

**Highwood Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
September 25, 2023**

Present—Trustees: Janell Cleland, Lucy Hospodarsky, Nora Loreda, Jason Muelver, Catherine Regalado, Lorena Victorica; Laura Ramirez, Director
Absent: Bertha Chavez, Paul Martinez

Ms. Hospodarsky called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Public Comments – None

President’s Report - None

Secretary’s Report

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the minutes from the regular and executive sessions of August 28, 2023. Ms. Loreda seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. At next meeting board will approve July 24, 2023 executive session and conduct biannual review of closed session minutes.

Communication – Director received a list of questions from a non-resident about board and process of joining. She has replied and will also respond tomorrow to some follow-up questions. Bylaws will be readded to the board website page and Public Comments Policy will be readded to Policies page. There was discussion on board qualification materials, and a note that reappointments by City Council are needed, as well as recruiting for board assets needed. New director will take FOIA officer training.

Treasurer’s Report

Ms. Loreda presented the August financials and September invoices.

The following items were discussed:

- Risk mitigation licenses \$402 charged to licensing was a technology purchase to clear patron information from computers after a session, previously called SmartShield/Centurion.
- Sculpture base renovation from Pottery Barn was a cost-effective way to prepare statue for outside. These sorts of items can go in director’s report.
- Board/staff travel reimbursement line is already over budget. It will be researched as most training travel is charged to grants. There has been extensive staff professional development. Budget may need to be increased for next year.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the September 2023 invoices as listed in the Check Detail, Mr. Muelver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Director’s Report

Ms. Ramirez noted several items:

- She is appreciative of Highwood police who responded quickly to a situation at the library.
- Construction update: 2 rooms in East building will be split – one for counseling and the other a smaller community room. There is a good size stage, and behind stage is storage for large items. Door used for mini-library entrance will be removed and converted to a large

glass pane. It's been noted that sound travels through the ceiling between rooms so director will be consulting with construction company to solve this.

- Summer reading had OK participation, due to building not being open, and we hope for better results next year.
- Learning Partners is recruiting volunteers with Ms. Wence training tutors.
- ESL is flourishing with 29 new students. They will meet in computer lab and meeting room or large community room once library fully open. November is anticipated time to transfer all teams back to library, and space partners will be notified.
- Mandarin as a second language kicked off – new program.
- Zumba is continuing and that is the only program staying offsite – St. James.
- Citizenship tutoring continues as a meaningful program.
- There is an infrequent food distribution program via BCBS.
- An adult services manager is being hired and another position for case management and administrative support being restructured.
- Friends still working on ribbon cutting date. Shelving will arrive in October and installation may be moved up.
- No more information on Wintrust fraud awareness on card, but staff are informed on policy.
- Knowledge transfer from Ms. Wigodner – someone will be getting training in monthly statistics generation, and Ms. Regalado will work with her and new staff member on record retention information.
- There was discussion on committees' makeup. Website will need to be updated. Important to get full board, and committees fully constituted.
- Andres Tapia, HP city council member, led a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion session for staff, and he gave staff copies of his book. Two staff members will attend HP Community Foundation fundraiser with him on Friday. Building off discussion on boundaries with public, he will conduct another training on identity and boundaries.
- New phone system: some staff have Google lines, web based, which show calls originating from Highwood Public Library. This eliminated giving out personal cell numbers. Mr. Knutson is reviewing a proposal for full staff, approved under renovation tech budget. Ms. Ramirez would like to have a backup/secondary internet line.
- There was discussion on idea of floating holidays, which is not applicable as library is closed on the holidays. There is always director discretion.
- There have been some challenges with construction: an electrical surge broke the staff microwave and coffee machine. Director talked to subcontractor, who will cover replacement. Landscaping has also been an issue as plants were not chosen or placed appropriately for light, and were overmulched, as landscaping architect hadn't reviewed plants in the setting. It was helpful to have Friends President involved in discussion with contractors, and B&G committee may also be able to help in this way.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds: meeting this week

Finance: Mr. Muelver will scan and send application for staff fidelity bond. Liability insurance is through City of Highwood. New building/property insurance will need to be researched once building is complete- president will contact city manager. Committee met to talk about

investment options, considering IMET (where capital improvement and reserve funds are) or Illinois Funds.

Policy: Committee met and minutes are in Board Packet. There is no new change to personnel policy as language will not be available until year end. Director is researching lawyer to review personnel policy prior to city review and board approval. Committee developed new Volunteer Policy and 2024 Closure calendar. Ms. Ramirez is following up on updating Disaster Plan, matching HPPL and HP fire department guidance on bomb threats procedure.

Old Business

Library Construction updates were provided in Director's Report.

Friends met and discussed ribbon cutting. Two local authors may be involved as well.

New Business

Phone system was updated during Director Report.

Finance Committee recommends Illinois Funds, which City also uses, for investment.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to select to approve Illinois Funds as investment vehicle for excess funds, Mr. Muelver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Muelver will follow up with Ms. Mitchell.

Ms. Ramirez presented renewing a MOU with Highland Park Public Library regarding issuing of library cards to each other's residents, extending to 3 years.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding, Ms. Cleland seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Regalado moved to approve the new Volunteer Policy, Ms. Loreda seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Regalado moved to approve 2024 Closing Dates, Mr. Muelver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of 5 ILCS 120/Sec 2(c) 1 and 8 for discussion of personnel and safety. Ms. Regalado seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive session entered at 8:42 pm.

Regular meeting was called back to order at 9:23 pm.

There was an update on the special committee. They have not met again, but Friends group is engaged.

There was discussion on the staff training and team-building event at the library. There is funding available, but Ms. Ramirez needs help arranging the event. Holiday bonuses will be targeted for beginning of December. A special board meeting may be needed to approve library closure for shelving installation depending on timing, possibly coordinated with staff event.

Ms. Hospodarsky moved and Ms. Loredo seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:44 pm.