

**Sparta Free Library
Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees
June, 2021**

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

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

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

Public Input: None.

Finances: A printed report reflecting May expenditures and income was distributed, as well as a list of year-to-date expenditures with comparison to budget for 2021. **Bernath, seconded by Perry, moved to approve the bills. Motion carried.**

Directors Report:

Programming

May Programming Highlights:

- Youth Services: In May, the Youth Services team (Schreiber, Wegner, Shipley & Haack) got down to the business of finalizing the Summer Learning Challenge, including prepping the first 3 weeks of kids' Summer To-Go Kits. There will be 10 weeks of summer total, with 150 bags each week. We also virtually presented our regular Groovy Mondays dance party, Lego Club: Mystery Brick Challenge, Teen Trivia - Movies theme, and our monthly Teen Advisory Group Meeting. In May and early June, Miss Aimee also hosted several field trip visits from Montessori classes, who walked over to hear all about the Summer Learning Challenge and summer events, programs, and take-and-make kits. The shining star of May programming was the Curbside Summer Kick-Off event on Friday, May 28. We had 186 attendees, who enjoyed learning about the upcoming summer challenge and events, as well as trying their hand at our obstacle course and adding some colorful chalk drawings to the library sidewalk.
- Adult Services: During the month of May, Wallace & Shipley hosted the Coffee & Chat Book Club, featuring Moloka'i. In recognition of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, we read about the history of leper colonies in the Hawai'ian Islands and shared a lively discussion. We also revitalized Needlecraft Club! With Haack's instruction, community members learned how to cross stitch and completed a napkin project while learning about the history of the craft. Adult Services created three months of summer programming for adults—for the first time offering Adult Activity Kits to our community on a monthly basis. To highlight these summer programming efforts, the Adult Services Team (Wallace, Einer & Weissenberger) sent 70 Adult Curbside Kick-Off Kits out into the world at the Summer Kick-Off event! Finally, the team (including our substitutes Friet and Clark) prepared 30 Adult Activity Bags, 10 Needlecraft Club Kits, 10 Book Club Kits, 30 Spice Club Kits and 20 Tails & Tales themed TRI-N-G-O Kits—all for adults to enjoy in June!

Upcoming Projects & Programs:

- **Youth Services:** The Summer Learning Challenges officially begins Monday, June 7 and brings the return of weekly virtual Groovy Mondays, Snuggly Stories, and Storytimes. The Youth Staff are also excited to reprise Listen 'n Munch sessions this summer, which will be weekly online read-alouds focused on school-agers. Teen Trivia in June also makes the jump to the Tails & Tales realm with reptile-themed questions and gift card prizes. Additionally, this summer a new partnership has been struck up with the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge to offer monthly wildlife presentations starting with Bird Identification in late June, highlighting local birds that families might see in their backyards. June will also see the library convene a virtual panel of veterinarians in our brand-new Vets Talk Pets event; the vets will speak about pet health and care, including answering questions from attendees. Youth services is also pleased to offer an in-person ABC Animals Scavenger Hunt around the library, where participants match animals and letters and submit their answers hoping to win an animal alphabet book.
- **Adult Services:** The upstairs folks welcome the arrival of summer with the Summer Learning Challenge—featuring prize collections we curated specifically with adults in mind! Two more contests arrive in Adult Services this month—our Spice-Up Your Summer Giveaway and Creativebug Crafting Giveaway. Community members who “create” with spices or with our new Creativebug database are entered into summer drawings—just by sending us a photo of their efforts. This month, Adult Services also offers programming with something for everyone! Adult Activity Kits for June feature MYO upcycled bird feeders, a paint-by-sticker bird mosaic, plenty of bird seed, and an invitation to join the NNWR Bird Identification presentation—coordinated by Youth Services. Next, our Spice Club kicks-off with a sample of Alderwood smoked sea salt, some history and facts about the spice, and recipes to try. Needlecraft Club (with Haack & Wallace) uses Creativebug this month to learn macrame—creating a decorative plant holder together. In addition, TR-I-N-G-O helps to celebrate the start of our Tales & Tails summer programming with animal-themed trivia and bingo on June 14th—brought to you by Weissenberger & Wallace. Finally, the Coffee & Chat Book Club reads Clap When You Land this month, as Shipley & Wallace share a selection that will hopefully generate conversations about the LGBTQ community.

Operations:

- **Grants:** Through the efforts of Youth Services Coordinator Schreiber, the Sparta Free Library has been awarded a READ Africa grant through the University of Wisconsin-Madison African Studies Program. One of only sixteen libraries to receive full funding, the \$500 grant will further support our efforts to offer access to titles and programming that brings contemporary knowledge about the diversity of the African continent and experience to our community.
- **Increased Services:** We have had numerous positive comments from the public regarding the Library Express model. With the CDC announcement regarding facemasks in mid-May, Leadership team met to discuss options. Tryggestad shared recommendations from WRLS administration – consider local & county stats and guidelines, as well as staff concerns and needs. We have modified posters to indicate “masks recommended” and continue to have masks available for patrons by choice. As a continued precautionary measure, staff will continue to wear masks until June 17th when Leadership team will revisit. We have now

expanded Library Express to Monday – Friday, allowing patrons to drop in any time during open hours. With that change, Curbside Pick-up is no longer essential, but we will continue to let the public know we are able to allow for accommodations by request. The single entrance is being maintained to allow staff to monitor numbers. Received call from patron happy with changes.

- **Staff Training & Education:** Due to the inadequate selection of training topics, plans for Wagner, Einer, Weissenberger & Shipley to attend the WI Library Association Virtual Support Staff & Circulation Services Conference on Thursday, May 27th were canceled. The front-line team were instead given the opportunity to build their own training day, selecting topics regarding front-line and patron services from the vast WRLS Workshop & Continuing Education site. Sessions selected included tools & strategies for budgeting, programming, de-escalating interactions, current trends, positive responsiveness, display design, virtual engagement, make-and-take & STEM, building community, and workplace wellness. This was a well-earned opportunity for our front-line staff to learn and share ideas with all, with Leadership team, part-time staff and substitutes covering operations for the day. Tryggestad attended the Emergency Broadband webinar from DPI on May 19th, as well as the Monroe County meeting on May 25th. The need for statewide improvements for equal access has been grossly evident this past year.
- **Staff Sessions:** All Staff meetings were held on May 7th, 21st and June 4th covering procedures and operations topics discussed by Leadership Team meetings on May 5th, 14th, 20th, and June 3rd (more this 3 Staff Sessions (cont): past month due to CDC updates & summer kickoff). Schreiber and Wallace met with level staff on May 14th. Tryggestad will have bi-monthly check-ins with all staff the week of June 14th and annual staff reviews with Director are scheduled for the week of August 16th.
- **Staffing:** As planned in the 2021 budget, we have increased the part-time Circulation Staff position (Haack) from 12 to 15.5 hours for the Summer Learning Program, June 1 st through August 20th (Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays). This has been past practice and we are projecting much greater traffic this year due to increased services.
- **Promotional Logo & Website Improvement:** With a renewed effort toward fundraising and expansion plans, a new logo to brand SFL is in the works. Tryggestad has reached out to WRLS Collaborative Consultant Cole Zrostlik regarding both items. By creating a logo easily recognizable in image and colors, the community will clearly know the library relationship in promotions. Goals for the website, including creating a static page with a scrolling headline of upcoming activities and easy to maneuver links to more in-depth information.

Building & Grounds:

- **Security System:** Brinks Security was in on Friday, June 4th. They repaired it as best they were able to, but it is an older system.
- **Electrical:** We are on Lydon Dry Wall and Electric's list to correct the outdoor outlet; however the current box seems to deter users - will continue to monitor
- **Phones:** As the volume of calls has eased, we are going to hold off on updating the phone system until the expansion.

- Bookshelf repair: Volunteer Skip Frazee, repaired a broken shelf in the DVD room.
- Weeding & mulch: Grateful thanks to members of the FOSFL who did additional clean-up around the building, including mulching the flower beds – it looks great!
- Elevator contract: National Elevator Inspection Services (our vendor) is in negotiations with the State of Wisconsin for 2022 contracts, as requirements led their terms to double in price. They have offered a private contract which will keep costs the same. Tryggestad has contacted WRLS for advisement.

Old Business:

Capital Campaign Committee update. The Committee met via zoom on May 27th. Jodi Sweeney (The Sweeney Group) has agreed to continue working with the Committee virtually through this Fall in order to assist with reaching the goal of \$1.5 million dollars. The Committee members agreed that the initial steps to reinvigorate the fundraising efforts will focus on the public phase of the campaign. Director Tryggestad volunteered to oversee the update of the SFL website to focus on the campaign, and to work with the local newspaper to highlight the Sparta High Alumni Campaign, encouraging additional donations. Other committee members will update promotional materials for the 20 Extraordinary Businesses and Professionals Campaign. Sweeney advised that applying for grants should be delayed until the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee is appointed (see New Business), and a proposed ground-breaking date is established.

New Business:

Expansion Committee update: At the City Council meeting on May 12th, Mayor Kristin Gust announced she will appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to coordinate the project. It will be composed of the City Administrators and representatives from the City Council, the Library Board of Trustees, the Friends of the Sparta Free Library, the library staff, and an interested Sparta resident. In early June, City Administrator Todd Fahning notified Director Tryggestad that the Committee probably won't begin to meet until late July or early August. Mayor Gust will submit the names of committee members to the City Council at their meeting on June 16th.

FOSFL Book Sale: The Book Sale held Friday, May 21st and Saturday, May 22nd was a great success, garnering almost \$1500. A team from the WI National Guard Challenge Academy made quick work of loading and unloading the giant stack of boxes and members of FOSFL organized and manned the sale. Plans are already underway for an upcoming meeting and eventual Fall Sale October 8th & 9th.

Fountain Vandalism: The fountain was vandalized with some type of foam on Saturday, May 15th by two young individuals. The foam was discovered on Sunday by City Parks & Rec staff and cleaned out of the water. After discussion with City Administrator Fahning, the incident was deemed an innocent high school prank, little harm done. Tryggestad contact the police department with the information in case other businesses had been affected. Unfortunately, the fountain was again vandalized on Saturday, May 22nd causing the water to be milky white. Though the damage was much more severe (Parks & Rec staff had to vacuum the water from the fountain); this time it was impossible to determine the culprits, as several were near the site throughout the late evening/ early morning hours. Tryggestad again notified police, so they are

aware of the repeated actions. President Koll asked if there is anything that can be done to improve security lighting so that faces are more visible. Director Tryggestad will research the issue.

Trustee Training Week: Director Tryggestad provided the Board with information about the Wisconsin Trustee Training Week, scheduled for August 23-27, and encouraged all Board members to register for the virtual courses.

Items for Future Consideration:

The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 12, 2021, 5 PM.

Mueller, seconded by Putman, moved to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:48 PM.