

**Highwood Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
November 27, 2023**

Present—Trustees: Bertha Chavez, Janell Cleland, Nora Loredo, Paul Martinez, Nancy Pastroff, Catherine Regalado; Laura Ramirez, Director
Absent: Lucy Hospodarsky, Jason Muelver

Ms. Cleland called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Public Comments – None

President's Report –

- Request sent to board to sign up to help for 12/6 and 12/9 grand opening events. Friends are working to get media coverage; Chamber of Commerce also assisting.
- There is no substantial insurance premium change as building and contents value updated.
- Friends are working to get media coverage, with Chamber of Commerce.
- Reminder of one board opening. B&G committee chair needed. Website will be updated. Descriptions of committee responsibilities would be helpful.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Cleland moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of October 23, 2023, Ms. Loredo seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Communication

- Received today a FOIA type request on organizational structure from MLIS student at U. Washington. Ms. Regalado can help Ms. Ramirez with response. Previous FOIA documentation was placed in shared drive this evening. Ms. Ramirez has completed FOIA officer training.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Loredo presented the October financials and November invoices.

The following items were discussed:

- Grants – indirect costs line is equivalent to overhead, but wasn't budgeted.
- Insurance line was negative in September, then large in October. There were two issues in benefits for new employees. It was noted that when having salary negotiations during new employee hiring process, complete salary and benefit packages should be compared.
- Vacuums, bike racks will be reclassified from Grant Renovation Technology to Grant Renovation Miscellaneous.
- Some cleaning invoices will be reimbursed by WB Olsen as final cleaning is lingering with spaces still being worked on.
- Address needed to pay mural contractor.

Ms. Cleland moved to approve the November 2023 invoices as listed in the Check Detail, Ms. Pastroff seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report

Ms. Ramirez commented on several items from the report.

- Library renovation is ~95% completed. Mr. Knutson has completed technology work, starting with public facing work like patron computers. He has also worked on wi-fi, computers, and cameras, and will finish with monitors in various rooms. Lots of touchup work has been done from installers. Some signage is still to be added. Inspectors have come through and we are waiting for full occupancy certification by next Wednesday.
- Children's programming will benefit from being back in the building.
- Teen Book Buffet will change the format to avoid continuing to lose ILL books.
- Adult literacy programming has been paused but tutoring is still occurring. Mr. Martinez suggested changing terminology to ELL and SLL, similar to school districts.
- Health Equity team has creatively partnered to access free Covid and flu vaccinations.
- Saturday 12/9 from 10-1 Friends and Board will greet public and show off space. From 1-3 pm Community Room, YA, Makers Space will be open for families to make ornaments. Vaccination clinics will be in meeting rooms. 3-5 pm will be general library resources. Author readings will be deferred.
- Kohl children's exhibit is being installed.
- Director is closing the library for 2 days 11/30 and 12/1, 9:45-3:30, to train staff on safety protocols. This includes new phone system, alarm system, internal security protocols, policies, keys, walkie talkies, and intercom. There will be an active shooter/bomb threat round table with Highwood Police. Staff will also prepare for sneak peek.
- Bathroom security approaches were discussed. Board noted key has been used successfully in past and is least expensive option. Will there be a way to track time key is out? Bathrooms should be left unlocked for big events.
- President and Treasurer will have the code for alarm system. No charge for false alarms.
- It was noted the grand opening has not been broadly advertised. It will be in Library newsletter and press release finalized by Wednesday. Board recommended reaching other residents via City eblast, Andy Peterson's newsletter, and the school districts.
- Part time positions applicants are being interviewed.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds: did not meet

Finance: did not meet

Policy: Committee has worked on Emergency Response procedures to assist Director. The policy was board approved last month, and procedures are the details. Some items still needed: location of systems, contractor contacts, cyberattack language. Narcan and IED information can be added at a later date. Procedures to be ready for staff training.

Committee also discussed Unattended Children policy, and wanted input from Children's librarian. There was extensive board and director discussion on age of responsible adult or caregiver for young children. Current policy is 16 years or older for children 8 and younger. Director prefers ages 13 and 7. HPPL has 14 and 8, which is what Committee had also previously discussed and drafted for board. Children's librarian did research Oak Terrace Innovation Learning after school program scholarships, and a case manager could help families fill out scholarship requests if paperwork is challenging. A procedure is needed for if a child is found unsupervised. There were differing viewpoints on the ages for supervision, but all agreed there is no data yet and policies can be changed.

The Personnel Policy should be adopted for the new calendar year. The City is also adding the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (PLAWA) to their policy so Library should use that language, but still need lawyer review of total Personnel Policy before board approval, which Ms. Ramirez is researching. Also need Health Equity staff guidelines included for interactions with minors.

Old Business

Library construction project and Friends were updated previously.

Mr. Muelver still does not have an update from Viti on quote for increased Errors & Omissions insurance coverage. Will get advice from President on how to proceed with this stalled.

New Business

There was discussion on hiring Lauterbach & Amen LLP for FY23 year end financial review. Multiple firms were contacted, and an engagement letter received from this firm, to correctly close FY23 and open FY24, and to have financials ready to be audited. Ms. Pastroff supports this action. There is now a higher compliance standard because of the DCEO grant and governmental standards.

Ms. Cleland moved and Ms. Regalado seconded to approve hiring Lauterbach & Amen to review the library financials. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Regalado moved to approve the Unattended Children policy, lowering caregiver age to 14 from 16. Ms. Cleland seconded and the motion carried unanimously. This will be on board agenda in 4 months to hear staff input for the policy.

There was discussion on staff bonuses for 15 staff members, full and part time. The director proposed that they receive an amount matching last year, to be announced at the staff party on 12/8. This was not in the budget so requires board approval, but it would be paid for by grant money. The President has been consulted and approves. Some grants need to be spent, though money is also needed for attorney review of personnel policy, and consultant for strategic plan. There was discussion on additional ways to support staff: flex spending accounts, professional development and coaching, paid time off.

Ms. Cleland moved to approve \$1000 bonuses for staff after taxes, Ms. Loredó seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next board meeting is 12/18.

Ms. Cleland moved and Mr. Martinez seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.