

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE PARK RIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014 IN THE FIRST FLOOR MEETING ROOM OF THE LIBRARY**

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Harrison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ROLL CALL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Margaret Harrison, President; John Benka, Vice-President; Audra Ebling, Secretary; John Schmidt, Treasurer; Charlene Foss-Eggemann, Dorothy Hynous, Robert Trizna, Jerry White

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Joseph Egan

OTHERS PRESENT: Janet Van De Carr, Library Director; Joe Basso, Jodi Bemis Whitney, Angela Berger, John Doyle, Kelly Durov, Linda Egebrecht, Gretchen Kottkamp, Maggie Thomann, Library Staff; Alderman Dan Knight, Park Ridge; Judy Barclay, Park Ridge Historic Preservation Commission; Gerald Berkowitz, Frank Kaminski, Lloyd Lange, Jack Owens, Ted Sigg, Jay Terry, Park Ridge Kiwanis; Barbara E. Herr, Gerald V. Herr, Maureen Kaminski, Park Ridge Residents; Cathy Thompson, Park Ridge Lions Club; Jennifer Johnson, Pioneer Press

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Harrison stated that the next order of business is the Consent Agenda. She added for those members of the general public that were present at the meeting to talk about the Food for Fines program, nothing in the Consent Agenda relates to that program.

Mr. Schmidt MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mr. White SECONDED the motion.

Roll call vote.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Mrs. Harrison announced that this is the point of the meeting for comments from members of the general public. She invited them to make their comments and stated it would be appreciated if they give their name and address and comments at this time.

- ☐ *Judy Barclay, 524 Courtland, Park Ridge, Chairman of the Park Ridge Historic Preservation Commission.* She stated her presence at the meeting is to announce that the Historic Preservation Commission has made note of the fact that the Library is a significant local historical site in Park Ridge. The Historic Preservation Commission would like to ask the Library Board permission to move forward with nominating the Park Ridge Public Library for local historic designation by the City Council. According to the City's Landmark Ordinance, consent of the property owner (the City) is required for the final landmark designation.

Mrs. Barclay asked if the Library Board has any questions for her or the Preservation Commission. Mr. Schmidt asked if the historic designation puts any limits on any future remodeling or any changes that have to be done to the Library building. Mrs. Barclay replied that Historic Preservation Commission controls the exterior, public view of the building only. She added that the Preservation Commission takes the place of the City's Appearance Commission. In other words, once a building is designated a historic site, the Preservation Commission acts as the Appearance Commission and the Library would

Mr. Benka asked if the Pickwick Theatre is the only Park Ridge property the Preservation Commission has been involved with in regard to historic designation. Mrs. Barclay replied that the Commission has had nine buildings approved for historic landmark status – both commercial buildings and single-family residences – and listed what they are. Mr. Benka asked if the commission has rejected any buildings requesting historic landmark status, to which she responded no, none have been rejected because they have all met the necessary criteria in order to be nominated.

Mrs. Barclay stated she hopes the Board will support the Historic Preservation Commission's effort in this undertaking and stated she looks forward to composing the nomination for landmark status. She also invited the Trustees to attend the public hearing and she thanked the Board for their time. The Board thanked her. Mrs. Van De Carr asked the Board if she should put the matter on the agenda for the February Building & Grounds Committee meeting, to which Mrs. Harrison replied yes, the Committee can discuss the matter next month.

Mrs. Harrison noted that she was aware that many of those present in the audience wish to speak about the Food for Fines program. She invited comments at this time on any subject, as well as during the discussion of the Committee meetings and also at the end of the meeting.

- **Ted Sigg**, *Park Ridge resident for 38 years*. He stated that for 36 years of the 38 he has lived in Park Ridge, he has helped deliver the collected food with Park Ridge Kiwanis. The Food for Fines program is a phenomenal program and he would hate to see it go away. It is an excellent outreach to the community and is a wonderful program. Although he realizes the Board has made up its mind, he thinks it is a shame and hopes the Board will reconsider and keep the Food for Fines program.
- **Jack Owens**, *Park Ridge resident for 48 years*. He stated he has enjoyed coming to the Library. He has enjoyed being able to participate in the Kiwanis delivery of the food collected by the Food for Fines program the Library has so graciously collected and assembled in the month prior to Christmas. He has also delivered the food for a great many years. To see the faces of the people receiving the food, you see their gratitude and you see the opportunities given to them. To receive the thank you notes you learn about how much it has meant to these families to have this food delivered and the positive impact we've had on their families. Cutting the Food for Fines program would substantially cut the program that Kiwanis has cooperatively developed with the Park Ridge Library over the last four decades.

Mr. Owens also stated that the amnesty program that goes hand-in-hand with the Food for Fines program has brought hundreds of books back to the Library, just as the food program has delivered food to hundreds of families. He asked the Board to consider how many families have been touched over 36 years of delivering food; with an average 20 to 25 families receiving food each year is 720 to 900 families impacted. He added that fortunately this year there were only 12 families who received food, but over the years there are usually more and this program has meant so much to our community. He stated he loves A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens – and he hopes that people will focus more on the gentleman's attitude at the end of the tale as opposed to his attitude at the beginning of the tale; we need to remember that at the end of the tale there is benevolence and willingness to give to all in the community.

- **Gerald Berkowitz**, *808 N. Delphia, Park Ridge – Kiwanis member, and Board member with the Center of Concern*. He stated his feelings are the same as the other two gentlemen: to continue the program as-is because it certainly helps in multiple ways. He stated he has taken advantage of the amnesty program over the years, and he has also spent his career supporting libraries and school districts in the community. One of the most important things was always to get back materials, even when working with children, which is a little different than with adults. Getting back materials is a critical aspect of keeping our libraries going, especially when materials are no longer in print. He asked that the Board reconsider and to continue the program into the future.
- **Lloyd Lange**, *Park Ridge resident for 52 years and Kiwanis member*. He stated he has been proud of this Library for the 52 years he has lived in Park Ridge. It has been thrilling to see how the Library has developed and how it keeps pace with changes, and we want to see a worthy program like this which reaches into the community from the Library to continue if at all possible.

- **Maureen Kaminski**, 210 Gillick, Park Ridge resident for 34 years. She stated she believes it is a very valuable program for all the reasons the previous gentlemen have stated. In addition to those reasons, she believes it is important for our children, for our youth to know that we have a social responsibility to take care of those who are less fortunate than ourselves. To abandon this program would send a very negative message about that matter. There have been a lot of negative messages for the youth of this community in recent years and she would feel terrible if the Library was another source for such negative actions to those less fortunate.

Mrs. Harrison asked if there were any other comments at this time. She thanked everyone for attending.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mrs. Ebling circulated two folders of correspondence and reviewed the contents:

- Copy of the Google Analytics Library statistics summary for 12/1/13 through 12/31/13
- Copy of the Impact Survey, which the Library is conducting with the assistance of the University of Washington Information School. The Survey will be used to assist Library staff in evaluating the Library's technology services.

Mrs. Van De Carr explained that the survey is funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The surveys are sent directly to the University of Washington Information School and the Library will receive the results of the respondents from Park Ridge in a few months. The survey is posted on the Library's website for anyone who wishes to take part and February 2 is the deadline.

- Copy of the December 26, 2013 *Pioneer Press Herald Advocate* newspaper article, Library to Close on Sundays During Summer
- Copy of the January 2, 2014 *Pioneer Press Herald Advocate* newspaper article, Library to Charge Non-residents for Programs, Computer Use
- Copy of the January 9, 2014 *Park Ridge Trib Local* newspaper article highlighting the Library's January 25 Preschool & Enrichment Fair
- Copy of the January 9, 2014 *Pioneer Press Herald Advocate* newspaper article, Ten More 'Stars' Shine with Chamber Awards. The article lists the ten people receiving recognition at the annual Park Ridge Chamber Community Star Dinner, including Mr. & Mrs. DuSold of the Friends of the Library.
- Copy of the December 18, 2013 *Journal & Topics* article, Park Ridge Chamber Stars Align, regarding the annual Park Ridge Chamber Community Stars awardees, including Mr. & Mrs. DuSold of the Friends of the Library.
- Copy of the January 16, 2014 *Pioneer Press Herald Advocate* newspaper article, 1939 Classics on the Big Screen at Pickwick Theatre, highlighting Library staff member Matthew Hoffman's Classic film Series at the Pickwick. The films being shown from January through June, 2014 were listed.
- Copy of the application for the 2014 ILA (Illinois Library Association) "Library Trustee Forum Workshops"
- Copy of the January/February 2014 issue of The Voice magazine, geared toward "Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations", an ALA (American Library Association) publication.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Schmidt reported that in perusing the packet one can see that the Library Fund Balance Report and the Library Technology Fund Balance Report are unavailable because the reports were not received from the City. Also, page 6F shows that with 67% of the fiscal year completed, the Library has only spent 25% of the operating budget. Mrs. Van De Carr announced that this figure does not give the full picture of the total expended budget because the Library is still awaiting payroll amounts from the City and there is still no date as to when that information might be available. The figures have not been available since the beginning of this fiscal year which began May 1, 2013.

Mr. Trizna addressed Alderman Knight and asked him, since he is on the City Council's Finance Committee, if he has any sense of when the Library might see current financial information and if he has any idea what the issue is with the hold up. Alderman Knight responded that he is aware that there are still some remaining issues with the implementation of the payroll system, although he doesn't know the particulars; reporting problems are occurring in the rest of the City departments as well. Payroll is getting

Mr. Benka asked if that insurance is a bid document. Mrs. Van De Carr replied that the Library uses the same broker as the City to obtain the insurance, and it costs approximately \$2,500 a year. Mrs. Van De Carr stated that the last appraisal was done about ten years ago and this appraisal has already been paid for and was approved by the Board a few months ago. She added that she emailed a copy of the appraisal to the insurance broker and is waiting to hear if there will be a change in the annual premium, and she brought a copy to this evening's meeting. Mrs. Van De Carr noted that these appraised values are not what the artwork can be sold for, they are strictly replacement costs.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Mrs. Van De Carr reported that the Friends of the Library are holding their annual winter book sale, which this year they are calling their "Children's and Vintage Book Sale". The book sale will be held Sunday, February 9, 2014 from Noon to 3:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mrs. Harrison noted that there may be some community members present at the meeting who did not get to comment and she invited them to speak now on any topic discussed this evening.

□ **Frank Kaminski**, 210 Gillick, Park Ridge, President of Park Ridge Kiwanis Noon Club. He stated he is here on behalf of the Kiwanis Noon Club he has been asked by the club members to attend tonight's meeting and voice the club's concern about keeping the Food for Fines program that runs from Thanksgiving to Christmas and the value that the club members see in the program. The program has been in place for over 20 years and club members have participated in the sorting and distribution of the food collected by the Food for Fines program during that time. Kiwanis also provides funding for the program. The food is sorted in this large meeting room by Kiwanis members, put in boxes and then delivered. The program is a big part of the club's mission. The club tries to get young people involved in the sorting and delivery of the food as an important lesson in the value of giving back to the community. The Kiwanis is very proud of this partnership with the Library and hope that it won't be discontinued. We feel it is very important and adds value to the community in three ways: (1) we are helping people in need; the mission of the Kiwanis is to help young people to help this mission and we are showing young people that this is important. Hunger throughout this nation is a serious problem and even by looking at the recent survey done by Lutheran General Hospital, 1% of the population indicated that they have problems getting food. Many of the club members also deliver meals to people in Park Ridge through the Meals on Wheels program. Eliminating hunger is a noble cause that we all try to eliminate. (2) He added that this program is a "win, win" situation – during Food for Fines the Library offers an amnesty program for fines and during this period of time people can bring in food and the Library gets materials back so that others can have them. (3) These kinds of programs are important and they build a sense of community. The Library is a focal point of the community and this program shows that we are a caring community. It's a message that is important to give to young people, that as they come to this building for knowledge and growth that we are a caring community. Kiwanis has enjoyed this partnership with the Library these past 20 years, both by providing financial support and all of the labor. He stated that he knows we are all going through some tough budget times, but he hopes the Board will carefully consider continuing this program and not eliminating it. On behalf of all the Kiwanis members in Park Ridge, he asks the Board to continue to support the Food for Fines program, and thanked the Board for letting him speak.

Mr. Trizna stated he thinks the Kiwanis Club is a great organization and obviously the collection of food for needy people is important. As he has previously stated, he feels his position as a member of the Library Board is to look after the taxpayers and his concern is that he swears an oath to attend to the needs of the Library and to protect the taxpayers' investment in the Library. This is why he is reluctant to sign off on the Food for Fines program because he feels it effectively takes money out of the taxpayers' pockets and donates it to a private organization outside of the Library. That aside, he asked if he was correct in his assessment that it helps Kiwanis to have the collection at the Library. Mr. Kaminski responded that it is a great distribution center and all the kids and members get involved. Mr. Trizna asked if he really thinks that if the Library didn't give fine forgiveness the community would be any less cooperative and giving to the food drive. Mr. Kaminski replied that this has been a program that has worked well and like he said before, if it is a win-win for both sides it's a beneficial program. Mr. Trizna stated he thinks that it would be a win-win-win situation (if the Library discontinues its Food

for Fines program) because the taxpayers can keep their money, Kiwanis can keep distributing food, the community can keep on donating and the Library can continue to still be the place where the food is collected and sorted since it is at the center of town. He doesn't think the program has to be a quid pro quo program where people have to have their fines forgiven in order to encourage donations. Mr. Kaminski stated that his personal opinion is that the Library's participation by offering Food for Fines is an important part of the program. Throughout forty years in his line of business, he has seen a lot of people in need and helping those in need is a very important statement to make as a community. If taxpayers don't feel the same he understands that, however to him personally and to the members of Kiwanis who spend a lot of their time giving back to the community, Food for Fines is an important program in many ways. And he speaks on behalf of all the members of his Kiwanis club.

Mrs. Harrison thanked Mr. Kaminski for speaking, and informed him that a deciding vote was not taken – the Board is collecting comments and the matter is going back to Committee to be discussed further.

- *Mr. Owens* stated that another important point to understand regarding the distribution of food for the Food for Fines program is that it really is a community effort. He informed the Board that the lists of names of the families who receive the food are provided by the school district, not Kiwanis. These recipients live within the community and are having trouble sending their children to school and providing them with lunches. He added that the Kiwanis members don't see the lists of names, they come through the Library so that there is confidentiality for the families, and thus the Food for Fines is a wonderful effort of the entire community. Sometimes the canned goods are past their expiration date or are damaged, and the people sorting the food look at each item to assure that all the food is safe to consume. To those helping sort and distribute this food the effort and hours they put in are well worth the effort because they are helping the community and what a better idea than to have our public library participate in this; it means so much to the community. The Library is a fulcrum in the community. Mr. Owens added that to lose that is to lose more than the few dollars the Library loses and he will gladly write a check for whatever the Board wants from him for that loss. Mr. Owens is sure that any one of these people here would still participate in the program but the community needs the Food for Fines program. To see it go down the drain because it might affect the Library purchasing something in the future would be a shame and he can't believe that is a reason. Many of the Kiwanis members are also members of Friends of the Park Ridge Library and they all participate in the Friends and at some time in the future his books will come back to the Library and be recycled. Our community is really centered around this wonderful library and we can't see programs that are so important and beneficial to the community be eliminated because we are being so tight with our money. He referred again to the Charles Dickens story where at the end of the story the main character has the mindset to help others. Mr. Trizna said that we should remember that at the end of that story no one made Mr. Scrooge give the money away, he gave it away voluntarily and he thinks the community is more like that Scrooge. He added that he is not against the Library remaining a collection point, he just wants to remember the obligation the Library has to the taxpayers; he thinks the community should be like the Scrooge at the end of the story not at the beginning of the story and he thinks it is up to that challenge. Mr. Owens said that's how he wants the Library to be remembered.

- *Mr. Jay Terry, 244 Columbia, Park Ridge, four year member of the community and two year member of Kiwanis.* He stated he echoes everything his fellow Kiwanis members said. He stated he has a question about another agenda item, i.e., the question of user fees for the Library. He apologized if there is a document that explains the matter that he has not seen but it strikes him that in addition to taking a survey, he as a resident would appreciate some context as to the issue nationally. Certainly Park Ridge can't be the only municipality struggling with lean budgets and tough times. He asked what libraries across the country are doing in regard to user fees. He appreciates that every professional librarian in the country wants a free library that is accessible all the time but he's old enough to remember when suburbs didn't charge for ambulance runs, garbage pickup or recycling pickup; we've all unfortunately gotten used to user fees. He asked what is the state of the art or best practices regarding libraries across the country.

Mrs. Van De Carr replied that she hasn't been able to find any libraries within the United States that charge their own residents to walk in and use a computer. She added that she has found a few libraries that have charged non-residents, like this Library is considering. Some libraries charge their residents to check out DVDs, at one time this Library did that and when that practice was dropped it

made a lot of residents very happy. In regard to charging for programs, she has found a few libraries who charge non-residents to attend certain kinds of programs but not their own residents. She cannot find any libraries in the country that charges people to bring their children to storytimes or to attend book discussions, things that are a part of a library's core mission. So this would be pretty unusual if this Library were to start charging our own residents for some of these things. Mr. Trizna referred to the January/February 2014 issue of The Voice for America's Libraries magazine included in this evening's secretary's report, and stated that it may have been in another issue or another similar publication, but he believes he read that a lot of these libraries don't necessarily charge for these kinds of programs or services but rather they just stop offering them, and so there is no paradigm for charging because no one wants to confront the issue so they just stop offering or curtail the programs substantially, and he's not sure that's something anyone here wants to do.

- *Ms. Kottkamp* voiced her concern for the Library Resources Committee that at their next meeting will be discussing charging for computer use in the Library. Part of the philosophy of the Library is that we offer people access and if we are then saying that those people who are rich enough to have a computer at home can get their own information but those who don't have a job, who can't handle a computer, who come up to the service desk and ask staff for information and staff brings them to a computer to obtain that information, staff will now have to say, "well that information is going to cost you". Or for you to fill out an online application for a job because you don't have a job, that is going to cost you. She finds that very upsetting and this is something the members of the Committee have to consider.
- *Maureen Kaminski*. She stated she had one more thing to say about the Food for Fines program to Mr. Trizna and that he feels this community is much more generous than needing a food for fines program if the Library was simply a collection point. She thinks that's probably true, and she's not sure how many people bring in one can of beans for a huge fine, but in her experience with her young children this program was a wonderful reminder to do something extra at that time of year. If the child had a fine of a nickel or dime it was a good opportunity to say as you went to the Library, "let's use this opportunity to speak to the issue of hunger". We would go to the store and they would pick out a few cans of food and they would bring them into the Library. It was a wonderful reminder for those small fines it was a good learning opportunity, particularly for young children.
- *Mr. Owens* asked if the matter now goes back to committee, to which Mrs. Harrison replied, yes, that the committee will discuss the issue again and determine in Committee if the Board needs to put a motion on the table to make a change or if it will remain as it is, or if there will be some other version, but there is no vote this evening. Mrs. Harrison added that there were enough comments in person, electronically and on the phone – and there were enough other matters on the table to discuss – that she didn't want to come to a vote tonight, she feels the Board needs to discuss the matter further. Mr. Owens thanked her.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Harrison asked if there was any other new business. Mrs. Van De Carr replied there is none.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Trizna MOVED to adjourn the Board meeting.

Mr. White SECONDED the motion.

Voice vote. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.