fines. While it may not last forever, patrons are being generous.

If the board decides to go fine free, Rylie said it will involve a process of changing the policy for fines/fees, as well as working with PrairieCat for 3-5 weeks before announcing to figure out lending times and rules. Rylie will bring the Fines and Fees Policy for review at the next meeting.

New Business

The board discussed the Donation of Marwaha Building at 142. Lincoln. Rylie said that the doctor called and wanted to donate the building to the library. She spoke with him on Monday. The building is approximately 6,000 square feet, and would be donated as-is with all contents inside, including medical records, equipment, etc. The building was originally a furniture store.

It was mentioned that the doctor previously tried to donate the building to the Village of Hinckley and after reviewing minutes from their meetings, it appeared that after 7 meetings, a decision couldn’t be made in the timeline he required. According to minutes, the Village also had concern about if it would pass a phase one EPA study.

Rylie said the library lawyer commented that since the building isn’t on a corner, that it would be unlikely to have ever been a gas station with any oil tanks. The library should not vouch for the value of the building for the charitable donation. It was advised to have someone who knows what they are doing look over the building. Rylie mentioned the Library doesn’t pay property taxes and has funds in a special reserve account for building projects. The space would need to be looked at to map out what it could be. Rylie said that there are so many possibilities whether it be moving the library, or creating an event/community center. It could also be fixed up and sold. The board wouldn’t have to jump right in and work on it right away.

Initial concerns raised included the medical records and the concern of the library taking possession of them. Additional research will be done about the details of this concern, as well as possible avenues to pursue regarding quotes for destruction, and laws regarding doing so. This concern also includes cost to remove contents. Kari voiced large concern over medical records being in the building. She also mentioned that there are requirements if there are X-Ray machines, as the state regulates them. If the board pursues this building, the Hinckley Historical Society would take a look for any items of interest for their museum. Rylie said that Bryce Carey can’t quote insurance yet, as the value of the building will need to be known. Rylie said the county tax website says that the building is under a trust.

There is a possibility of receiving grants for work and renovations to be done on the building. It was wondered what the holding cost per month would be if the donation was accepted. The idea was also mentioned of possibly renting out part of the space for small businesses in town that need indoor space.

The board agreed that they are grateful for this possible donation and want to proceed and explore possibilities cautiously. The board wondered even if the building is free, if it’s in the right location. Would there be concern about a lack of outdoor space?

There is a walk-thru scheduled for this Wednesday at 2pm. An inspector who is donating their time will be there, as well as the doctor. The board agreed that an extra meeting should be called to discuss this subject further. This meeting should be set for Monday, October 26th. Rylie mentioned an additional walk-thru of the building can be arranged.

Other Business

Karen shared that the Hinckley Lions Club is hosting their Hinckley Hometown Halloween on Saturday, October 31st from 2-4pm. It will take place on the Community Building Lawn. Treat bags and “Agtivity Kits” will be handed out, and there will be a backdrop for photos to be taken and entered into the costume contest.

At 8:42 pm, Karen Yaggie adjourned the meeting.