

Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees
Virtual Special Board Meeting - 6:00 p.m. – May 12, 2020
Held Online Via Zoom

Board Members Present: Bomarito, Hahn, Huyck, Largent, Montgomery, Murphy, Rae, White

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Grover, Carleton, Shereda, Erdody

Staff Members Absent: None

Guest Speakers: Mary Beth Klawender, Maddy Lank, Beck Brunner, Leisl Brunner, Jen Hassell, Sue Burstein, Suzanne Dengiz, and Mitch Stringer

Zoom Guests: 40

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by Board President White.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Hahn to approve the Agenda for the May 12, 2020 Board meeting, was supported by Montgomery.

Vote: Aye: All in favor

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Klawender – I spoke at the last board meeting regarding concern from community members. Livonia Libraries are able to supply their patrons with their Summer Reading Program. The best programming is in person. Other Libraries are getting this done because they have maintained their staff.

Maddy Lank – Speaking from the staff. 1) I'm hoping the board has some kind of timeline as to when the furlough will end. 2) Any plans for library staff should there be a 2nd wave of COVID? 3) At what point will we know when the staff members will be coming back? Would you recommend the staff start looking for employment elsewhere?

Becky Brunner – Long time Library users. Being a part of the programming that has been beautifully offered. We want the Library to open safely but we need access to the physical materials that our taxpayer dollars have used. We need books in our hands. Not just digital.

Liesl Brunner – I am 14 years old. I love the library and it has led me to want to become a writer. I hope you will do the best that you can to put the physical books back into my hands.

Jen Hassell – I am a part-time Librarian. This is about how we've been treated. Leadership - you can deliver bad news to your staff in a manner that respects their value and their usefulness to the community. I feel very undervalued because of the way this was communicated. Dismissive treatment - being told we should have some perspective. We were told there is money to pay us and that you are just not going to in order to save up for the future causes a lot of unnecessary anxiety. If the community realized the degree to which you have let people sit in limbo they would be very disappointed.

Sue Burstein-Kahn – I run a charity. My heart goes out to everyone struggling. Looking at providing services these decisions have to be made. It has to be run like a business. Hope we can get back to some normalcy. It's a time of making very difficult decisions.

Suzanne Dengiz – We deserve to have some answers from the Board. I was hoping there would be some responses tonight. If it is not going to be brought up tonight when will it be?

President Mr. White commented that as soon as we can find a safe way to offer a curbside service we will.

Mr. Largent – All decisions are running through subcommittees.

Director Grover – We will soon be giving more information regarding programs. The expansion process is in progress and we are trying to put things together with the current team. I speak on behalf of the whole team that is currently working to make things happen. We will be communicating at the earliest.

Mitch Stringer – My understanding the Library has a fixed budget for the staff. Where is the money going for the staff? Why is the money budgeted not going to what it is budgeted for?

President Mr. White - We don't know what our budget will look like in the next year. Based on a large part of property tax money and we don't know yet how many tax payers will be paying property taxes. We need to tackle some large capital projects involving modifications to both buildings. We don't know where we are going to be as the year stretches on. The thinking behind this is if we have people who not working and we put them on furlough, while this causes some consequences to them but helps the library maintain security in terms of budget into an uncertain future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AS AMENDED

MOTION by Huyck to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on April 21, 2020, was supported by Largent with the date of the next scheduled Board Meeting amended to April 23, 2020.

Vote: Aye: All in favor

Abstain: Bomarito

Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AS AMENDED

MOTION by Huyck to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on April 28, 2020, was supported by Hahn with the date of approval of the Agenda amended to April 28, 2020.

Vote: Aye: All in favor

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Committee

Director Grover commented we have been procuring PPE's, Plexiglas shields, anti-viral sprays, cleaning all surfaces, and carpeting. Replacing filters in HVAC and regular maintenance to provide a safer place to return to work.

Finance Committee

Treasurer Mr. Huyck – Finance committee met and discussed general status. Budget for this year and next year talked about in general terms.

President Mr. White – We have to approve our budget for the next fiscal year by July 1, 2020. Our next regular meeting will be May 28, 2020 and will include a public hearing so the public will be able to view our proposed budget. We will vote on fiscal year 2020/2021 budget at our June meeting so we will have our budget in place.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Benefits for furloughed employees.

President Mr. White - The policy does not allow an employee to carry over PTO and sick leave hours beyond a certain limit with a deadline of June 30th.

President Mr. White – further explained that Plante Moran provided the cost if all furloughed employees continued to accrue benefits for 1 week or a 6 week period. Our policy does not cover being furloughed.

Director Grover referred to our handbook “employees on unpaid leave of absence will not earn or accrue additional PTO hours during unpaid leave.” All benefits include: PTO, Sick leave, Life Insurance, contribution towards the 401K, a health savings plan, defined benefit pension plan, and reimbursement of the dental/vision benefits.

There was a discussion regarding cost of benefits provided to the furloughed employees as well as who to bring back.

Director Grover states the employee handbook regarding benefits does not talk about the situation we are in. We are paying the health benefits – continuing the Optical, Dental, and Life Insurance would be a good gesture during the current times of sickness/pandemic. The Life Insurance is billed per month.

MOTION by Largent to maintain existing policy as outlined in the employee handbook – to continue to not allow accrual of the benefits PTO and Sick time during the furlough, supported by Montgomery.

Vote: Aye: Largent, Huyck, Murphy

Opposed: Bomarito, Montgomery, Rae, Hahn, White

Motion failed.

MOTION by Rae to change the language in the employee handbook to allow accrual of PTO and Sick time from the date the furlough took effect (April 24, 2020) until return to work, was supported by Hahn.

Vote: Aye: Huyck, Bomarito, Montgomery, Rae, Hahn, White

Opposed: Murphy, Largent

Motion passed.

Mr. Largent – 58% of Americans are employed by small businesses. We have no demand. We don't know what the future holds. Our responsibility is to the Library and to represent the community. I think we need to be fiscally prudent.

Ms. Bomarito – I have confidence in our Library staff coming back. Having the human connection is everything, not just the digital programming.

Mr. Largent – For the last 2 years we have seen declining utilization at the Library every month. We have 40 people here (zoom) that are closely aligned with the Library. There are 89,960 people who are not here and that is who we represent, not the 40 people on the zoom – the 90,000 who pay the taxes.

President Mr. White – Because we have furloughed we are saving \$32,000/week or \$65,000/pay period as long as 82 people are on furlough. It doesn't seem like not allowing time to accrue, like that alone is going to fix the problem and it's just a kick in the teeth to people we have already put out. It doesn't make any sense to take it away.

Mr. Largent – It does make sense because the employee handbook states we don't pay benefits to people who are not performing services.

President White - A leave of absence is not the same as furlough because a leave of absence would have some voluntary component and this is not that situation.

MOTION by Rae to use the accrued PTO and Sick time deadline for this year to carry over until December 31, 2020, was supported by Hahn.

Vote: Aye: Huyck, Bomarito, Montgomery, Murphy, Hahn, Largent, White

Opposed: none

Motion passed.

Director Grover commented that it would go a long way in giving the right message. It is really a good gesture.

MOTION by Montgomery to continue for regular full-time employees who have completed the orientation period eligibility for Vision, Dental, Hearing, and Life Insurance during the furlough, was supported by Bomarito.

Vote: Aye: Huyck, Bomarito, Montgomery, Murphy, Rae, Hahn, White

Opposed: Largent

Motion passed.

Ms. Montgomery – I am aware that Riti has been working a lot of hours for 4 months and still does not have a contract.

MOTION by Largent to send Riti’s contract to Mike Blum for finalization.

Vote: Aye: All in favor

Opposed: none

Motion passed.

BOARD TRUSTEE COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Montgomery to adjourn the Board Meeting, was supported by Largent.

Vote: Aye: All in favor

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

The Board meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m. by President White. The next meeting of the Library Board is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Rae, Secretary
Library Board of Trustees
ER:ee