

HOWELL CARNEGIE DISTRICT LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Minutes of August 13, 2024

President Lyn Hewitt called the regular meeting of the Howell Carnegie District Library Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 pm.

Bob Ellis moved to approve the agenda as presented. Kathryn Tuck seconded, and a quorum of the board unanimously approved.

Members present: Jennifer Earl, Bob Ellis, Lyn Hewitt, Tony Kandt, Susan Pominville, and Kathryn Tuck. Maria Stuart arrived at 7:14 pm. Library Director Holly Ward Lamb was also present. Additionally, one member of the public was present.

Members absent: None.

Bob Ellis moved to approve the consent agenda as presented, including **a)** Minutes of July 9, 2024, **b)** Bills and Payrolls, **c)** Policies: Update Fund Balance Policy, Approve Electronic Transaction of Public Funds Policy, Approve Investment Policy, and Approve Payment by Financial Transaction Device Policy, **d)** Resolutions: Resolution 24-16 to Adopt Electronic Transaction of Public Funds Policy, Resolution 24-17 to Adopt Investment Policy, Resolution 24-18 to Adopt Payment by Financial Transaction Device Policy, Resolution 24-19 to Authorize Operating Millage for 2024 FormL-4029, **e)** Board of Trustees Training Topics, and **f)** Board of Trustees Standing Committees 2024-2025. Jennifer Earl seconded, and the board was polled. All board members approved.

Comments from the Public: None.

President Lyn Hewitt reminded the trustees about a virtual financial workshop that was available for them to view.

The treasurer's report is part of the board packet. Treasurer Bob Ellis briefly reviewed it with the board. No action is required, and the report is filed.

The **policy committee** met on July 16, 2024, and the board packet included the unapproved minutes.

In addition to her written report, Director Holly Ward Lamb stated we sent the RFQ for the ramp and stairs project to three firms. Due to some production/supply chain issues, this project will not occur until spring 2025. Our architect recommended that after we finalize and sign an agreement with a contractor, we have “make safe work” completed on the ramp and steps to get us through until spring. Director Lamb also noted a recent MI Supreme Court ruling that will change the minimum wage effective February 21, 2025. Also, the Earned Sick Time Act requires that employees receive one hour of sick for every 30 hours worked, and we will have a new procedure in place before this takes effect. She shared the date of September 26 for a potential Livingston County Trustees & Directors Meeting at Cromaine Library with a Zoom presentation about AI.

ACTION ITEMS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- The board discussed the viability of allowing public comment for each meeting agenda item. Bob Ellis stated that the current procedure of having public comments at the beginning of the board meeting does not allow the public to participate in the meeting. He believes the library board should conduct its meetings much like the City of Howell conducts its council meetings, allowing the public to comment after each agenda item, which enables the public to have more involvement and makes things more transparent. He noted that since we are specifically inviting members of our appointing bodies to hear the “library speaker” at the October meeting, and they cannot participate in a discussion after the speaker, it seems “disingenuous” and may provide a “negative experience” for attendees.

Holly Ward Lamb noted that the October speaker, Library Attorney Anne Seurnyck, works for the library. She asked Ms. Seurnyck about comments and conversations at this presentation. She was told that this training is for library trustees only unless this is a joint school board, city council, and library board meeting. Ms. Seurnyck is open to receiving questions ahead of time and will do her best to address them. Typically, an outside speaker is placed at the beginning of the agenda, with public comments immediately following, which allows us to be consistent with our own rules. In this case, Ms. Seurnyck will answer questions she feels she can, remembering that her role is that of library attorney.

Director Ward further stated that public comment should be input, but only the governing body should be able to discuss, debate, and decide an issue. According to a recent webinar on the Open Meetings Act, the purpose of public body meetings is for the body to hear from the public and be informed. Still, the public should not be engaged or included in discussion or decision-making. Attorney Anne Seuryneck advised that the public can speak, the library board may ask for input if it wants to, and that transparency is achieved by having discussions in the open.

There was further discussion about in-service training presentations as we move forward. We will consistently schedule outside presentations at the beginning of the board meeting and have public comment directly afterward. In that case, we must request the speaker stay at the meeting if there are questions about the presentation. The speaker does not necessarily have to engage or answer questions. When Attorney Seuryneck presents in October, we will ask that questions be submitted to Director Lamb ahead of time, and Ms. Seuryneck will determine if it is in the best interests of the library to answer them.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Bob Ellis moved to approve a purchase agreement with Fast Eddie's Painting for interior and exterior painting, not to exceed \$25,000. Jennifer Earl seconded, and a quorum of the board approved.

DISCUSSION

- Director Holly Ward Lamb reviewed the process of her performance evaluation with the board.
- The board reviewed and discussed proposed bylaws created by attorney Anne Seuryneck with input from the director. This is an Action Item for next month.
- The time and location of the annual holiday dinner for board members and administrators were discussed. Trustees chose 2Fogs Pub, with the board meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. on December 10 and the dinner immediately following.
- Bob Ellis provided an update on proposed parking in the City of Howell, with recommendations made using a parking study from 2004. He suggested the Library Board of Trustees generate a letter of support for the city's Depot Lot Renovation and Parking Improvement Project. He noted other community organizations, such as the Livingston Arts

Council and the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce, have committed to submitting such letters to boost grant funding. Bob Ellis moved that the library board submit a letter of support for the Depot Lot Renovation and Parking Improvement Project. Kathryn Tuck seconded. Bob Ellis stated that the letter should include language stating that the library board supports the project and that it benefits library patrons. Tony Kandt suggested that any statement should be reviewed and approved by the library's attorney. Bob Ellis moved to amend the motion on the table to task Trustee Bob Ellis to draft a letter of support for the project to be reviewed by the library attorney and presented at the board's next regular meeting. Kathryn Tuck seconded the motion as amended, and a quorum of the board unanimously approved.

- Holly Ward Lamb updated the trustees on our strategic planning process.

Jennifer Earl moved that the library board meet in closed session to discuss a confidential, attorney-client privileged written legal opinion. Bob Ellis seconded, and the board was polled. All board members approved.

Bob Ellis moved to close the closed session and move into open session. Susan Pominville seconded, and the board was polled. All board members approved.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING TOPIC

Holly Ward Lamb reviewed and summarized the first two sessions of MSU Extension Governing Essentials: Open Meetings Act and Parliamentary Procedure for the Board.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

Bob Ellis noted that he will not be present for the September meeting but will submit a draft of the proposed letter of support for the depot project to the board for review at that meeting. Maria Stuart apologized for her absence at last month's board meeting and stated that she worked hard to be present for this one.

Without objection, President Lyn Hewitt adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.

Kathleen Murray, Recording Secretary