

Bath Township Public Library

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

Present: (Board Members) Sue Garrity, Lynn Bergen, Ken Jensen, Theresa Kidd,
Audrey Barton

(Library Director & Staff) Nayeli (Joana) Bancroft, Jana Slisher,
Kasey Horan

Absent: Larry Fewins-Bliss

Public Present: Aaron Slisher, Diane Doberneck, Kelli Horan

Next meeting: Wednesday September 18, 2024 @ 6:00pm

I. Regular Business

a. Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm

b. Moment of civic reflection.

c. Audrey **motions** to approve the agenda with these changes requested by Sue: In item 6, "April" should say "July." In item 9D (youth librarian job description) should be removed. Ken supports, all in favor.

d. Public comment: none

e. Disclosures of conflict of interest: none

f. Audrey **motions** to approve the July 15 minutes with the changes of not listing Kasey Horan as present staff at her interview, and removal of the editor notes. Sue supports, all in favor.

Theresa **motions** to approve the meeting minutes from July 17, Sue seconds, all in favor.

II. Financial Report

Please see the full Treasurer's Report in August meeting packet. Lynn reports that all financial paperwork has been reviewed and is in order. Contractual services, professional development, travel, programming, office supplies and membership budgets are all of concern, with five months to go.

With an eye to the future, Lynn advises that more careful spending and that a clearer understanding of how the former director, Kristie, set up the budget is very important.

Joana adds that incoming monies from Woodlands and grants will make a difference in travel, memberships and personal development expenses. Future reports will then show these columns

have moved closer to even in the allocated budget. Additionally, the programming budget for Summer Reading was added to by donations and local organizations. As these are inputted for future financial reports, the numbers will balance more.

Joana agrees that contractual expenses from earlier in the year (for the director search and bookkeeping) are large. Sue adds that one thing she sees missing is the classification of expenses as “prepaid,” or spread out throughout the year. Joana responds that the bulk of Summer Reading and other programming spending is large, and agrees that more details will help.

Lynn requests more details for how the budget is set each year, by the Director, and how things like grant money will be allocated. Joana recently added a column for grant monies in the system – up until now, they had been classified as donations. Joana mentions that since this level of detail was not already established by the prior Director, the added detail can will be an improvement, moving forward.

Sue adds that the report from Transparent Bookkeeping’s has errors that need to be resolved, especially within “Net Operating Revenue.” Issues like these will need to be fixed in future financial reports, for clarity. Lynn adds that Joana has been a great steward as Interim Director, especially in how she took on the QuickBooks system, learning how to use it and problem solving in the established system. Thank you, Joana!

Lynn adds that the penal fines came in at \$5,000 less than what was anticipated in the budget. There’s time to figure things out and make necessary adjustments. Sue mentions that the township’s treasurer has asked for the library’s budget, which was unexpected since they are not involved at BTPL at that level. The treasurer responded that the township Superintendent had requested it. This is unusual. Sue will follow up with them soon.

Sue **motions** based on the discussion to accept the financial report, Ken supports, all in favor.

III. Director Report

Please see the full Director’s Report in August meeting packet.

BTPL is pleased to announce the addition of Ms. Sarah Rick as the new Director of Bath Township Public Library. We are so pleased to welcome you to our community, Ms. Rick! She will start as Director on September 3rd.

Joana will wait until the arrival of Ms. Rick to proceed with hiring, to fill any open positions.

Joana’s attendance at the national MLA conference was great, and she returned with many exciting ideas for the library. Summer programming was a great success as well, for youth and adult patrons. Please see the packet, and especially Jana’s Youth Report, for some terrific participation statistics and information about other programming at BTPL.

The Webster Rd. construction seemed to have a significant effect on the accessibility of the library for many patrons, when looking at monthly statistics. Now that construction is complete, patron visits and participation statistics are back up!

Joana handled a variety of technology issues in August, ranging from printer problems to collecting quotes about Meraki and server upgrades. This will be discussed later in the meeting. Joana shares that another potential technology upgrade is the ability to record Board meetings. This would require an update to the bylaws.

Joana has also worked diligently to get a good handle on the current PTO policy issues, and upcoming changes at the state level that will bring changes to BTPL policies in the coming year. This is further discussed later in the meeting. She has also made many improvements to reports and helpful resources as she and the staff prepare for the arrival of the incoming Director. Thank you, Joana!

IV. Unfinished Business – Items for Discussion

- a. Options for forming a District Library - no update
- b. Hiring a Director – Ms. Sarah Rick will start at BTPL on September 3rd!
- c. Safety Update – no update
- d. Nepotism Policy – no update
- e. Cisco Meraki warranty renewal – Lynn notes how important it is to keep this in mind for the budget over the next 5+ years. She says that unexpected expenses added since the beginning of the fiscal year need to be kept in mind, so there's not an overdraw at the end of the year. Sue adds that this expense should be stretched out over the life of the warranty. Lynn and Sue both underline the point that this upgrade is still necessary, but better financial planning must happen for the next upgrade.
Ken asks whether this would fall under “technology” or “contractual” within the budget. Joana says it could go either way, and Ken explains that there seems to be much more flexibility within the “technology” classification. Joana adds that these quotes are good for thirty days. With a deadline in September, Ken suggests that utilizing the monies allocated for technology makes the most sense.
Lynn hopes that the incoming director will be a strong leader in situations like this, and in drafting future budgets with more foresight. Going forward, a long-term budgeting plan to chart out expenses like this (once every 5 years) would be very helpful. Sue thinks Ms. Rick will be a good leader with this.
Lynn **motions** that the board goes with the 5 year option in the quote (\$4,026), Sue seconded, all in favor.
- f. Convergence Networks server replacement – The replacement quote for the server came in at \$15,600. Joana adds that there's a \$2000 grant through Woodlands that could potentially be put towards this. Sue feels that seeking another quote in January would be wise. Joana adds that the current month-to-month extension is not a long-term solution, as it could fail soon and need to be replaced. Sue says that this sort of tech does not often break, and that in her career experience there could be other solutions.
Theresa **motions** that this be revisited in the new fiscal year, Ken seconds, all in favor.

V. Unfinished Business – Items for Action

- a. Cisco Meraki warranty renewal -- Lynn **motions** that the board goes with the 5 year option in the quote (\$4,026), Sue seconded, all in favor.
- b. Convergence Networks server replacement -- Theresa **motions** that this be revisited in the new fiscal year, Ken seconds, all in favor.

VI. New Business - Items for Discussion

- a. PTO Accrual Issue – Sue opens the discussion by recommending many resources to help people better understand this changing situation at the state level, and that the Board should be well-informed, and understand where we are at, so that we know what needs to be changed. She acknowledges how hard Joana has worked on this issue over the past few weeks. One issue Joana discovered is within QuickBooks, and how the hours are tracked. The QuickBooks amount does not match the reports' amounts, due to how it was set up within QuickBooks. Sue says that the second issue is that a vote at the February meeting was not properly implemented.

Please see the information provided in the meeting packet for a detailed analysis of these issues, and some possible solutions. Joana's explanation of these issues -- "the math is not mathing" (hah!) -- is based upon an earlier version of the staff handbook. In this version, under which many employees were hired, staff was granted 3 weeks of PTO. When this PTO policy changed, the staff did not receive a clear explanation for this change. In the current version of the handbook (as of March), it does not say 3 weeks, but rather an accrued amount that factors in more details than the original implementation. The board needs to decide how to rectify this, and looking forward, must make sure that it is compliant with upcoming state law changes.

Ken notes that the error in accrual seems strange, and it should have been implemented properly. Interim Director Joana doesn't wish to place blame on any individual. This is handled differently, depending on locations, and that the former Director or Transparent Bookkeeping's understanding of the policy likely led to the issue at hand.

Joana adds that the staff hired under the earlier version of the PTO policy understood and expected a full 3 weeks of PTO. Members of the board understand and acknowledge this. The details provided in the meeting packet are especially helpful in understanding this issue. Please see the included chart.

Sue recommends forming a subcommittee that can work on HR policy and handle this properly, with legal advice and an eye to the future.

The Board and Joana discuss options for resolving this issue, also included in the packet. Due to changing staffing schedules over the year, Sue says this is especially complicated. Joana adds that she consulted informally with Jeannine Brown, Bath Elementary principal, who helpfully shared her wealth of knowledge. Joana notes that she will not provide an official recommendation, since she is biased. She requests that whatever the Board decides, they let the staff know directly. Sue adds that there should be regular

staff meetings which Board members can attend, to know that certain items are being thoroughly covered. She says this is an important responsibility for the new Director and Board.

Sue adds that Nayeli is correct about the importance of doing this all 100% correctly, and to involve the new Director and an attorney. She says the Board wants to commit to communicating clearly and carefully document changes like this one, moving forward.

Sue **motions** that the issue of PTO be set aside, to be discussed with the new Director Sarah Rick, an attorney, Interim Director Nayeli Bancroft and the Board in September. Audrey seconds, all in favor.

Sue will reach out to the law firm and get this scheduled for September. Joana acknowledges that the staff feels uneasy about this unsettled PTO issue, and how it can affect all of them moving forward. Sue requests that the Board be supplied complete copies of the handbook – both old and new versions.

- b. Heads Up – Minimum Wage / Paid Leave issue Feb 2024 – Should we create a subcommittee? (as discussed above)

VII. Items for Action

- a. Vote for managing current PTO accrual issue -- (see above)

VIII. Closing

- a. Public Comment:

Jana comments that there should be two staff members present in the upcoming PTO policy meeting, especially considering how some staff members (like her) could be negatively affected. Jana recounts that at the meeting where this policy was voted on, she said that the PTO should be staggered, to avoid issues with frontloading. Jana recalls that Lynn had said that “we are being very generous as a Board, and we’ll just hope the staff won’t use it.” Lynn responded that this is incorrect, and Sue reminds all that Public Comment is not an opportunity to discuss. Jana adds that this directly, negatively affects her. She says that upon being hired, she didn’t think it was her responsibility to check how these numbers were totaled. She adds that that she accepts she should have double-checked this, and that because of our small staff size, it’s difficult for everyone to use their vacation time towards the end of the year (around the holidays). She points out that she and the staff serve at-risk populations (babies, children, elderly) and that a loss of PTO could result in employees coming to work sick, making things worse for BTPL and our community. She remembers that Kristie was not happy to figure out the math in this policy, when Jana pointed this out to her months ago. She says that allocating vacations at most places are a first come, first serve basis and it’s up to the Director to say yes and no.

Kelli asks for more information about the issue in the report from Transparent Bookkeeping, which was discussed earlier. Sue responds that this seems to be an

accounting error which must be fixed. Kelli also asks about BTPL finances and the township, and if the library is required to report back to the township.

Kasey says, in reference to the PTO issue, that there was a staff meeting months ago in which the front-loaded and accrual PTO were discussed. She recalls that they were told “it’s not going to happen again.” She adds that there is a 15 page document available to the Board detailing the legality of changes regarding the PTO policy.

Sue adds that most of these PTO changes will be negated in February 2025, when changes in the state laws affect BTPL. She says that this is likely to continue to be a difficult situation for many places, in regards to how time off is granted. It will be difficult to administer for everyone. “We will do the best we can to do what needs to be done to keep our employees happy, because we love our employees and we think y’all do a good job. We can’t do anything about undocumented items from prior to this time, and we have to do better about that going forward. Meetings need greater clarity moving forward. I apologize. I think everyone on the board feels that we could have done a better job at oversight, and we *will* do a better job moving forward.”

Kasey asks if their vacation time is frozen for yet another month. Sue responds that this is up to the Director. Joana offers her opinion as Interim Director that this is complicated and the decision should wait for further guidance from the board. Sue adds that we can’t do anything further without legal advice.

Kelli asks about how Kristie set up the budget without more oversight, and who did this job before her? Sue responds that since Kristie was the first Director, she was the originator of the budget. Sue explains the ordinary level of oversight expected from a library’s Board, and that libraries are supposed to finish with a balanced budget – this is where budget adjustments are usually utilized.

Joana adds that she does not recall the meeting Kasey mentioned, and in asking other staff members they also don’t recall the events Kasey mentioned. She mentions that Jana has agreed to begin taking notes at staff meetings, and this practice will continue going forward.

Jana adds when she and other staff members arrived late to morning meetings under Kristie’s direction (due to dropping off kids at school), Kristie did not provide information about what they missed. Agendas were never provided.

Diane asks about the Bath Coalition – Joana explains that this is an idea to form a community-minded group, with the goal of bringing together people from parks and rec, the school museum, and other community groups. This would allow for better community organizing, with a main objective of creating a more harmonious localized event calendar. There’s much excitement to improve local planning in our township, and working with entities like Bengal Wildlife Center and Corey Marsh.

- b. Board Member Comments: **Lynn** wishes to say that she wants the staff to know that she would never not want the staff to not use their PTO. **Audrey** asks that the Board please consider recording meetings, after exploring this within the bylaws, for improved communication and record keeping. **Theresa** would like to say to staff and the public: “When we became a public library in 2018, and everything was new, it was new for all of us. So, forgive us please if something wasn’t done right. It was not intentional, and we

are all sorry about issues. We will be more attentive moving forward, and just want what's best."

- c. Sue thanks everyone for attending, participating, and helping us get through these growing pains at BPTL. Audrey **motions** to adjourn the meeting at 7:30. Theresa seconds, all in favor.

(Minutes recorded by Audrey Barton, Secretary)