

**FREMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT  
MONTHLY MEETING – BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2023 MINUTES**

1. President Nalezny called the meeting to order at 6:00pm
2. Trustees Present: Cole-Burns, Kasten, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, and Wilmes  
Also present: Becky Ingram, Interim Director and Karen Bolton, Circulation Manager
3. Kasten made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Smogor. The motion passed by voice vote.
4. Public Comment: no public present.
5. Meet the Managers: Karen Bolton, manager of the Circulation Department presented details about who works in her department, specifically the PICs (the Associates that work more hours (most are full-time) and handle the higher functions of the department, including InterLibrary Loan (beyond our consortium), checking the Library of Things, dealing with patron accounts and billing issues, and they primarily staff the Drive-Up Window as well. The rest of the department are Circulation Assistants who work part-time at the desk, checking items in and out and greeting patrons with our famous friendliness. Bolton pointed out that we pride ourselves on the quality of our materials. Patrons appreciate the great care we take in thoroughly checking and cleaning of all our disks, either through manual cleaning or with our advanced disc repair machine. Ingram commented on the department's impressive staff retention rate, and gave credit to Karen and the PICs for fostering a positive work environment. People really like working here. The department consists of 17 staff members, 3 of which are full-time which is unusual in Circulation Departments but is really helpful for covering last minute absences and creating that positive work environment. Cole-Burns asked if there is consideration for more self-checks or if we are focused on having more manned stations. Bolton expressed her satisfaction with our current system, stating that she appreciated the self-check in the Family area and the mobile checkout app available to all library patrons. She believes that these features provide a more comprehensive and convenient experience for patrons. Cole-Burns also talked about how quickly the department gets their items back out on the shelf. Our average time for an item to go from the return drops to being shelved is within 24 hours, which is pretty remarkable!
- 6.1 Smogor made a motion to approve the regular monthly board meeting minutes of Aug. 17, 2023, seconded by Cole-Burns. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.2 Smogor made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Aug. 22, 2023, seconded by MacKay. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.3 Smogor made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Aug. 22, 2023 seconded by Kasten. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.4 Smogor made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Aug. 23, 2023 seconded by Kasten. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.5 Smogor made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Aug. 23, 2023 seconded by Cole-Burns. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.6 Smogor made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Sept. 16, 2023 seconded by Wilmes. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 6.7 Smogor made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the Special Board Meeting of Sept. 16, 2023 seconded by Wilmes. The motion passed by voice vote.
- 7.1. The monthly Finance Report for July 2023 was presented. MacKay asked why the vending machine payment may have been higher this month than normal, and Ingram suggested it was perhaps because we had workers here, and we encouraged them to use the vending machines. Wilmes asked about the Personal Property Replacement Tax and it is much higher than we expected and what is normal. Ingram said she would look into that to make sure it wasn't something that was coded wrong or an error and will report back at the next meeting. Smogor asked about the gifts and memorials line as it has a hefty budget but no funds in it yet. Ingram explained that \$139,000 of that is earmarked from the anticipated DCEO grant from the state to pay towards carpeting. We are waiting in line for that money and are expecting it this fiscal year.
- 7.2. Kasten made a motion to approve Lists of Checks for September 2023 and to authorize the payment of bills and salaries, and to make transfers, seconded by MacKay. A couple questions were asked about what certain checks

were for and were answered successfully. The roll was called:

Yes: Cole-Burns, Kasten, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, Wilmes - the motion passed.

- 8.2. Personnel Committee – a final statement was passed along from Deiters & Todd regarding their services.
9. Nalezny mentioned the Decennial Committee regarding library efficiencies and discussed that after the new Library Director arrives, we will have to schedule those meetings. Ingram mentioned that other libraries have been planning to hold these meetings as part of their regular monthly board meetings. The board liked the idea and want to plan on that, and will check with the members of the public who have been chosen to be part of the committee to make sure which months would be good candidates for those meetings.
10. Library Director's Report mentioned that after the library received 2 bomb hoaxes over chat in August that we turned the chat services off for the past few weeks. We have since found from our chat company Library H3lp that they are offering a way to block chats coming from outside the U.S. The library plans to activate the chat feature once the requisite installation is completed, and they feel it's an appropriate time to turn it back on. Staff members may feel apprehensive about answering the chat, but once they feel comfortable, the chat service will resume. Trustee Cole-Burns began a discussion about how we handled the bomb hoaxes and commended staff for dealing with something so nerve wracking and asked about whether or not we would have considered making an announcement of some kind to patrons when the threat was occurring. Ingram stated that from the conversations, which contained poor grammar, spelling errors, and vague descriptions about our library, it was not necessary to issue an announcement or evacuate the premises. No specific person or service was mentioned, leading to the belief that there is no immediate threat to the safety of the library's staff and patrons. The board seemed to think it would be good to review the procedures. Already libraries are starting to share best practices and it would be nice to have the procedures extended to discuss what should be communicated to the public should a bomb hoax occur.

Ingram mentioned that she has added one more move to the remodel project to have the shelves in the Friends Book Nook removed so the space can be properly recarpeted. Total cost about \$3,000.

A new expense for facilities coming through is to test our 20+ year-old sprinkler heads, which is a safety requirement that will have to be conducted.

Ingram has contacted Engberg Anderson for a quote to update their Capital Replacement Schedule spreadsheet. They may wait until the new director is onboard as it will be valuable information for them and the director may have experience in this area.

Cole-Burns asked if the building is still having heating/cooling issues. Ingram stated that there have been repairs over the years, and changes to the controls that have actually fixed many of the issues and it is not as bad as it was in years long past. It's a system that doesn't really belong in this climate so it can be challenging to keep it at a moderate temperature.

Kasten suggested that they attend the staff inservice on Sep. 22 as a trustee, but after discussion, the group decided that it may not be appropriate as it touches on sensitive topics. While attending inservice as a group may be considered in the future, they decided against attending this particular session. Future meetings could involve trustees where appropriate, ensuring that administration and the board have sufficient planning time to make the experience valuable for both staff and trustees.

Kasten asked about some chatter he found on the Mundelein neighborhood forum online that discussed our pond and how it is covered over with a lot of algae right now. Ingram explained that the Village of Mundelein owns the pond and is not treating the water. The library is responsible for the grasses around the pond and the landscaping. The library has been asked to alter its treatment of the pond due to the issue of goose droppings contaminating the Loch Lomond Lake, into which the pond drains. This year, less water treatment will be carried out and the aerators will not be on during the winter so it can freeze completely. There is hope that the changes being made will improve the quality of the water, although it may also affect the appearance of the pond as it transforms to a more natural state.

The library trustees discussed ordering polo shirts for community events where they represent the library. Ingram will provide choices and sizes to order before the Open House Celebration. Details about the celebration were also discussed, and what would be needed from the trustees on that day.

- 11.1 Nalezny made a motion to approve Ordinance No. FY2023-24-101, Combined Budget and Appropriate Ordinance, seconded by Kasten. Wilmes caught a typo in the youth periodicals line under the appropriation column which had an extra 0. Motion was amended with that correction. Roll was called: Yes: Cole-Burns, Kasten, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, and Wilmes – the motion passed.
- 11.2 Kasten made a motion to hire Laura Long as our new Library Director to start on November 1, at a starting salary of \$128,000 annually and a moving allowance not to exceed \$3,000. Motion was seconded by Cole-Burns. Roll was called: Yes: Cole-Burns, Kasten, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, and Wilmes – the motion passed.
- 11.3 MacKay made a motion to extend the salary of the current interim director at the current rate through December 31, 2023, seconded by Kasten. Roll was called: Yes: Cole-Burns, Kasten, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, and Wilmes – the motion passed.
- 11.4 Cole-Burns made a motion to increase the annual salary of the Assistant Director by \$5,000 effective January 1, 2024, seconded by Smogor. Roll was called: Yes: Cole-Burns, MacKay, Nalezny, Pflug Mounce, Smogor, and Wilmes. Abstain: Kasten – the motion passed.
12. Nalezny adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm

Approved

/s/Sharon Smogor, Secretary

10/19/2023