

**Sparta Free Library
Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees
November 2, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by President Laurie Koll at 5:00 PM.

Members participating: Paul Lenz, Amy Bernath, Sandie Perry, Bruce Humphrey and Terry Putman. Also participating were Director Michelle Tryggestad and Youth Services Coordinator Aimee Schreiber. Trustee Reinhard Mueller was excused.

Approval of Minutes: The October minutes were presented. **Putman, seconded by Humphrey , moved to approve the October minutes. Motion carried.**

Public Input: None

Perry, seconded by Lenz, moved to adjourn and convene in closed session under the exemption set out in Wisconsin Statutes 19.85 (1)(c) to consider staff compensation. A roll call vote was conducted. Motion carried. Regular meeting adjourned at 5:01 PM.

Closed session meeting adjourned at 5:06 PM. The regular meeting was immediately reconvened.

Bernath, seconded by Humphrey, moved to approve annual compensation of \$40k for the newly hired Adult Services Coordinator, Nicole Wallace, effective November 9, 2020. Motion carried.

Finances:

A printed report reflecting October expenditures and income was distributed, as well as a list of expenditures with comparison to budget for the 10 months ending October 31, 2020.

Humphrey, seconded by Perry, moved to approve the bills. Motion carried.

Director Tryggestad reported that the city has approved an increase of approximately \$11k in funding for library operations in 2021. This is in keeping with the city's efforts to gradually increase funding in preparation for the additional operational expanses anticipated when the upcoming library expansion is completed. Director Tryggestad will present a final 2021 budget to the Board of Trustees at the December meeting.

Directors Report:

Programming:

- **October Programming Highlights:** Our weekly Snuggly Stories and Online Storytime programs have been highlighting fall themes including pumpkins, leaves, and candy! Our October Groovy Mondays Dance Party was a blast, with everyone on the Zoom meeting dancing to spooky favorites like Casper the Friendly Ghost, The Addams Family Theme, and The Monster Mash. Learn with the Library bags continue to be a wonderful addition to youth programming, with several parents and guardians commenting on how nice it is to have a non-screen activity to do with their kiddos each week. This month we offered the teens another great Teen Crafternoon take-and-make kit containing several Spooky Cubees craft sheets, which teens could cut and fold to create box-like characters, including a werewolf, vampire, and bat. The Virtual Costume Contest, which took the place of our annual in-person contest, has a lot of fun costume picture entries,

and will be judged this week by library staff choosing winners in five age categories. This month we also promoted the library's DVD collection with "SFL Movie Night." During the week of Oct. 19 - 23, patrons who checked out library DVDs received a free bag of microwave popcorn to turn their evening into a movie night!

- Upcoming Programming: In youth services, November is all about dinosaurs! Dinovember will kick off November 2 and will include to-go kits stuffed with plastic dinos, crafts, STEM challenge activities, snacks, and more. Families will be encouraged to track their dinosaur's silly adventures and enjoy photos of the library's dinos getting into mischief all month long. The program will also include a special dinosaur-themed Virtual Lego Club, a weekly non-fiction book read aloud (with paired snacks) called Dino Crunch, and regular Facebook polls asking patrons to weigh in on who would win in several dinosaur head-to-head battles. Also, in November new Teen Crafternoon kits, containing an Origami Star Jar craft, will be available for pick up.

Operations:

- WRLS: Adopted change in quarantine procedures as per ALA & WLA guidelines; can limit quarantine to minimum of 48 hrs.; SFL will stay at 96 hrs. until our county is out of the red.
- Computer/Wi-Fi Access/Browsing Appointments: Steady use; limit number of patrons during peak times to seven to assist with state self-quarantine; staff monitor patrons for use of hand sanitizer and correct facemask use. Checked in with Police Chief Nottestad, who had these comments regarding negative activity in our area:

"I haven't had the chance to speak directly with the night shift patrol officers this week. However, in checking our call logs, it appears that we had no calls on Library property during the times in question during October. So this does appear to be a major change for us in terms of the contacts we were having there. From the calls/contacts I'm seeing directly, it does appear that a major amount of drug activity and our homelessness problem has moved north-east of the Library. Obviously, this hasn't solved our community problems, but we are continuing to work on solutions for the larger issues. We've sought-out successful programs in other communities and connected with resources in Sparta and Monroe Co to find out how we can best combat these on-going issues within our City. We're also beginning new training for our officers as they are increasingly dealing with a changing homeless population, new addiction issues, and more and more mental health issues on the street."

- Monroe County: Reached out to all five directors in the hopes of creating ways our libraries can work together now and in the future. Contacted County Admin Tina Osterberg to introduce myself and offer to meet virtually to inform board and department heads.
- Conferences & Webinars: At the beginning of October, Aimee Schreiber, Youth Services Coordinator, attended the ALSC Virtual National Institute, a bi-annual conference focusing on youth services programming, collection development, and professional networking.
- Presentations & Meetings: Michelle inducted into Kiwanis organization; gave presentation on the campaign and library statistics to date. WWTI: Zoom with Mandy Church-Hoffman to discuss possible partnership as alternative to their rented storefront operation downtown. Tomah's campus is much more active (new building), looking to

expand services – re-entry programs, GED, Adult Basic Education (skills to successfully navigate life), etc. Currently offering classes at jail last 3 yrs. and in 3 other counties. Possible building partnership (Viroqua McIntosh Library example). Trustee Bernath noted that meetings conducted with WWTI in the past had not created mutually beneficial results, but acknowledged that changes in staffing in both organizations could prove more satisfactory.

- Grants: Receiving \$3000 worth of materials to circulate and create Grab & Go bags for caregivers in our community with the Memory Connections/Aging Grant. Looking into the ALA Libraries Transforming Communities Grant for small and rural libraries (issues ranging from media literacy to COVID-19 safety to unemployment).
- Staffing: Four great applicants were interviewed with the input of Aimee Schreiber and Kimmy Wegner. After consultation with another director, we will offer the position to Nicole Wallace of Sparta. Nicole comes to us with experience at UW-La Crosse Library in Public Services as well as intern/volunteer experiences in EResource Management, archival/museum, and general public library. She has an MLIS through UW-Madison and Masters in Education. We will be posting for the Substitute positions, training before the end of November. One Library Assistant assisting with the city elections (as in the spring); one-hour training on 10/7 and working tomorrow's election

Building & Grounds:

- Custodial: Noticed debris below the roof access in office and could hear even slight breezes; called roof repair company and they immediately repaired with new seal. City has turned off and cleaned fountain. Purchased large sandwich boards for front steps – will order “closed temporarily” laminated signs and chains, to eliminate winter access to closed entrance.
- Expansion: Contacted Evans Printing for blank check for photo ops. Virtual meeting with Jodi Sweeney on Thursday at 1pm. Contacted Kevin with FEH for a virtual meeting. Trustee Bernath recommended that Director Tryggestad include Trustee Mueller in any conversations or meetings with FEH, as he has been the main contact with the organization in the past. Consider addition of Facebook and or website to donor letters. Trustee Bernath will make the addition.

Old Business

Capital Campaign Update: Trustee Bernath reported that new donations/pledges continue to trickle in. Pledge reminders mailed in October generated significant response. (Revenue amount increased from \$678,543 to \$757,000.) More than sufficient funds are available to coordinate with FEH to proceed with the next phase of project design. Before such discussions commence, however, a decision must be made regarding the source of the funding, specifically who writes the checks to FEH. As the Library is a city facility, City Treasurer Sund has indicated that it might be more appropriate for the city to initiate all financial transactions associated with the design/construction process. Trustee Humphrey offered to facilitate a meeting between the Mayor, the City Administrators, Director Tryggestad, Trustees Mueller and Bernath, and himself to decide the issue.

New Business: Director Tryggestad distributed a sample statement of work for a roofing project over the gymnasium in the Barney Center.

Items for Future Consideration: Open Library Board Annual Meeting.

The next meeting will be the second Monday, December 14, 5:00 PM

Humphrey, seconded by Putman, moved to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:45PM.