Hinckley Public Library District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2020

At 7:02 pm, Karen Yaggie called the meeting to order. Kari McMurtrie, Amie Carey, Carol Kohler, Fran Kriesch, Tom Lang, and Arlen Carls were present.

This meeting was not practical or prudent to meet in person with the public, so public participation in the meeting is online via zoom.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 9, 2020 meeting were approved as presented. The minutes from the Special Meeting November 23, 2020 were approved as presented.

Comments from the Public

Jennifer Klambauer, Ashley Hughes, and Chris Young were present on Zoom. Ashley Hughes commented that she thinks the board is doing a fantastic job.

Secretary’s Report

The 3rd Quarter 2020 Fund Performance Update was received from The Illinois Funds.

Treasurer’s Report

The financials were updated as of yesterday, as the $2,000 anonymous donation was received (Line 050 Donations). Rylie said this is the time of year they expect approximately $3,500 in donations from other foundations. Karen made note that December is about the halfway point through the fiscal year. All tax money has come in for the year, and the auditor moved things around so it shows as it should be.

Kari inquired about the $2,000 paid to Marwaha and if it was for half of the shredding cost. Rylie confirmed this was to reimburse him for the first half he paid for by credit card. Kari mentioned it wasn’t discussed, but that she thought maybe they should've waited in case something fell through or didn’t work out, and to keep that in mind for anything else they are paying him for. Karen said she would contact the shredding company to see if they could give any discount, as the cost was more than initially anticipated.

The board reviewed the Annual Treasurer’s Report. A motion was made by Kari and seconded by Amie to approve and file the Annual Treasurer’s Report as presented. It passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Approval and Payment of Bills

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

Director’s Report

RAILS held an online update last week with the biggest topic being the new Cards for Kids legislation. The law is currently in the public comment phase. It mandates that libraries in Illinois give free non-resident cards to children who are eligible for the free school lunch program. For our library, this would mean that students in Big Rock and Pierce Township could get library cards for free if their family’s income meets the requirements. Homeschooling families would be excluded from this. Rylie believes that Cards for Kids will create more problems instead of addressing the real need for universal library service in Illinois.

The Librarians Working Together group met on Zoom last week to talk about what they are doing and how they can help each other. While many large libraries are closed, smaller ones are open because of low levels of foot traffic. The Waterman Library has a new director, who is also the director of the library in Kaneville. DeKalb library is partnering with smaller libraries to cross-promote virtual events. Rylie will be meeting with the PR manager of the DeKalb library Wednesday to discuss a partnership.

The Giving Tree was a huge success. Because the food pantry was unable to offer the shopping room this year due to COVID, all patrons were eligible for the giving tree. 75 individuals from 19 local families were on the tree. There was an anonymous donation to the police department, and they took the last 5 adults from the tree. There was a waiting list of donors, and all wishes were adopted. The families will pick the gifts up directly from the library this Saturday. Karen thanked Rylie for coordinating it.

While in-person events are still on hold, they have started filming weekly virtual story times. This week, Buddy the dog will be on story time. Book club members are meeting on Zoom, and about 9-11 attend each time. Dungeons & Dragons Club has moved online also. 5 people attended the free mask repair event at the end of November.

In November, 201 items were checked out from OverDrive and 16 from eRead Illinois.

Youth Services Report

All story times have been moved to online. The IPads that the library received from the census grant, now can be used to record story times, with better quality video than that of a cell phone.

Library Statistics

Checkouts were about even from last year. Interlibrary loans, where requests are made to borrow from other libraries, were at 422 this year, compared to 291 last year. Attendance continues to be down due to COVID. The library is encouraging curbside as much as possible.

Friends of the Library

The Friends currently have $1,868.70. They had income of $26.50 from book sales and $29.60 from Thriftbooks since last meeting. Thriftbooks picked up another 17 large boxes of books today. We aren’t accepting large donations of books due to quarantine procedures.

Unfinished Business

The Strategic Plan was tabled.

The board discussed the Proposal for Scheduling Community Building. Rylie and Karen attended the township meeting in November to discuss the proposal. Due to a COVID issue, they attended via Zoom. Rylie believes they were coming from very different angles. They don’t want the library to be in charge of the building or have special use of the building. They want it to be a full community building. The township board was not aware of what is charged for rental of the building, and they mentioned possibly getting a different locking system. They were not in favor of the library’s suggestion for getting a security system due to not having anybody to monitor it. Karen noted that they did secure the kitchen area when not in use, and the building schedule has been posted.

Rylie mentioned two teenage girls being in the building while it was closed. The library wasn’t aware that the township allowed them to be in the building, so the library staff asked them to leave when staff wasn’t there. The township board, however, said it was okay. This also wasn’t communicated with the cleaning person for the building, who had some concerns over safety in case of a fire, or other emergency. They were also not concerned when it was mentioned that someone had been staying, possibly overnight, in the upstairs closet area where food and other things were found.

Rylie said that attending the meeting opened a new line of communication with the township board. Contact information was exchanged between the township board and the library’s phone tree. Issues that still have to be addressed include the fire alarm that needs replacing, the upstairs heat is broken, and the elevator hasn’t yet passed inspection. The board agreed to close out this agenda item.

The board discussed the Donation of Marwaha Building at 142 W. Lincoln and Payment of 2020 Property Taxes. A letter was received from Dr. Marwaha’s attorney (Daniel J. Kramer), which was sent to the library’s attorney, Kelli Smith. The letter is dated today, and states that Dr. Marwaha agrees to split the real estate taxes. He suggested the library pay the first installment and that the Marwahas will pay the second installment when due. It was also requested that the building display a prominent plaque showing that it was donated to the library by the two doctors.

Rylie spoke with Kelli twice today. The first was to ask her to follow up with Marwaha’s attorney, as she had never heard back from him in the last couple of weeks. When they did hear back this morning, Dr. Marwaha didn’t want to pay any part of the taxes, and believed everything in the building is worth a lot of money. Kelli negotiated with Attorney Kramer. After speaking with Dr. Marwaha, this letter was the result.

Kari inquired on if this is normal in a transaction where the taxes are being split, that he wouldn’t pay up front, and instead would have to be found in September to pay. Karen believes he means well, but that she thinks he should put the money in escrow. Tom said he wouldn’t take the building without having the money in escrow. The board wondered why he insisted on paying the second installment. Rylie emailed Kelli back asking if this compromise was acceptable. She said it was acceptable for him to offer to pay half, but that the downside is we don’t know our half until the bill comes out, and that if he doesn’t pay, there would be problems.

Fran wondered what the next step would be if he refused to put the money in escrow. Karen asked what direction they would give Kelli if he didn’t agree. Amie said they should ask Kelli what her recommendation would be, or anything else that could be done to give the library reassurance.

Amie said we should see what they do if they request to have the money in escrow, and that doing that it’s mutually beneficial. Everyone agreed that September is far away, and that it’s a risk. Karen said it's obvious that they all agree it should be in escrow prior to the transaction taking place, and that they should direct this to Kelli to address concerns. No action required at this time.

Fran inquired about the request for the plaque, regarding what the standard would be for it, or the cost incurred. Tom said the plaque could be donated also. Amie said she doesn’t think it’s an odd request. Rylie said this is common for libraries to name donors.

The Fines and Fees Policy Review was tabled.

New Business

The Comptroller’s Report was reviewed. A motion was made by Amie and seconded by Arlen to approve the Comptroller’s Report for 2020. It passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

The board discussed the Annual Financial Review. The library is under the budget threshold and doesn’t need an official audit, so this review is done annually. No action is required.

The Investment of Public Funds Policy was discussed. This is legally required to be passed every year. There have been no changes since last year. A motion was made by Fran and seconded by Kari to adopt the Investment of Public Funds Policy as revised. It passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

The board discussed the Coverage Amount for Title Insurance on 142 W. Lincoln. After Kelli attended the last special meeting, Rylie asked her if anything else was needed regarding this. Kelli said the title insurance will need an amount on it. The title was ordered with the minimum amount, but the board needs to decide what the coverage amount should be. It was advised to possibly go based off of the assessed value.

Karen recalled reading in the email that they could do the minimum amount now but would have the opportunity to increase it as they start to put money into it and it becomes more valuable. Rylie pulled up the email and said the minimum amount is $10,000. If not increased, the cost at the time of closing would be about $700. It’s recommended to increase the coverage at the time the building is acquired, but the assessed value or appraisal price would be needed. They could also wait until later until improvements are made. It’s best to have title insurance in the amount of the purchase price, but because this is a donation, it is a little different. Kari asked if Rylie knew what the assessed value was. Rylie and Karen believe the assessed value is about $150,000, making the actual value about $450,000. It’s unknown what the cost would be at that amount of coverage. Kari and Karen mentioned what exactly this insurance protects them from. Tom said it covers any potential legal fees and covers liens if any were found. Rylie said it also covers if improvements were done and the proper permits weren’t pulled or the work not done up to code, it might cover that. Amie said she thinks $10,000 is a very small amount, and said to ask Kelli what a reasonable amount would be, and find out the cost. The board decided to table this and get more information, it will be left on the agenda to discuss more at the next meeting.

There are no Closed Session Minutes from July - December 2020 to review.

Other Business

Rylie said a $500 donation was made by someone who wanted to start a building fund. She asked the board for guidance on how they would like it to be recorded. Amie said as long as the trail is clear and the donations are tagged so they go where they are meant to go. Rylie said she can make a separate line on the profit and loss to mark them for building donations vs. general donations. The board agreed. The best time to move the money to the building fund account according to Rylie would be at the end of the fiscal year.

Tom asked since it’s right around the holidays, if potential dates should be discussed in case another special meeting needs to be called. Another meeting may not be needed. Rylie said agendas must be posted 48 hours before a meeting. Rylie will communicate with Kelli, and if another meeting is needed, the board will tentatively plan on December 21st at 7pm.

At 8:11 pm, Karen Yaggie adjourned the meeting.