

Minutes
Bartholomew County Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
February 8, 2021
Board Meeting 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Call to Order

By order and permission of the Governor, the meeting was held by combination of on site and virtual attendance (Zoom). The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by President Gron.

Present via Zoom: Monta Frazier, Gary Gron, Vern Jorck, Stephen Shipley, Angie Wieneke, and Mike Wilkerson. Library staff: Jason Hatton, Director; Angela Eck, Assistant Director; Michelle Williams, Business Services Coordinator; Lindsey Bailey, Children's Librarian. Mike McIver, Attorney.

Absent: Billie Whitted

Gron asked for a volunteer to serve as Secretary pro tem. Wilkerson volunteered. Frazier moved and Shipley seconded approval to appoint Wilkerson as Secretary pro tem. The Board was polled and all answered Aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 11, 2021 regular meeting and Board of Finance meeting were reviewed. Frazier noted that her name was misspelled in the Board of Finance minutes. Wilkerson moved and Jorck seconded approval of the January 11, 2021 regular meeting and the Board of Finance minutes be approved as amended. The Board was polled and all answered Aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report and Approval of Claims

A. Claims 26 through 99 in the amount of \$321,146.82 were reviewed. Hatton made note of the following claims: Claim 56 to the Galecia Group is for the BookPoints platform for Summer Reading. Claim 59 to H&K was for service on the Book Express. Claim 69 to Madacon was for a genealogy platform for entering and searching obituaries. Claim 86 to Scholastic was for the Teachables database. Shipley moved and Jorck seconded approval to pay Claims 26 through 99 in the amount of \$321,146.82. The Board was polled and all answered Aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Items

None.

Reports

A. 2020 Statistics. Hatton made a presentation with 2020 statistics including a comparison with data from previous years. He said that due to the circumstances of 2020, all physical categories were down while all electronic categories were up. These statistics were

consistent across the board; the story of 2020. Physical checkouts were down 32%, while digital checkouts were up 26%.

The library was closed for 8 weeks. We did only curbside delivery for 15 weeks. Programming was quite different in 2020. There was no live inside programming from March on. Some bright spots in programming was the response to virtual events. We presented both live and recorded virtual events.

Mclver asked if there was any data on any wait lists for digital items or if we bumped up against limits on digital check outs, and if the demand would have been more on Overdrive or Hoopla. Hatton answered that we do monitor those conditions. While we raised the Hoopla limit at the beginning of the lock-down, we have just recently lowered that limit. We measure the digital ratios regarding holds the same as we do physical items. He added that we issued over 6,000 digital-only cards in 2020. Gron asked if availability affected the numbers on digital checkouts. Hatton answered that really isn't any motivation for patrons to return digital items when they're done with them. Since they return automatically after the checkout period, most patrons just leave them on their account until that point. Gron asked if there was any way to remind patrons to return the items as soon as they're done, perhaps putting something on the website. Hatton said that is something that we have discussed.

B. Lindsey Bailey, Childrens Librarian. Bailey said that the pandemic has changed our processes and that we've learned a lot and grown as we cope. Our focus has been on content since we closed. We've switched to virtual story times and mindful moments. Initially, we had 3-4 postings each day. There was a huge demand for content to begin with, but that levelled off. She said we were learning as we went regarding things like camera angles and best photography tricks. Presentations were made available on the BCPL YouTube and Facebook accounts. From the data, we learned what was being viewed and what wasn't. Instead of four average presentations each week, we do one a week really well.

Bailey said that we have increased the usage of story time kits, which have a puppet or prop to go with a book, and our go-along kits, which have a follow-along playlist. She said we've just introduced personalized story times with staff member Kate Grafelman for early childhood and toddler/baby story times. She said kids, including her own, love when Miss Kate says their name. Bailey mentioned the Storywalk installed last fall. She said it has been very popular with families; we are on our third story at Blackwell Park and our fourth downtown. She said we have had a great response from the public. We've streamlined our installation process and will be increasing new stories from every other month to every month.

Bailey said we would be using a virtual platform for Summer Reading again this year. We will be collaborating with several community partners again this year. As we did last year, we shared content with those partners for participants to earn points towards prizes. She said we built strong connections with those community partners last year, and despite no in-person activity, participation was very good.

Bailey reported that outreach continues to be a strong aspect of our services. She said that Kelly Kennedy was still in the schools and classrooms throughout 2020 to maintain that connection. We provided fliers and packets of materials to the schools. One new method of outreach was "realtor" boxes placed at various locations throughout the county, filled with fliers, activity guides, etc. With these, we are able to reach families not digitally connected. There are boxes in Hartsville, Hope, and Ogilville, as well as at several apartment complexes in the city.

Another new patron service introduced during our shutdown was book bundles. With Reference and the Teen department, boxes were put together based on information provided by the patron, such as preferred authors or genres. There was good reception on the boxes,

with many repeat patrons. Along with the Hope Branch, the Childrens' department answered letters to Santa in December.

Bailey mentioned several other developments in the Childrens' department, such as new collection materials including Ozobots and STEAM related kits. She said there were several "take & make" projects, which were very popular. She said registration for the take & makes fills up fast, so we will definitely continue with those, even as we reopen.

Throughout the shutdown, Bailey said, we were able to provide support for Homeschooling or at-home learning situations. Our Teachables and Watch & Learn databases were excellent resources.

Going forward, Bailey said we are preparing for Summer Learning again, we are planning Bicentennial events, and we are hoping to do pop-up story times on the plaza.

Gron asked if we collaborate with other libraries and how our projects and services compare to what other libraries are doing. Bailey answered that there is a lot of collaboration with other libraries, many phone calls between librarians. We share ideas with other members of our District 6 libraries and roundtables with other central Indiana libraries. She said all of the other libraries are doing some form of the take & makes. She mentioned that we were early adopters of the Storywalks and many other libraries are coming to us with questions. Most libraries are doing recorded or Zoom story times, but some have chosen not to record them due to copyright concerns. Jorck asked about the target age groups for the projects and services. Bailey said that Teachables is aimed at the K-8 age groups, with some pre-school offerings. Teachables has information on all school subjects. The Watch & Learn database is geared towards lower elementary and Pre-K groups, typically 3-8 years old. For the take & makes it varies. When we started, we were focusing on specific age ranges, but from the feedback we received from our patrons, the best response was to "family" kits. There could be elements to the project that might be too advanced for younger children, but with the family input, the goal was achievable.

Public Comment – 10 minutes

None.

New Business

Hatton provided information from the General Assembly. The legislature will be handling redistricting (which is done every 10 years) in a special summer session. They are looking at Broadband expansion which dovetails with efforts in Bartholomew County. The question of electronic meetings established after the emergency declaration is also being discussed.

Hatton reported that the phased re-opening has been going well. Patrons have expressed their appreciation that we are open again, even with some restrictions.

He mentioned the Bicentennial story in The Republic. He said he is on the team producing a documentary-style history video. They are still discussing how it will be released, perhaps an opening at Yes Cinema, but he will provide more details as they are set.

Hatton reported that the Sheriff's Department is shifting how deputies are allowed to work security outside of the department. The costs will definitely be going up. We will be reevaluating how we handle security at the library. We are considering different options. Pat

Bryant has changed his schedule while we've been doing curbside, so that will all be taken into consideration going forward.

Hatton said that we have resumed discussions with Louis Joyner regarding furnishings in the Teen and Reference departments and carpeting throughout the building. We are especially focused on the Red Room. We will be looking at replacing the carpet and reassessing the room for accessibility. He said that now is a good time to make improvements, as we aren't resuming live programs right now.

Jorck asked if there was a food box inside the library now, replacing the Blessing Box on the plaza. Hatton answered that due to the inclement weather, Sonya Stretshberry and members of the circulation staff had made some items available to some of our homeless patrons who are regularly at the library. This is not in place of the outside Blessing Box, but supplemental to the Blessing Box.

Jorck asked about a financial report for 2020 year end. Williams said a report would be forwarded to him.

Frazier asked about snow removal around the library and in the parking lot. Hatton answered that we have a service that provides plowing and snow removal from the parking lot. Our facilities/maintenance department clears the sidewalks and pathways to the entrances for both the library and the Visitors Center, using a combination of shovels and a snow blower along with re-application of salt/snow melting products to maintain safe walkways. Frazier asked about the sidewalks around the library. Hatton answered that due to the large amount of snow we received, the sidewalks were not cleared while we were closed.

Hatton reminded the Board of the next meeting on March 8 and added that a decision on in-person or remote attendance would be addressed closer to the meeting date.

Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Attested:

Mike Wilkerson, Secretary pro tem

Gary Gron, President