

sMt. Lebanon Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2025

Present: Holiday Adair, Kristen Baginski, Pete Halesey, Anthony Moretti, Anne Swager-Wilson (Commission Representative), Bob Taylor, Marcia Taylor, Robyn Vittek (Library Director), Susanne Wagner.

Bob Taylor (President) welcomed Pete Halesey as the Board's newest member. Pete lives in Sunset Hills area with his wife and two children.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items: M. Taylor moved, Wagner seconded, unanimous approval.

Comments from Observers: NONE.

Comments from the Commission Liaison to the Library Board:

- The Civic Engagement Board's January 20th Day of Giving event was very successful with 100+ participants.
- Issue of not allowing a menorah in the Commons: Commission does not accept third party requests (request came from Chabad). Legal counsel was consulted, case law states no religious symbols on community property (Christmas trees and Santa are considered commercial symbols). Civic Engagement Board will have a public comment portion to their Feb. 5th meeting, will have a closed session portion to create a policy on inclusivity for celebrations to present to the Commission.

President's Report

- Annual Evaluation of Robyn Vittek, Director, will be conducted and submitted by April 1
- Officers Nominating Committee (moved by Adair, seconded by Baginski) = Adair, Baginski, Moretti. They will present the slate either at the February or March meeting for a vote at the April meeting, special attention will be paid to interest/skills in serving as Treasurer
- After Officers start their terms at April meeting, the subcommittee (Governance, Fund-Raising, Finance) assignments will occur
- The procedure for electing officers follows the Board of Trustees Bylaws

Director's Report

- Explained the content of her reports - a monthly synopsis of library activities, technology acquisitions/improvements and finances
- Library will be closed February 17 for staff development
- Friends of the Library met last week and approved Library wish list items: Book Stop and Media Stop subscriptions, programming, repair of LED sign, Staff Development Day (PALA registrations and development day speaker fee) they also sponsored the PALA conference at the Silver level (\$1500)
- Thursday January 23rd, Residents Academy will tour the Library and hear a presentation by Robyn
- Staff changes: part-time circulation clerk Kelly Nagy left for a FT position at another library, position is open and 60 applications received so far, will be filled by late February

Committee Reports: Finance NONE

Committee Reports: Governance NONE

Committee Reports: Fund-Raising

- Garden Tour: 3 gardens for the Tour are in confirmed status. Still seeking 3-4 more. Refer gardens to Marina (nielsenm@einetnetwork.net)

Old Business:

- Library Highlights of the Year (framed by the mission statement) were submitted to Municipal Manager
- Emphasized the capital improvement project
- Met with DRAW Collective – they are working cost estimates. Library will be able to finance the project with funds on hand, Friends help and a Keystone Grant (which can be up to \$750,000)

New Business: “Book Sanctuary Library” designation - pursue for the library?

- Such a facility must embody at least one of these qualities:
 - Protect endangered books in the collection – no banning, no burning
 - Make endangered books broadly accessible - no “soft censorship” = shelving children’s’ books in the adult section, making books only available on reserve
 - Host Book Talks about endangered books
 - Present the history of book banning and burning events in the US
- Mt. Lebanon library already does these things, so it would be a matter of packaging these actions as part of being a “Book Sanctuary Library” in publicity and display materials
- Board of Trustees would pass a resolution (might be either during National Library Week in April, or Banned Books Week in September)
- Rationale to pursuing this designation is: 1) Mt. Lebanon Library can serve as a model and support for other libraries struggling in repressive communities, 2) it indicates how welcoming and inclusive Mt. Lebanon is (and ties in with CEB project of getting Mt. Lebanon designated a “Welcoming City”)
- Considerations:
 - There will still be the (already in place) Request for Reconsideration process
 - Front Line staff will bear the brunt of any disagreement/anger from the community about this designation (Robyn will speak with ALL staff as a group and process concerns)
 - Other immediate stakeholders will be consulted (Friends of the Library Board)
 - Consider the content of the messaging and an alternate title (“sanctuary” has been politicized)
- Next Steps:
 - Robyn will meet with staff, Friends, Commission and Mun. Manager
 - Bob will write a more formal proposal for presentation to the Board of Trustees

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Holiday Adair, Secretary