

CORRESPONDENCE

On April 9, 2007, a letter was received by Jason Pernick, Committee Member, from Karen L. Hill regarding her suggestions of the Library's Summer Reading Program.

April Stevenson is present to elaborate on the Library's programs. She speaks about the perception of the library's programs and the upcoming events.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Committee reviews the current financial report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Eric Suess, Library Director gave his report.

- Circulation for March set a new high at almost 23,000. This is over 23% higher than March, 2006. I have attached our circulation figures.
- Clara Bohrer from the West Bloomfield Library has indicated that she will not be honoring our MichiCard because "...local issues trump state programs". She also indicated that her Library Board would be exploring at least limited reciprocity with Commerce in the not too distant future. Also, on the reciprocity scene, I talked with Donna from the Walled Lake Library who indicated she does not wish to be reciprocal unless Commerce residents are 5% or less of her circulation.
- The furniture for our new offices (youth and technology) has arrived and is extremely nice. It should serve us very well for many years.
- Wayne State's Library School has offered us a practicum student. Kirstin Malzahn will be working with April for 90 hours, at no cost to our library. The timing on this is perfect, as we are heading toward summer reading season.
- Potential cuts in State Aid to libraries are a strong concern for public libraries across the state. While an individual library's share of this aid is generally a fairly small part of the budget, the numerous library cooperatives throughout Michigan rely up to 95% on this funding. The Library Network (TLN) is in much better position than most as only 24% of its budget comes from State Aid. Traditionally the funding has come in two parts (80% for the first part, 20% a few months later). This was recently changed to 50/50. The first payment went out to libraries and cooperatives already. It is unclear at what level the second half payment will be distributed. Estimates range from the full other 50% down to no payment at all. It is a possibility that in 2008 there will be no funding at all. What this means is that many cooperatives could close or be severely limited in operational capabilities.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Continued)

The TLN Library Directors are meeting to deal with this proactively. The first meeting was 4/16/07. Meeting on 4/23/07 and 4/30/07 are also planned.

Assisting us with this is Jeff Johnson, a former Cooperative Director and Deputy State Librarian. Attendance at the first meeting was nearly 100% representation. I'll have more on the second meeting by the time of our next meeting and have made this topic an agenda item.

- The Township Board passed the three revisions to the Library Policy. While there was some question about the wording we had discussed (Behavior Policy's 'may interfere' versus 'interferes'), I had gotten Linda Mayer's nod for the change. The Privacy Policy was tabled for further explanation. As I was unable to be at the meeting. I will explain it in more detail at the next meeting. Linda also forwarded to me the Materials Selection Policy, and we will consider it for recommendation this month.
- The bylaws of the Friends of the Commerce Township Community Library have been passed. I will be meeting with the elected officials as well as Linda Mayer on Monday 4/23/07 to go over the status and future of the Friends. They will join us for this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Friends of the Library

Tom Zoner, Township Supervisor is present and addresses the Committee regarding the start up of the Friends of the Library. He states, their goal is to get the Friends geared up and running. I am here as the President of the Friends, along with Sandra Abrams, Secretary and Susan Gross, Treasurer. We are going to be here to make this happen. Our first item will be to draft the mission statement and goals. We would like your input in what it will take for us to focus on your ideas of what the Friends of the Library should be. I would like to see the group bring new incentives, new ideas, fund raising, helping hands and to obtain some enhancement we may not have been able to get otherwise.

Linda Mayer, Township Attorney is present and comments that she has been involved almost since the inception of the Friends of the Library, working with the legislation to become State recognized. After becoming officially recognized, her efforts have been to create a viable structure. We know there is a wealth of volunteers and our objective is to create the proper structure and a sound basis for a successful organization. Late last year, the Friends were incorporated and the bylaws are completed for a non-profit organization. I am still working on the non-profit status, filing the 501C3, becoming a non-profit, tax deductible organization. Until the 501C3 is completed, we will not be able to do any fund-raising.

Ann Marie Kelley informs the Committee that the IRS is just now processing 501C3's from September of 2006.

a. Friends of the Library (Continued)

Susan Gross, Township Treasurer is present and commends the Library Advisory Committee. She states the Library Advisory Committee members are the experts and that her role is to assist in the foundation of the formation of the Friends.

Sandra Abrams, Township Clerk is present and presents the Minutes from the Township's last two meetings and a copy of the newly drafted bylaws for the Friends. She encourages the Committee to call her if they have any need. She also states that the Library Committee members are the experts in being a Friend of the Library.

Ann Marie Kelley presents information from the Folusa.org website, regarding a membership to help form the Friends of the Library. The membership will allow us access to a tool kit regarding formation and possible grants and awards. The cost for the library membership would be \$100.00, or for up to 100 members only \$40.00.

Carol Keeler comments that the Library website should post an advertisement for volunteers to serve on the Friends of the Library.

Barbara Garbutt questions that once the Friends are organized and running, how long will the executive committee be involved?

Linda Mayer states that according to the bylaws, there will be annual meetings and elections. At the moment, we only have three directors and the bylaws can be amended at the annual meetings. We want to make it clear that the Friends of the Library are a support organization. Our mission is not to run or direct the library. We are here to support what you set out to be.

Tom Zoner responds to Barbara Garbutt's question. He states that his role is to help the Friends as a friend. I expect to be a member for the rest of my life. I will remain the President until we find the right person to replace me.

b. Permanent Library

Tom Zoner reports that the Township is still moving forward with the plans for the Township Hall and the Links of the Pines property. He invites an open discussion regarding the current building.

Ann Marie Kelley-

Would it be less expensive to renovate what we have here rather than to start from scratch? The layout here is not conducive to programs. All programs have to walk through the administration offices to access the big room. We would like to incorporate more programs.

b. Permanent Library (Continued)

Barbara Garbutt-

I was here last week for the children's program and watched as the children had to line up outside the administration offices and be walked through to the back room, a little bit at time. The rooms are not laid out well for additional programs.

Eric Sues-

If we open the entrance from the mirrored wall into the kitchen area, we could access this room easier. If we are going to be here for the long term, that could work. We could also break up the youth area and possibly make meeting rooms or a computer training areas.

Tom Zoner-

Eric and I have discussed the security issues regarding the entrance way into this back room and monitoring the main office area. We could make a temporary walkway into this room. Our plans depend on the final plan of the Martin Road project. It is difficult to determine what can be done. Safety is a major concern. We will work together to make minor changes for now and when we know more, we will work toward the major changes.

c. Library Needs and Goals – Demographics

Carol Keeler comments that the challenge to being a very innovative library in this building or any other building is in the location and design. I would eventually like to see an internet café, attracting teenagers. We need room for the growing senior population, other groups, pod casting which presents another whole set of needs and the Oakland County Literacy Program, that would certainly need its own space. What sort of things will be offered now and in 10 years from now? Flexibility in design is paramount, how quickly can we adapt to the changing needs? In terms of safety issues here, the tall arborvitaes are a real concern for parking and driving in the parking lot.

Tom Zoner again discusses how the Martin Road Extension is holding up the progress. The first step is to get that road completed and make a connection. The round-a-bouts are monumental, that will make this a prime location, becoming one of the most expensive properties in Commerce Township. Your ideas allow us to grow in many ways.

Tom also explains to the Committee how the DDA collects its revenue and how they are able to give back to the community in return.

d. Parental Responsibility for Children Policy

Linda Mayer addresses the Committee regarding the Library Privacy Act in Michigan. Our policy parallels the Michigan Statute. The library will not release records without the authorization from the person responsible for the account. In the case of a minor, that would be the parent or legal guardian.

d. Parental Responsibility for Children Policy (Continued)

Rick Sovel comments that the Township had approved all the policies except the confidentially policy. Our feeling is to have it worded in a way that allows parents to have access to what their children are seeing. Because the parent is financially responsible for the child with a library card, that parent should have access to what the child is seeing. We need to have our policy re-worded for those 17 years of age and under and a new application with the appropriate language to be sent to the Board for approval.

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Sternberg, to direct Eric Suess to create a written application for minors 17 years of age and under, to have one parent or legal guardian agree to be financially responsible for that minor and create a policy how to remedy the situation for the current minors that have cards without parental or guardian signature on file.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Michicard

Eric Suess reports that the Michicard stickers should be available by the end of this week or possibly Monday 4/30/07.

f. West Bloomfield Reciprocity

Eric Suess reports that he spoke with Tina Hatch from the Milford Library and the issues in place may not be resolved quickly for reciprocity with our library. Eric also reports that he believes that reciprocity between the Walled Lake Library is not going to happen.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Cooperative Funding

Eric Suess reports of the problem in cooperative funding. A significant number of library cooperatives may be going out of business from the loss of State Aid. State aid was paid in two increments, first payment of 80% and then the second payment of 20%. Now they have changed to paying 50% on the first payment, then 50% on the second, enabling the State to hold on to the funds longer. All other payments are now frozen and the second payment may not be available at all. The directors of TLN are taking a proactive position dealing with various scenarios that may emerge from this lack of aid.

Rick Sovel comments that the Commerce Library will be the only library that will not have a reduction in State Aid for the next year.

b. Material Selection Policy Revision

MOTION by Keeler, supported by Kelley, to send the revised Material Selection Policy to the Township Board for approval.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Collection of Fines.

Eric Suess comments on the collection of fines. He gives one example of a patron who currently owes \$654.00 for outstanding dues on books, CDs and DVDs. This patron has moved with no forwarding address and we have no resources to find her and collect on the debt. He suggests to Linda Mayer that the library could retain the services of a collection agency. There are agencies that work with library systems. He recommends they explore collection agencies for libraries as used in Michigan.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REMARKS

Rick Sovel suggests that the Committee ask Emily England, the Director of Richardson Center come and address the Library and share their policies on lending books. I think their collection should fall under the umbrella of this library.

Linda Mayer provides an update on the library theft of last year. Those involved were ordered to pay restitution for the stolen items. We did consider a civil suit and we decided we have no advantage in doing that. The order of restitution acts the same, if not better. We will be able to pursue the collection of the amount due by garnishing their tax return or garnishment of their employment until the debt is paid in full.

OTHER MATTERS

Betsy LaFond questions when will we use the blue road sign (the internationally recognized library sign) at the Library entrance?

Jason Pernick questions if the library is equipped with an Automated External Defibrillator?

Carol Keeler questions if the library has emergency procedures posted?

Rick Sovel suggests they speak to the fire chief about emergency procedures.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Sternberg, supported by Kelley, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

