

MINUTES  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY  
January 7, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Trustees of Peoria Public Library was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Chair Barbara Van Auken in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Community Room, Main Library, 107 NE Monroe Street, Peoria, Illinois.

**ROLL CALL**

Committee Members Present: Margaret Cousin, Tiffanie Duncan, Barbara Van Auken, Jeanne Williamson, and Tom Menger

Committee Members Absent: Pat Barton, Edward Barry, Tim Hartneck, and Cathy Curtis

Other Board Members Present: Lucy Gulley, Mandar Pattekar, and Arun Pinto

Staff Present: Randall Yelverton, Roberta Koscielski, Jennifer Davis, Jenny Sevier, and Alyce Jackson

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

A. Approval of December 3, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made by Margaret Cousin, seconded by Tiffanie Duncan, to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

B. StoryWalk® at North Branch

Jenni Davis passed around a draft sponsor form for committee members to review. Barbara noted that eligible donors to our StoryWalk® should be aware of the IRS provision that allows individuals who are at least 70 1/2 years of age to make tax-free distributions to qualified charities from their IRA. Jenni Davis reported that 17 posts have been pledged. Posts should be ordered two months ahead of time. The Lincoln Branch StoryWalk® will have a spring opening and the North Branch StoryWalk® should be ready by fall. A discussion was held on the status of the StoryWalk® at North Branch. Each one will consist of 20 posts.

C. Proposed Little Free Library at Ronald McDonald House

Tom Menger reported that during the Friends meeting it was noted that the new Ronald McDonald House would be a good place for a Little Free Library. Tom suggested moving the Little Free Library currently at Peoria Civic Center to the Ronald McDonald House. Jenni Davis said that the Book Rack may be working with Ronald McDonald House. She will contact James Werry, the guest and employee services manager at Ronald McDonald House. She added that Bob Spears' daughter is their community engagement coordinator.

D. Board Liaison for Innovation Hub Initiative

Barbara Van Auken said that she wants a Board member involved to ensure that this collaborative project benefits the Library as well as the other partners. Randall reported that he had a meeting with the potential partners but has not yet received a plan. After the plan is received, he will have an idea of costs and timeline. The media lab will feature technology for audio and video production and virtual reality. Funding will be primarily from the Capital Development Fund. The project will tie to Peoria's innovation push. Tiffanie volunteered and Jeanne Williamson appointed her to serve as the Liaison to the Library Board on this project.

E. Valuing Services Provided by the Library

Jenni Davis reported that she is working on a bookmark and will bring a draft to the next committee meeting. Barbara Van Auken said she likes this idea which was suggested by Jenny Sevier at the December committee meeting.

F. Updating the Library Website

Jenni Davis reported that our current Library website consists of 264 pages. For comparison, Rockford Public Library's website has 107 pages. We will figure out how many pages we need as this will help determine the cost. Jenni said we will use open source tools to build the website. Tom Menger said he is willing to provide feedback as the site is developed.

G. Annual Income Generated by Library Fines

Barbara Van Auken would like the Library to find a balance so that fines are not an impediment to library use. Roberta Koscielski reported on statistics related to outstanding fines and bills due to the Library, including amounts due by patron age, patron zip code, item type, and item home location. Barbara asked Roberta to provide this information, along with the annual income from fines, into a packet for committee members. She also asked for more information on what public libraries are doing regarding fine forgiveness.

H. Peoria Civic Center New Year's Eve Event Participation

Jenni Davis reported that this is the first time the Library participated in this Peoria Civic Center event which was held from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Participating staff members were Alyce Jackson, Karla Wilkinson, Jenni Davis, and Amber Lowery, as well as Amber's mother, Linda. The event attracted 1,500 to 1,700 people. Activities offered by the Library included Harry Potter selfies, a potion pantry, crafts, sorting game, and make your own magic wand. Committee members suggested that off-site program numbers be shared with the Board.

Lakeview Branch also presented their Countdown to Noon program on December 31, featuring snacks, music, dancing, and a balloon drop at noon.

I. Peoria Reads 2020

Roberta Koscielski reported that the Peoria Reads selection for 2020 is *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. The planning committee, which includes representatives from Methodist College and Bradley University, has created a slate of programs which promote discussion on topics touched on in the book, including police brutality, racial profiling, and activism.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- Jenni Davis reported that the Library is going to just one monthly newsletter that will include all of the scheduled Library programs arranged by ages. Barbara Van Auken complimented the inclusion of photos of staff and patrons in the newsletter.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Jeanne Williamson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

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Barbara Van Auken, Chair  
Community Relations Committee  
Board of Library Trustees  
Peoria Public Library