

TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DECEMBER 12, 2023

TCPL Board Members Present: Martha Hardesty, President; Blixey Taetzsch, Don Trotter, Jason Moore, Liam Murphy, Lis Chabot, Melisa Sidle, Shelley Wong, Nina Scholtz

Board Members excused: Jamila Walida Simon, Marli Stahler,

Also Present: Kat Savage, Youth Services Department Manager; Mary McKeon, Administrative Manager; Michelle Benjamin, Business Manager; Kerry Barnes; TCPL Foundation Director, Amanda Champion; Tompkins County Legislator

With a quorum, meeting convened at 4:01 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA DOC 23-79

A **MOTION** was made by J. Moore and seconded by D. Trotter to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jay Leeming is grateful for the library but concerned about the withdrawal of materials. Leeming feels the screens in the children's area are distracting children who are reading. Leeming said he is being harassed for speaking up.

Caroline Cox is also grateful for the library, she is concerned about the withdrawal of materials. Cox said Leslie's response was professional but didn't resonate. She urges the board to communicate what the goals are.

Margaret Soulstein is grateful for the library too. Soulstein was impressed during covid and the library's quick action to getting books into patron hands. She fundraises by participating in the Readathon. She is floored by the 23% of books that have been eliminated. TCPL was a place of community, the tone of the library is different now. Soulstein would like to see the screen in a different location. Communication is inconsistent.

Richard Enlich a long-time resident, served on the South Central Region Library Council board and TCPL is not in compliance with the open meeting laws and there is no transparency. There was no information about RFID. Had there been weeding policies in advance the widespread mistrust could have been avoided.

Melisa Crumrine is on the Foundation Board of Directors/a donor/an employee. Crumrine said there is misinformation on the weeding process, no connection between weeding and RFID. We haven't weeded in twenty years, weeding of this magnitude will never happen again. Public libraries are not just about books.

Woody Chichester announced that staff are tired of the discourse, misinformation about weeding and the switch. We are not an archive.

Ken Garson, an IT professional and one year resident doesn't want to fight about the screen time but find another space for the screen the switch. RFID library systems are a significant expense.

Adrianna Histler loves the library too, and the friends Booksale is amazing! She would appreciate more transparency and listen to public feedback.

Bob Proehl feels discourse is hurtful to staff, change is hard. A public library is not an archive. It's a community site that maintains a circulating collection. The library is a community center, its public internet access, it's a warm place to spend the day in the winter.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 14, 2023, MINUTES DOC 23-80

A **MOTION** was made by M. Sidle and seconded by J. Moore to approve the minutes. Approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

I, Treasurer, Blixty Taetzsch, in keeping with New York State Education Law, certify that I have reviewed payroll #24 dated 11/30/23 and #25 dated 12/14/23 totaling \$119,041.76. I have reviewed all vouchers presented for payment, and that all disbursements are within the approved operating budget of the library, and therefore recommend that the Board of Trustees approve for payment December 2023 bills in the amount of \$468,719.87 as listed in Abstracts #35, #36 and #37.

APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET DOC 23-81

Approved unanimously.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

D. Trotter made a recommendation for nominees Kathy Weinberg and Darrell Long for trustees. Approved unanimously.

Trotter also recommended Melisa Sidle whose current term ends in December 2023, for another three year term, beginning January 2024. Approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kat Savage, Youth Services Department Manager reported in director Tabor's absence. Savage gave an overview of the Youth Services department including crafternoon, winter reading passive program, and staff changes. Crafternoon drew 150 attendees and 8 activity/craft stations. The winter reading program started December 12. Kids and teens can pick up a free book in return for writing book reviews that will be posted in the Children's Room and the Teen Center. Staff changes include a permanent Library Assistant, Sash Raffloer, two new staff from Adult Services joined YS, Tom Fredette and Woody Chichester.

LIAISON REPORTS

County - The Legislature is working on a strategic plan gathering public input sessions, input from staff and they also met with senior leadership on the steering committee. Champion gave a brief overview of the bylaws changes and is asking to meet with the board to discuss the changes. Champion stated that TCPL Board of Trustees is not an advisory board.

Foundation – The Foundation is in the thick of processing and acknowledging year end gifts and fine-tuning our 2024 work plan. We’re excited to have finally gotten a lead on a prototype for a donation box that will accept cash as well as credit card gifts. The students in Antonio DiRenzo’s Proposal and Grant Writing course at Ithaca College did an incredible job presenting their findings and recommendations for rebranding and a social media plan and strategy for the Foundation. And we were honored to celebrate Julee Johnson at AFP Finger Lakes’ National Philanthropy Day luncheon where she received the Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year Award, nominated by the TCPL Foundation, Southern Tier AIDS Project, and Friends of TCPL.

Friends – D. Trotter announced the slate of officers for the Friends, they are:

- President – K.C. Ryan
- 1st VP Membership – Emily Koester
- 2nd VP Book Sale – Anne Neiryneck and Kathy Weinberg
- Secretary – Sue Durham
- Treasurer – Jay Janowsky

Nina Scholtz will be the Friends liaison as my term has ended.

K. Barnes thanked Martha Hardesty and Don Trotter for their two terms of service as trustee with books dedicated to each of them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A **MOTION** was made by J. Moore and seconded by D. Trotter to adjourn to Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. to discuss compensation of TCPL director. There being no further business, a **MOTION** was made by M. Sidle and seconded by S. Wong to end Executive Session at 5:48 p.m. Approved unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by J. Moore and seconded by S. Wong for a raise of 2% for the director which is consistent with the department heads’ compensation. Approved unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by S. Wong and seconded by M. Sidle to adjourn at 5:50 pm. Approved unanimously.

Recorded by Mary McKeon
Administrative Manager

Endorsed by Liam Murphy
Secretary