

TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
JUNE 22, 2021

TCPL Board Members Present: Ingrid Jensen , President; Martha Hardesty, Blixty Taetzsch, Anthony Martinez, Jason Moore, Nina Miller, Liam Murphy, Shelley Wong, Maureen Gilroy, Melisa Sidle

Board Members Excused: Thompson Terry, LaWanda Cook, Don Trotter, Nina Scholtz

Also Present: Susan Currie, Interim Director; Michelle Benjamin, Business Manager; Mary McKeon, Administrative Manager; Amanda Champion, County Liaison; Teresa Vadakin, Head of Adult Services; Susanna Drbal, TCPL Foundation Development Coordinator

With a quorum now present, meeting convened at 4:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA DOC 21-53

A **MOTION** was made by M. Hardesty and seconded by S. Wong to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVAL OF MAY 25, 2021 DRAFT MINUTES DOC 21-54

A **MOTION** was made by N. Miller and seconded by S. Wong to approve the minutes. Approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

I, Secretary, Blixty Taetzsch, in keeping with New York State Education Law, certify that I have reviewed payrolls #11 dated 6/3/21, #12 dated 6/17/21 totaling \$99,259.26. I have reviewed all vouchers presented for payment, and that all disbursements are within the approved operating budget of the library, and therefore recommend that the Board of Trustees approve for payment June 2021 bills in the amount of \$214,043.39 as listed in Abstracts #16, #17 and #18.

APPROVAL OF 2021 BUDGET AMENDMENTS DOC 21-55

Approved unanimously.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

B. Taetzsch gave the board an update on the Director Search interview, finalizing the schedule and the interview format to be in-person while the public presentation will be a hybrid July 13<sup>th</sup>.

DIRECTORS REPORT

We invited Tompkins County Health Director Frank Kruppa to a Zoom meeting with TCPL staff to give an overview about the changes for lifting of the restrictions for Covid and to answer

questions staff have. We recorded the meeting and I will send the link/info to the Board for them to also see the information he shared with us.

In addition to the information shared in my written report, we are opening the study rooms based on Frank Kruppa's report that there are no restrictions other than unvaccinated people are required to wear masks. The majority of staff have moved back to original locations. We are slowly getting furniture restored to original locations. Moving everything back in place requires a coordination of IT and Facilities.

We are also busy updating information on the library's website, monitors in the library, etc. Thanks to Asia for her review and work on this.

The wiring for the County's security cameras has been taking place but we do not have dates for the actual installation.

Thank you to Amanda Champion, who met with me last week, just to connect about the library. We had a productive talk about the library as we plan for our budget request. I was happy to have the opportunity to thank her for all her help with the search for a new director.

We have hired a Library Clerk and Page both of whom will start very soon.

I reached out to Sarah Glogowski to ask about the Open Meetings Law suspension during the pandemic. She responded that the exemption goes through July 5<sup>th</sup> but will send additional information as it becomes available. We are looking at how we offer a combination of in person and virtual attendance.

There are two upcoming documents from FLLS that will be sent to the Board. One is the Direct Access Plan (outlines services provided to cardholders in the system) and the other is the Central Library plan (how TCPL serves as a resource to the system; and how we are the research library for the system). Stay tuned for these to be included in Board materials later this summer and fall.

Budget: We are working on our budget request to the County as advised by the F & P Committee. We had an in-depth discussion at the last meeting over how to structure the request. We lost 8 positions during the pandemic in a combo of retirements and hiring freeze. We took the opportunity to study needs in depth, and we need a Clerk, Page, Library Assistant as well as normal wage and insurance increases, critical restoration of security and IT support in order to support the required restoration of 60 hours/week. This is what we are requesting.

In the F& P Committee, Michelle and I reviewed the history of the Library/County Working Group initiated and chaired by Joe Mareane, former County Administrator to help resolve a past ongoing \$400K deficit return to normal. There was a recommendation, which was adopted:

“The County should consider revising the way it computes the Library’s annual funding “target” by adjusting the target for uncontrollable salary and fringe benefit growth—just as is now done for County departments.

This provides a way for the County to align its support with the uncontrollable cost pressures facing the Library.”

Understandably, the county was unable to do this during the pandemic.

The Working Group was a strong partnership with the County as we worked to be as efficient as possible and to keep costs down. The library has become a vital community organization, provider of central services and collections and active part of a vibrant City, Town, county and the entire library system

We can send this report to Trustees if desired (please let me know if you would like a copy). The budget request is due July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### LIAISON REPORTS

County – A. Champion gave a brief update on the Reimaging Public Safety, the City and County formed a Community Justice Center staffed by two people to look at data. A resolution was passed creating a position. Departments are looking at the budget processes. The county has a survey to get community input for use of funds from the American Rescue Plan. Champion spoke about local redistricting as a result of the 2020 census for more information follow the county facebook page.

Foundation – S. Drbal commented how impressive how everyone stepped up; Susan Currie, staff, Blixty Taetzsch and the Search Committee. Drbal reminded everyone tomorrow is Giving is Gorgeous. The Foundation is planning upcoming events in-person and hybrid.

### ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITY

Jensen reminded board members to promote library services and hours and additional open spaces through word of mouth. Return to in-person meetings now that restrictions have been lifted. The July 27<sup>th</sup> board meeting will be in-person and virtual while waiting for additional information from the state.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

A **MOTION** was made to adjourn to Executive Session by M. Hardesty and seconded by S. Wong at 4:59 PM. Approved unanimously. Interim Director Currie was asked to stay. The trustees checked in with Director Currie on staff morale. Currie said she thinks morale is in a good place and that the staff is very focused on the work of the library.

Currie was excused at 5:14 p.m. The trustees then discussed personnel matters, including the forthcoming finalist director candidate interview in July.

A **MOTION** was made by M. Hardesty and seconded by B. Taetzsch to adjourn from executive session to public session at 5:29 p.m. Approved unanimously. There being no further business, a **MOTION** was made by M. Sidle and seconded by L. Murphy to adjourn Public Session at 5:30 p.m. Approved unanimously.

Recorded by Mary McKeon  
Administrative Manager

Endorsed by Blixxy Taetzsch  
Secretary