

**Sparta Free Library  
Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees  
October 4, 2021**

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

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

**Approval of Minutes:** The September minutes were presented. **Perry, seconded by Lenz, moved to approve the September minutes. Motion carried.**

**Public Input:** Skip Frazee expressed concern about the signage and tape blocking the front entrance of the library. He reported receiving questions from community members, including a very generous donor to the expansion capital campaign, about whether the library is even open. President Koll thanked Mr. Frazee for his comments and agreed that, whereas the front entrance is closed for COVID-related issues, the optics of the current signage and tape are unpleasant and unwelcoming. Director Tryggestad will explore more pleasant options.

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

**Directors Report:**

Programming

September Programming Highlights:

- **Adult Services:** In September we began our fall programming schedule—continuing some of the summer favorites and adding a few new options, as well. Spice Club continued, with 40 kits and a new partnership with Northwood Country Store. Needlecraft expanded to two sessions monthly in September. Four people participated in the Learning session and another 7 people joined us for Needlecraft's Bring Your Own Project. Tech Thursdays, a service providing assistance with devices, began on September 16th and helped 5 people in hour-long appointments. Coffee & Chat Book Club met virtually with 6 participants discussing the novel, Oona Out of Order. Through our ALA LTC grant, 4 people joined us for a Latinx book discussion of Mexican Gothic with Latinx guest, Gabriela Navia. Our new adult coloring club, Color Me Happy, had 6 attendees. Fall TR-I-N-G-O had 5 attendees. Adult Services established 2 donation drives for children from Afghanistan – partnering with a local group to knit infant sweaters, producing 10 knitting kits and receiving 2 sweaters already, and coordinating with Team Rubicon to offer a Children's New Clothing Drive for our community's Afghan guests. Building-wide, we collected and delivered 27 boxes of new children's clothing items to Team Rubicon. Many of these items are already being worn by child guests at Fort McCoy.
- **Youth Services:** In September we returned to in-person programming at the library, including, Lego Club and Storytimes. Youth Services also hosted an Open Play Day that had 19 participants playing with a variety of toys from wooden trains to Magna Tiles to Fisher Price Little People play sets. Groovy Mondays was hosted outside the library on the grass and had 11 wiggly dancers! This month the YS staff have also welcomed several classes for field trips visits to the library, including students from St. Pat's and St. John's. Miss Aimee

also began visiting schools and classrooms to present Storytimes and readalouds, as well as sharing information about the library and handing out library card registration forms.

#### Upcoming Projects & Programs:

- Adult Services:
  - Spice Club- 46 kits, October 4
  - Tech Thursdays – Fall Thursdays, 11:00am – 2:00pm
  - Needlecraft Club – Twice monthly, “Learning” October 8 and “Bring Your Own Project” (BYOP) October 22
  - Coffee & Chat Book Club – The Fifth Season, October 19 @ Ginny’s Cupboard
  - Color Me Happy, adult coloring program – October 20
  - The Night Watchman book discussion (ALA Grant) with Priscilla Cleveland – October 21
  - Spooky TR-I-N-G-O – October 25
  - Flavor Your Fall – Fall Spice Club recipe contest – October Guess the Spice!
  
- Youth Services:
  - The library will provide 120 youth craft kits at Fall Fest 2021, containing 4 craft activities.
  - Snuggly Stories - Fall Mondays
  - Library Storytime - Fall Thursdays • Lego Club - October 9 • Open Play Day – Oct 16
  - Groovy Mondays - October 18
  - Youth Book & Culture Discussion (ALA Grant): Ancestor Approved - October 19
  - Teen Advisory Group Meeting - October 19
  - Teen Crafternoon - October 21
  - Star Wars Reads Day - October 23
  - Board in the Library (game night) - October 26
  - Costume Contest (all ages) - October 29 & 30

#### Operations:

- Patron/staff safety concern: (Incident on 9/20) Patron wanted to speak with a particular staff member, was told it was the end of her shift/ not available; wanted to know if he could go back (NO); wanted to know when she leaves/what door (did NOT tell “I’m sorry I cannot share that info with you, but I can take a message.”); gave staff member a heads up, as patron has a history of being demanding and expecting assistance above and beyond ability both here and at LPL (where he is currently banned). When staff person left the building, he was leaving her a voicemail, got out of his car, and approached her – very uncomfortable. She assured him she would look into his request on Monday & left. Michelle contacted LPL for background, then called patron to explain how this cannot take place (safety concern) and what we will do if it happens again (call the police). Patron seemed willing to comply. Michelle led discussion at staff meeting regarding procedures and emailed staff not in attendance.
  
- CenturyLink: Service finally made system accessible for director; updated general message and hours; in response to bid for additional needs including updating circ desks to remote phones, director phone dropped calls and third line – “working on” (expansion and timeliness of 2021 budget were mentioned).

- WRLS Updates: Additional funds expended for materials in Overdrive this year (\$500,000 more statewide) for eBooks & digital audiobooks created an additional 100,000 in circulation statewide. WRLS Biannual Planning Day in October. Federal money is coming for projects – possible WRLS-wide and/or individual library applications, with broadening/continuing pandemic services a focus (outdoor lockers, bookmobile/pop-up library tools, etc.) – no specifics yet.
- Policies:
  - Staff recommended Animals in the Library policy should include a statement regarding programs: “Animals as part of library sponsored programs and events are at the discretion of the Youth Services or Adult Services Coordinator, after approval by the Director, and should adhere to any library or city policies.”
  - Director led first staff discussion of Children in the Library which falls under the Patron Responsibilities and Conduct policy – specifically procedures for unattended children at closing time and throughout the day. Staff will follow up

#### Building & Grounds:

- Bulletin board adaptations: Staff have created a community bulletin board on the Youth Services wall, as well as library information boards located in the stairway landing and upper door, and adjacent to the Adult Services desk.
- eWaste Recycled: Old tech parts were sent to WRLS for wiping and recycling; old paint, light bulbs and ballasts were taken to city shop for recycling; both opening up the storage room for discards. (Discards are provided to FOSFL for book sales.)

#### **Old Business:**

Campaign Committee update: Trustee Bernath reported current revenue amount is \$902,438; raised amount is \$1,332,592.

#### Blue Ribbon Committee Update:

- Trustee Humphrey reported that the Committee will meet on 5 October to select the architectural firm for the expansion. He feels that the panel is leaning toward FEH. Director Tryggstad added that FEH has much more experience with both historical sites and libraries and is more concerned about community involvement. Trustee Humphrey asked that a vote be taken of the Board of Trustees as to their preferred firm. The Board unanimously supported FEH.
- Trustee Humphrey expressed concern that FEH had advised the Blue Ribbon Committee that, due to skyrocketing costs of construction, the building expansion would have to be downsized by approximately 28%. President Koll advised that we were aware from the beginning of this process that some downsizing was possible. The priority will be given to public spaces.

Director Review Process: The Board Officers (who comprise the evaluation committee) have met and a timeline is set. Director Tryggstad will provide the evaluation committee with a self-

evaluation of the past year and list of goals for the coming year. The evaluation committee will also be soliciting input from patrons, staff, and other stakeholders.

Policy Review: Animals in the Library: Director Tryggestad again read the proposed policy, with the amendment regarding programing (see Policies above). **Humphrey, seconded by Mueller, moved to approve amended policy. Motion carried.**

Goal Setting Meeting Date: Director Tryggestad advised that WRLS Director Kristen Anderson, who will facilitate the goal setting meeting, has suggested the Board focus on future community wants and needs and how the Library can help meet those wants and needs. Due to scheduling conflicts, the meeting has been delayed until November 8<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM.

**New Business:** None.

**Items for Future Consideration:** None.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 1, 2021, 5 PM.

**Bernath, seconded by Putman, moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion carried.**  
Meeting adjourned at 5:52 PM.