

OFFICIAL

LIMA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

July 19, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

Approved: 09-20-2023

PRESENT: Trustees: Chair Shirley Caccamise, Cathy VanHorne, Teri Kruk, Debby Lund, Jon Grasso
Library Manager: Megan McLaughlin
Town Board: Leta Button
Staff: Michelle Rohrbach, Marsha Osborne, Myrna Pease
Public: none

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Shirley Caccamise.

VOUCHERS: The May vouchers #53-71 and June vouchers #72-85 were reviewed. Teri Kruk moved to approve the vouchers as presented and Cathy VanHorne seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MINUTES: Minutes of the June 14, 2023, Special Budget meeting were reviewed. Teri Kruk moved to approve the minutes with a second from Cathy VanHorne. All were in favor.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:

Cathy VanHorne gave the report as President of the Friends Group, Barb Brenner, was unable to attend the meeting.

The Friends cheered the Lima Library Staff for the “BE WELL WALK” and the summer reading activities. The group has heard from residents of Mendon and Honeoye Falls that they now make trips to Lima due to an increase in social media and fun things to do.

They were happy to report a new member: Cassie Montermarano has a background in health and has ideas on how to bring mental and physical wellness to Lima.

Programming:

- Story Time trial wrap-up: May 6th had 7 children and 5 adults in attendance; May 20 had 7 children and 6 adults; and May 23 had 1 child and 1 adult. Various crafts were enjoyed.
- Book Tasting: presented by M. Depew & B. Lind as a joint venture with the library staff had 27 attendees.
- Spring Cleanup: Thank you to G. & E. Baker, B. Brenner, J. Moody, M. Depew, C. Rabe, and C. VanHorne.
- Game Night: continues throughout the summer
- Introduction to Canning had 7 attendees on May 22 & 0 attendees on May 23

- New Friends items:
 - The Little Library has been installed in the pocket park.

- Books for Babies have come through and books to be given out at Farmer's Market.
- Dance fundraisers are on hold
- B. Brenner is talking with Mendon to involve Pinehurst in the authors' talks happening on-line.
- Friends will be at the Great Pumpkin Day this fall and is in partnership with the Crossroads Days.
- The Annual Book sale is Friday, August 4th & Saturday, August 5th.

Shirley Caccamise mentioned the library is doing movie days and that is going well. She thanked the Friends for all they do.

Friends of the Library asked Megan McLaughlin to please get a "wish list" together for the group, Megan had one ready and produced it at the meeting.

Staff Report:

Shirley Caccamise said the Staff had asked to address the Board regarding concerns and suggestions for the Long Range Plan (LRP) the Board is currently working on. Michelle Rohrbach took the lead in addressing the Board with additional remarks as necessary from other Staff members present.

Michelle stated the first topic was libraries in general and Lima Public Library in particular. The topics tie into the Long Range Plan (LRP). The 2020 census is now available on the internet and shows a shift in demographics in the town and village of Lima. The population is younger than in the past. This changes public expectations for local libraries. Libraries in general seem to be shifting to less of an information and book center and more into community and/or recreation centers. Several reasons include but are not limited to post Covid 19 and new technology.

Past programming had been tied to the long standing mission statement where libraries prioritized book-based programs and used older census. The 2020 census data shows changes are needed to accommodate the younger population and consider their expectations, needs, and desires for the library to best serve the community.

First, the Staff would like to express their support for Megan McLaughlin for the job she is doing as manager. They feel she has the mission statement well in hand. They request the library's fundamental mission statement be implemented at a slower pace and through proper channels instead of a "tsunami of changes in programming, hours and staffing." It would allow Megan and her staff to adjust staffing levels, workloads, and funding in a much better manner if procedures were in place and followed. The library manager needs complete control of the library calendar and scheduling so there are no conflicts with library business, new PLS initiatives, or other groups wishing to use library space for their events. It is standard industry protocol to follow such a procedure – the staff checked with other PLS libraries. The staff feels these changes need to be addressed in our official LRP and mission statement for the library. The staff asks the Board to establish a written program request procedure that addresses scheduling concerns, set-up, and publicizing procedures. A new mission statement including the changes to programming would change the role of the library manager who will then be responsible for a more hands-on approach to programming.

The paid library staff needs to be in the loop when patrons ask about programs. Currently they often have no idea a program has been scheduled by the Friends and are unable to answer questions about the program. It reflects poorly on the library in general and leaves the staff in an untenable position. In turn, this affects morale. The staff would like to collectively consider future programming opportunities with the Friends.

The staff acknowledges and is appreciative of the Friends of the Library Group. They commend the Friends, headed by Barb Brenner, for all their work and enthusiasm. It is recognized that program opportunities at the library are largely due to volunteers. The staff expressed concerns regarding the role of the Friends and their interactions with the director, staff, and trustees.

The Trustee Handbook states: "a Library Board Trustee serving...as a [Friends] member significantly involved with the Friends' financial activities is a conflict of interest. It poses ethical dilemmas at Board Meetings. Trustees must exercise the Duty of Loyalty to the Library during a Board Meeting, not another organization (the Friends group)."

Michelle Rohrbach emphasized the Trustee Handbook (pg.74) states the purpose of the Friends group is to "support the library and the library board... in ways identified in consultation with the board and the director."

Regarding programming overall: The staff feels the programs the library offers are wonderful but questions the need to host so many given the size of the community, monies available and other circumstances. They would very much like people to stop comparing Lima Public Library with the Mendon Library.

Lima has the unique situation of being in a school district that is mainly in two counties – Livingston and Monroe. The school district is primarily in two village and town districts as well – Lima Town & Village, and Honeoye Falls Village & Mendon Township. It is unfair to compare the two libraries as the size, wealth, funding, etcetera available to each is completely different.

The communities are very different as can be seen by walking down each main street. Honeoye Falls has a park across from the library, several restaurants and businesses within easy walking distance and a good size grocery store to bring people into the village. Our park is a considerable distance from the library and the population and business district are much smaller. This impacts library use in Lima. It would be helpful if the library had a sign directing people off Main Street to the Library as it is tucked away on a side street and not easily visible to those passing through.

Marsha Osborne said they had gone to Honeoye Falls and spent time with the Mendon Library director regarding their children's programming. They saw the church by the park running a robust summer children's program; the Harry Allen park had many people there, and there were others walking the streets and frequenting businesses and restaurants. Lima does not have that level of foot traffic. Lima cannot be Honeoye Falls with its grocery, Pinehurst, and a full service pharmacy to bring in people. Our library has no where to expand, nor does it have the financial resources offered to the Mendon Library.

This comparison of "apples to oranges" is creating a morale issue among the staff. All the negative remarks and comparisons to Mendon are creating a negative workplace. The staff is professional in its treatment of all who come into the building, providing a service with updated displays, and a large collection both in the children's and adult rooms. Many patrons comment on how much they like the library as it currently is. They can get movies and audio

books as well as traditional items. Patrons appreciate a quiet place to sit and relax and others come just to have someone to talk to. The staff delivers books to houses for shut-ins. The Boy Scouts use the library. The library has the largest circulation in the county.

Michelle said this does include on-line circulation as well as materials physically crossing the desk. Myrna Pease acknowledged the in-house circulation decreased during and after Covid. Older regular patrons no longer stop in but many now use the on-line services.

The staff feels they should not have to feel like they are in competition with Mendon, nor do they see a need to do so. Lima is its own unique community, and they are proud of the library and to be part of the staff.

The staff are of the opinion that Megan McLaughlin, as director, should not ever need to work at the front desk. She has enough to do as director. This also will leave someone working alone if she needs to leave for a business meeting. Having less than two people working at a time becomes a safety issue and becomes a logistical issue with scheduling as these are part-time jobs and some have other jobs that could cause a conflict. The staff is the third lowest paid in the county and has the least rate of turnover in the county. They routinely go above and beyond their duties to help patrons.

They acknowledged that change is uncomfortable and the change away from the book based purpose of the library is challenging. The staff would like the Board to shift the mission statement to address the changes in our demographics and industry standards. What the Friends have done with programming is wonderful, but the library manager should and must oversee the calendar. The staff needs all the details about upcoming programs before they are publicized so they do not look unprofessional.

The library “is the place that offers the good stuff in life” and there is no way to library wrong. We are the sprinkles in peoples’ day” stated Michelle Rohrbach. She does not want the library to “forget the books.” “Like the Lorax speaks for the trees, we speak for the books.” Staff can always tie materials and services to any programming if given the chance. They ask for a chance to do so.

The library staff thanked the Board for listening to them and exited the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chair Shirley Caccamise stated she was glad the Staff came and spoke to the Board. It is wonderful that they have such a great comfort level with the Board.

OWWL Survey:

The OWWL survey is ready for use. Ron Kirsop encouraged us to use or amend it to address our own needs. The answers will go back to OWWL for their use as well.

After some discussion and a few minor changes, the board agreed to use the survey. Director Megan McLaughlin will make the changes by the end of the week. A final collection date was not set but Megan noted the next cohort meeting is September 11th and completed surveys should be back to her by August 31st to give her time to work on her part of the tabulation.

The surveys will go out to the local churches, Village and Town Board members, Rotary, Scout troops, and handed out at Farmer’s Market. Physical copies are available at the library

front desk and on-line. It was agreed to include a QR code in the packets for those who might want to do so when approached at other venues. They will be available at the Book Sale during the CrossRoads Festival.

NEW BUSINESS:

Driveway Sealing & Sidewalk:

Megan McLaughlin said the parking lot sealing and striping had been completed by Blades Landscaping on June 8th. The sidewalk repair has not been done yet. She will remind the Town. Teri Kruk said it is getting bad enough to be on the point of being negligent. It really needs to be addressed. We have asked several times for the repair. Leta Button asked if Megan was seeking Town permission to hire someone to do it or funds for the repairs. Megan noted the library has funds to cover it.

Proposed Budget:

The proposed budget has been given to the Town Board for approval. Word has not come back yet. Town Liaison Leta Button replied the Town is meeting with the accountant to go over the numbers before voting on it and getting back to the Library Board.

Upcoming Programs:

Megan McLaughlin said she took the lead on the upcoming Library – Tenny Burton Historical Society program being offered on September 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town/Village Hall. The guest speaker is Derrick Pratt of the Erie Canal Museum, and the presentation is: “Pathway of Resistance: The Erie Canal and the Underground Railroad. Shirley Caccamise noted the Civil War Music program was successful. She is sure this one will be too.

Solar Eclipse:

Megan said the library will be hosting Jim Porter, a local NASA Ambassador, on September 28, at 6:30 p.m. in preparation for the April 2024 total solar eclipse. It is a big deal as the total eclipse will pass right overhead.

Leta Button said particulars are still being worked out for a watch party at Tubbs Park. The municipality will be receiving a large quantity of viewing glasses for local businesses to hand out and will receive funds for events to take place around the eclipse.

Megan McLaughlin noted there is a partial eclipse this October 14th as well.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreement:

Shirley Caccamise asked Teri Kruk to present her version of the draft MOU between the Library Board and the Friends of the Library group. The MOU establishes the working relationship between the library and the Friends group.

Teri asked Megan to include the MOU used by Avon and by Naples libraries with the agenda mailing. She found them to be identical and apparently boiler plated from an early MOU and asked if Board members had reviewed them. They did not seem to be what Lima needed and dealt with money issues between the groups. She will work on a sample for the September meeting more in line with Lima’s needs. Teri suggested the Board consider putting a time limit on the MOU and reviewing and updating it on a three year cycle. The board liked the idea.

Cathy VanHorne said some of the money items need to be left in. The Book Barns status could be alluded to without going into detail. Lima does not seem to have a problem with the money earned from the yearly book sale.

Megan McLaughlin asked that all materials being donated go through the library first so she can pick out anything that would be of value to add to the library's collection.

Cathy VanHorne alluded back to a statement made by the staff. The MOU should address the calendar issue. The Friends can give the director a list of programs and proposed dates to facilitate a better interface between the library and the Friends group. She would like to see things work more smoothly between the Friends, the Trustees, and the Director and staff.

Megan voiced a concern over collecting and holding monies from Friends raffles, donations, and so forth. The reason for her concern is this money is considered public funds until she can hand it over and feels this is not the "best practice". She is not sure where she stands legally. The Library has no policy in place to cover this and Teri Kruk will look into the issue and report back.

Teri noted the library is fortunate to have such a vigorous Friends group and we all need to move forward in a positive manner.

With no further business to discuss, Cathy VanHorne moved to close the meeting. Teri Kruk seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting closed at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debby Lund

NEXT MEETING WILL BE: Wednesday, September 20, 2023, AT 6:30 p.m.