

**Culver-Union Township Library
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2023**

Time: 7:00

Place: CUTPL Main Room, Lower Level

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting was called to order by board member Karen Boland at 7:00 PM.

Members/Attendance: Karen Boland, Amy Kindernay, James Wolf, Martin Oosterbaan. New board members joining for the first time: Rebecca Strati and Jan Fitterling. Others present: Several community members and two CUTPL employees, a representative from The Pilot News, and guest presenter Sally Anglemyer from ARKOS Designs.

The meeting was properly noticed, and a quorum was established.

Agenda approval: Motion to approve the amended agenda placing public comments at the beginning of the meeting was made by Oosterbaan, seconded by Wolf. Approved 6-0.

Public Comments: A group of individuals opposed to the recent re-hiring of a CUTPL employee attended the meeting. They presented a number of procedural questions based on their review of the CUTPL bylaws.

The group questioned whether officer elections were legitimate because they were not conducted by secret ballot. (Subsequent to the meeting, the officer election process was deemed appropriate under the circumstances by library counsel.)

The group questioned whether the special board meetings were properly advertised and noticed to the media (They were.)

The group questioned why communications and transparency were not a priority. The board advised that several communications generated by the library providing updates and news were published on TGL and in *The Pilot*. They were also advised that gaining control of the library webpage and FB page has been a top priority and been a work in progress since the previous board meeting. Total systems-related issues including systems security, password resets, and banking matters have had to be cleared first, and that our systems vendor has been challenged by the unusual number of support requests from CUTPL. It is expected that we will have the webpage and FB communications operational in the near future.

The group questioned whether it is proper for a trustee to approve the hiring of an individual whom they know well. The board advised that the answer is yes. Nepotism is defined to include the spouse, child, parent or sibling of any board member.

The group questioned if the trustees of the board had been properly sworn in and taken the oath of office (They had.)

The group made a number of additional inquiries into committee appointments, board operations and library operations.

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Individuals in the group stated that they are opposed to the recent rehiring of a CUTPL employee because they feel she was condescending when their daughter worked as an intern at CUTPL in 2021. The group was assured the board, having reviewed the matter, was comfortable in approving the interim director's hiring recommendation. The board restated its intention to initiate an improved grievance policy for employees who feel the need -- or have a desire to escalate -- a personnel matter.

Secretary's Report: Minutes for the October 3, 2023 special board meeting were sent to members of record prior to the meeting and all suggested changes and corrections we made. Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Kindernay and seconded by Wolf. Approved 4-0.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Wolf presented several slides providing current fund balances, the current bond balance, and an update on the controls and reconciliation work plan to bring the books current.

Wolf also presented for approval the 2024 operating fund budget. No changes in the budget have been made since the public hearing on the budget was held at the September regular board meeting. The budget does not include taking on any additional debt in 2024. No additional comments from the public have been received. A motion was made by Kindernay to approve the 2024 operating budget as presented. Seconded by Oosterbaan. Approved 6-0. The budget will be submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance on time.

Oosterbaan reported that discussions with our municipal advisors at Baker-Tilly determined that under the circumstances a meeting should be scheduled with them after the first of the year to provide the board a general overview of our bond financing in the past and options for bond financing for the library for consideration in 2024.

Facilities Committee: No meeting held and no report.

Policy Committee: Boland explained how the various policies of the library are reviewed on a rotating basis through monthly meetings of this committee. She gave all board members notebooks she had compiled to help with board member orientation. A full board training regimen is anticipated once a full board is convened.

Finance Committee: Boland, Wolf and Oosterbaan attended the finance committee meeting along with Interim Director and Finance Manager Cathy Thomas, and past treasurer and long-time committee member Alfred Nyby.

Kindernay motioned to approve an updated salary schedule, seconded by Wolf. Approved 6-0.

Kindernay motioned to approve reimbursement of \$500 to employee James Mechling-Smith for library science classes taken, seconded by Oosterbaan. Approved 6-0.

Kindernay motioned to include re-hired employee Esmie Rodgers in the group of employees receiving a \$1,000 lump sum payment for the additional responsibilities they are fulfilling while the library is short-staffed, seconded by Wolf. Approved 6-0.

It was noted that no board members are related to any of our library employees.

Director's Report: Interim Director Cathy Thomas did not attend the meeting. President Boland provided an update on staffing and programs. New staff members: Autumn Wilson, Jessica Perkins and Mitch Anderson.

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Unfinished Business: Sally Anglemyer of ARKOS Design presented a series of slides to orient the board on the status of the library refresh initiative. She covered the employee and community engagement activities that were undertaken and highlighted the feedback, and how that feedback was incorporated into the final design voted on by the board earlier this year. When the board is ready to turn their attention to this project, Sally promised to return for a work session with the board to help determine next steps.

As designed, the estimated cost of the project ranges from \$2.5 to \$3.1 million. Developing bid specs and bidding takes approximately 6 months. Construction would take between 10 and 18 months.

New Business: Boland discussed the challenges faced by all the new and existing staff. She suggested that productivity and scheduling flexibility would be significantly enhanced by holding two "institute" days for staff training. Boland proposed closing the library on October 23rd and October 30th and using both of those days as paid training days for staff. So motioned by Kindernay, seconded by Strati. Approved 6-0.

President Boland also discussed the requirement from our property insurer to update our inventory valuation. This process is regularly conducted every several years and is once again due to be completed. A specialty firm with expertise in library valuation by the name of Buckland submitted a \$3,000 "not to exceed" proposal. Acceptance of the proposal has been encouraged by Interim Director Thomas. Motioned by Oosterbaan to accept the Buckland proposal, seconded by Wolf. Approved 6-0.

Trustee Comments: None.

Adjournment: Motioned by Kindernay at 8:46 pm, seconded by Strati. Approved 6-0.

Minutes taken by Martin Oosterbaan

Karen Boland

Amy Kindernay

James Wolf

Martin Oosterbaan

Rebecca Strati

Jan Fitterling

Handwritten signatures of board members over horizontal lines. From top to bottom: Karen V. Boland (black ink), Amy Kindernay (black ink), James Wolf (black ink), Martin Oosterbaan (black ink), Rebecca Strati (blue ink), and Jan Fitterling (black ink).

Board Approval: 12/19/2023