

ST. CLAIR COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR  
MEETING MINUTES

TIME & PLACE: 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, 2006  
210 McMorran Boulevard, Port Huron, St. Clair County Main Library

PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS: Arnold Larson, Lynn Moran, Kathy Nicholl, Helen Praet and Peter Vernier. DIRECTOR: James Warwick

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Following staff members: Barb Adent, Allison Arnold, Melissa Davis, Vickie Hurley, Anita Jackson, Mary Jo Koch, Kimberley Radatz, Janet Rose and Sharon Smith. Other: Times Herald Reporter Shannon Murphy, Jerilyn Brown, John Hurley, Gretchen Krug and Kathleen Wheelihan.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE BY Chairperson Larson at 6:36 p.m.

Pledge of the Allegiance

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by Member Nicholl and supported by Member Moran to approve the Agenda as received. Motion unanimously carried.

Department Heads Report – Community Relations – Melissa Davis. Community Relations Coordinator Melissa Davis presented a power point presentation on the Community Relations Department giving an over all review of their department including marketing, scheduling functions, fundraisers, designing newsletters “Library Links”, collection of statistics and also including annual reports.

Chairperson Larson thanked Community Relations Coordinator Melissa Davis for her department presentation. Member Moran also expressed her appreciation for their help at the Memphis festivals.

III. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS:

None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Vice-Chairperson Praet and supported by Member Moran to approve the January 24, 2006 rescheduled Regular meeting minutes. Motion unanimously carried. Director Warwick noted he made an administration changed reflecting the August 8<sup>th</sup> date for the Millage vote instead of August 2<sup>nd</sup> as quoted.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Chairperson Larson explained that of the \$181,943.08 in Millage invoices approximately \$74,000 is 2005 expenditures.

a) Approval and Ratification of Bills.

Moved by Member Moran and supported by Vice-Chairperson Praet to approve the Regular invoices for January 2006 totaling \$11,029.49 and Millage invoices for January 2006 totaling \$181,943.08. Motion unanimously carried.

b) Acceptance of Financial Report.

Director Warwick noted the County is now charging the cost allocation on a monthly basis and is located on the budget summary under Capital Outlay (County reflects it here); next month we will reflect it in Services.

Director Warwick also noted it's too early to indicate any trend, some of this is coming in a little higher than anticipated and we will need to go over these reports to see what has to be back dated to 2005. Chairperson Larson noted the 2005 year end has decreased down to somewhere around \$20,000 to \$30,000. The County recognized more bills and expenses to be paid out of last years opposed to this year. When we first reviewed it was known that there would be some changes.

Moved by Vice-Chairperson Praet and supported by Member Vernier to accept the Financial Reports. Motion unanimously carried.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS:

a) Library Director's Report.

Director Warwick noted Burtchville Township had their township meeting last night and approved their building and approximately \$150,000 in funding. Building would be 1800 square feet and construction won't start until the ground thaws. Also noted we had equipment failure with the air conditioning system located in the IT department. Fortunately we had an alarm installed so when it over heats the security company is notified then they notify us. Director Warwick was called twice. Circulation is up by 7.3%. Also included in tonight's packet is information on the State's Library budget. This will have an affect on our state funding for next year.

b) Department and/or Committees.

Moved by Vice-Chairperson Praet and supported by Member Nicholl to receive and file Communications. Motion unanimously carried.

c) Thank you notices.

American Red Cross – Jay Spencer

Main Street

St. Clair County Regional Educational Services Agency

The Art Center – Gretchen Rose

Moved by Member Moran and supported by Member Nicholl to receive and file thank you notices. Motion unanimously carried.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

a) Revised 2006 Budget.

Chairperson Larson explained at the last meeting it appeared that our 2005 budget would have a surplus between \$50,000 to \$70,000. The board has asked Director Warwick to look at some of the staffing, material issues and to meet with staff to make some recommendations to the board at tonight's meeting on additions to the 2006 budget. Director Warwick explained the suggestions in detail referring to document Additional 2006 Budget Recommendation. Total added cost is \$84,139 also noted a change in revenue which reflects an increase in both interest and penal fines having a net increase on the 2006 budget by \$29,139. Director Warwick also explained the County decided not to include the copiers in the cost allocation so we had to reinstate in the budget as a direct expense. Chairperson Larson noted he appreciated the detailed work that Director Warwick provided to the board.

Moved by Member Moran and supported by Vice-Chairperson Praet to support the recommendations of administration to support the positions, activities and expenditures as noted \$84,139 and amending the revenue budget by \$55,000 as indicated.

Member Vernier asked by amending the revenue doesn't that mean we need to amend the amount of transfer from our fund balance which would be \$29,139. Chairperson noted yes which would change the ending figure from \$466,059 to \$495,198.

Chairperson Larson also noted because of the change with the County's cost allocation and the reduction of the appropriation we would have to reduce our expenditures by \$456,000 from what was proposed and where would that come from - reduction in hours, reduction in staff and materials. Rather than doing that because we did have a 1.9 million dollar fund reserve we decided to draw it down for at least this year and especially next year. Over time as we talked about before, that process of drawing down our fund reserve is going to put us down by 2007 or 2008 to down about \$400,000. This would affect our ability from a cash flow purposes to maintain operations without significant reductions. Member Moran noted this is a point that most people don't realize. Chairperson Larson also noted he certainly thinks this would be a part of the information shared with the community. Member Nicholl noted this shows good faith that the library is trying to commit these things to the community. Hopefully this support which the library is providing, the community will then provide that back when the time comes for a Millage. Chairperson Larson noted there has been several letters to the editor and some have called back indicating the library does have a quality system. It has showed historically good faith budgeting and good fiscal responsibility and not exceeding its expenditure plan without appropriate action. Yes maybe in some cases Director Warwick has been a little conservative at times, and ended up with a fund surplus rather than a deficit, but Chairperson Larson doesn't see this as a negative but sees this being sound fiscal management. Motion unanimously carried.

b) Proposed 2007 Restoration Budget.

Chairperson Larson explained their goal was for Director Warwick to come up with what it would take to put the library back to the operating position in terms of services and staffing that existed in 2002. This was before the library started experiencing reductions in county commission's support. This is not for action tonight but informational purposes. Director Warwick explained the budget does meet directly or indirectly most of the items noted on the 2007 Budget Staff Comments Summary. Director Warwick also noted fine tuning is still needed on the 2007 Budget. Director Warwick reviewed in detail the Draft of the Restoration Budget for 2007, Branch Operation Cost and Preliminary 2007 revenue. Chairperson Larson explained the board needs to look at this as a preliminary proposal of restoration which is something that could be considered in the near future but not tonight. Chairperson Larson also noted over the next couple of months there needs to be further discussion with the board as well as the staff, the municipalities and County Board of Commissioners about the various items here. Also he projected we need to have a resolution to the board of commissioners by late April. This board would have to identify/indicate an amount for a Millage to support and submit to them by May but before we do that we need to know what our decision is. Vice-Chairperson Praet suggested having informational meetings for the public. Chairperson Larson agreed and stated there would be informational meetings and also he thinks he and Director Warwick would be meeting with the Times Herald and also with local municipalities. Chairperson Larson explained for the next 30 to 45 days we will use this time for general discussion and then come back to the April board meeting and make a decision on the amount. Based on that we would then pass a resolution and this would be the only action the board would take requesting the board of commissioners to support a Millage ballot for a specific amount. Member Vernier asked Director Warwick is it possible for Millage increases or Millage be set at or less than a tenth of a mil tax rate? Director Warwick to follow up. Member Moran asked if the board was going to do any outreach in the next month or two.

Chairperson Larson noted no because we are not at a point of saying this is what we are going to do! Director Warwick also noted this is the time for the board to review and give feed back to him. Member Moran also noted we really need to make it clear to the public what it is that we're requesting, because in the past, consensus had it that the public didn't know what was going on.

c) Millage update (time-line).

Chairperson Larson explained the board did agree that the Millage vote would be on August 8<sup>th</sup> and we do need to have a resolution passed by the board at the April meeting. Following whatever decision is made by the board, Director Warwick would prepare for this meeting a Millage promotion plan (getting Friends group together to raise money to help support the Millage effort etc.). Chairperson Larson is gone until April 9th. Member Moran and Director Warwick are scheduled to meet with the Board of Commissioners on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

a) Stanley Arnett II – Retirement tribute.

Director Warwick acknowledged Assistant Director Stanley Arnett's retirement for his twenty-nine years and seven months of dedicated services to the library system. Director Warwick asked if the library could purchase material and place a book plate in honor of his services? Director Warwick explained this would be establishing a new precedent and suggested because Stan has been here for almost thirty years we place book plates in three books. Board agreed leaving it up to the Director and staff to come up with an appropriate tribute. Stan worked for the Detroit Public Library prior to joining the St. Clair County Library System. Chairperson Larson noted it would be certainly appropriate to have a formal resolution from the library board to be presented at the Board of Commissioners meeting.

b) Printer bids.

Moved by Member Vernier and supported by Member Moran to approve the bid for twenty-one color laser jet printers in the amount of \$36,183. Motion unanimously carried.

c) Programming Policy.

Director Warwick explained the committee has worked on this policy for quite some time; they have done a lot of shifting and compromising. Moved by Member Nicholl and supported by Member Moran to approve the Programming Policy. After further discussion the motion to approve the Programming Policy was withdrawn by Member Nicholl and supported by Member Moran. Motion withdrawn. After additional discussion it was moved by Member Vernier to table the Programming Policy to the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting due to # 2 under section Guidelines for the Selection and Presentation of Program. Vernier explained he doesn't have a problem with what they what to say, but what is said here is not necessary what you want it to say.

d) Board Member Reports.

Vice-Chairperson Praet – Announced the illness she has is life threatening and they have decided to sell their home and move out in the country. Hopefully she will still be in her library's area where she represents. Spoke with Librarian Vickie Hurley at Marysville, they are really busy also noted if they had more meetings rooms they would be all filled. Librarian Anne Marie Bedard will be teaching another computer class this Friday at Maryville. Their Heritage Group will be having their second speaker. Book sale is scheduled for May 3rd and 4th.

Also spoke with Librarian Jane Perukel at G. Lynn Campbell their book sale is a week after Marysville's sale. Everything at G. Lynn is going well and also spoke with Assistant Branch Librarian Veronica Ruck, her programs are almost filled. Spoke with Librarian Julie Alef in St. Clair. She mentioned their program with Barbara Hawkins about Laura Ingles-Wilder was standing room only. Next Thursday Friend's group will be sponsoring a local artist and they are very busy too.

Member Vernier – Shared his thoughts on some of the things that have been in the paper. It seems to be in discussion that the library has been over the last few years has been very responsible with its funds and tried to maintain the operating of the library as efficiency as possible but we have been getting bad reviews in the paper. It was as we were operating the library as the same way as they built the jail and that we are getting all the money we want. Also noted a lot of times it not so much the misconceptions but it's the type of questions asked. He has also been a little dis-hearted because of the reactions he has seen in the paper that the library shouldn't need any more money because they keep on having money left over. We explained we have money left over because we are trying to save money, were trying to work efficiently.

Member Moran – People keep hearing that we are asking for more money, but we have surpluses. The missing link is that they don't understand that we are still deficit spending our fund balance. If some how the paper can get that out, she thinks this would help clear things up and that we are not operating with a surplus every year and then asking for more! Spoke with Branch Coordinator Peggy Guoin and Librarian Linda Aguinaga at the Memphis branch. They had concerns about the Program Policy but pretty much has been cleared up. It was also mentioned they are experiencing computer problems. Mentioned the IT people that come out to repair the equipment are so nice and helpful.

Chairperson Larson – He is pleased that Burtchville is moving forward with their building project and commitment. It seems to be strongly helped by their township officials in terms of committing dollars also thinks their friends group is righting leadership of all other friends group throughout St. Clair County in terms of how they rally. There's a lot of enthusiasm. He also expressed the library board has been supportive and will continue to be supportive with their new branch. Also thinks without looking at the long term objective, the long concern they have (3 to 4 years) and if we don't become conservative with dealing with our dollars now we will have nothing left. We don't want to be put in a all or nothing situation. By doing this it shows some creditability and for thought on the boards part as well as management's part to deal with funds. We did not want to reduce hours, reduce staff and reduce purchasing materials but it was prudent to do so and it turns out that we had more revenue then we anticipated which put us in a situation to have a positive fund balance instead of a negative. As indicated in the paper by Ms. Rochon having a positive fund balance is not negative management its good constructive management.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE. Tuesday, March 21, 2006 at 6:30 p.m., located in the Gilbert Wilcox Meeting Room at the Main Library, 210 McMorran Boulevard, Port Huron.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Member Vernier to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourn at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Helen M. Praet, Vice-Chairperson

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James F. Warwick, Director/Secretary