

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Trustees of Peoria Public Library was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by Chair Barbara Van Auken on Zoom.

II. ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Jeanne Williamson, Margaret Cousin, Barbara Van Auken, Arun Pinto (5:13), Tiffanie Duncan (5:14), Tom Menger (5:16), and Cathy Curtis (5:16)

Committee Members Absent: Ed Barry and Tim Hartneck

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

III. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes

Jeanne Williamson made a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting. Margaret Cousin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

B. StoryWalk® at North Branch

Randall Yelverton reported that the posts have been delivered and all donors have been secured. The library maintenance department will install the posts. Barbara Van Auken asked Randall to assign someone to coordinate installation dates for both North Branch and Lincoln Branch. She suggested that Jenni Davis might be the best person since she has been coordinating donations.

C. StoryWalk® at Lincoln Branch

The posts for Lincoln Branch have also been delivered. Margaret Cousin asked if someone had contacted Rotary for a reimbursement for the posts. Randall Yelverton reported that they have not been contacted yet.

Barbara Van Auken reported that she asked Patrick Urich if the city could take care of lawn work at Lincoln Branch and McClure Branch prior to reopening on July 6. She asked if that had been done. Randall reported that it had.

D. Draft Fine Free Policy

Randall Yelverton, Roberta Koscielski, and Arun Pinto met to discuss a fine free policy. Randall reported that they considered several options, including a policy that would only apply to juvenile cardholders. Ultimately, they decided to propose a policy that would apply to all cardholders for ease of implementation. Randall also reported that a study of library fines shows that they are higher in zip codes where the median income is lowest.

Roberta Koscielski shared a draft of the fine free policy. Randall noted that while library fines should not be seen as a source of income, the library took in approximately \$48,000 in 2019 from fines. Tiffanie Duncan recommended coming up with a fundraising plan that

encourages grateful patrons to make donations to the library in the absence of fines. Jeanne Williamson added that while she supports the policy, the loss of revenue should not be taken lightly, and a plan for how to adjust the budget should be considered.

Barbara Van Auken said that PR is crucial to the rollout of this policy so that it is clear that this does not mean materials should never be returned. Randall will work with Jenni Davis to form a PR plan.

Randall stated that due to a 1st and 2nd reading for the board, the earliest the policy could go into effect is after the August board meeting.

Margaret Cousin made a motion to send the policy as reviewed to the library board for a 1st reading. Tiffanie Duncan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Barbara Van Auken asked Randall to express to the whole board that we are being careful about how we introduce the policy to the public.

IV. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

- Karla Wilkinson provided an update about the Summer Reading program. There are 1,447 patrons signed up, and they have enjoyed using the new online program, Beanstack. Barbara Van Auken added that she shared the Summer Reading participant numbers with Patrick Urich at the city, and he was impressed.
- Roberta Koscielski reported that Backpack Peoria is still happening this year. The library will provide library card applications to be inserted in the backpacks. Arun Pinto asked for applications for a similar program at St. Thomas School.
- Red Cross blood drives at the North Branch have been successful and will continue monthly.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Randall reported that he and Roberta visited all library locations on July 6 to observe how reopening went. Patrons are wearing masks and appear to be happy to be back. He also did interviews for local television stations about the reopening.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Arun Pinto made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 p.m.

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