

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JULY 25, 2024

President Angela Neeley called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library to order at 4:34 pm in the Community Room of the Northwest Akron Branch Library. The following members of the Board answered the roll call: James Casey, Joseph Ferrise, John Frola, Jr., Angela Neeley, William Rich, Bernie Rochford, and Ray Weber. Present from Library staff were Pamela Hickson-Stevenson, Michelle Scarpitti, Mike Bianchi, Michael Derr, Pat Manning, Ryan McCoy, Heather Otto, Dana Setting, Val Sherman, Greg Trask, Melissa Walker, and Crystal Wooten.

Mr. Rochford moved, seconded by Mr. Ferrise, to adopt the agenda as distributed. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-70
AGENDA

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the minutes of the June 27, 2024, meeting as amended. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-71
JUNE MINUTES

Ms. Neeley remarked the Library's Sesquicentennial Gala was a great event and recognized the staff's hard work. PRESIDENT'S
REMARKS

Michelle Scarpitti, Fiscal Officer, presented the executive summary and financial report for June 2024. The main receipt in June was the Public Library Fund (PLF) along with approximately \$23,000 from the gala proceeds. Related to the fines and fees numbers, a review showed that patrons are coming in to pay the fees for lost items. Ms. Scarpitti will be receiving an updated certificate of estimated resources from the County in the near future to be able to compare the Library budget against updated projections. JUNE 2024 FINANCIAL
REPORT

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the financial report for June 2024. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-72
ADOPTION OF
FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Scarpitti presented the donor gift list. The Library received \$15,836.21 in monetary donations since the last meeting and approximately one page of other donations. DONOR/GIFT LIST

Mr. Rochford moved, seconded by Mr. Weber, the acceptance of the donations and gifts with great appreciation. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-73
ACCEPTANCE OF
DONATIONS & GIFTS

Ms. Scarpitti presented the investment report for June 2024. The Library received \$71,560.76 of interest with 61% credited to the general fund. Some monies were transferred from the Huntington main account to the Star Ohio account, but no other changes to investments were made. JUNE 2024
INVESTMENT REPORT

[The investment reports are appended to the minutes.]

Ms. Scarpitti requested Board approval of the 2025 alternative tax budget, a 2025 ALTERNATIVE

form that is completed annually as a starting point for the County to provide certificates of estimated resources for the upcoming year. TAX BUDGET

Mr. Ferrise moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to approve the 2025 alternative tax budget. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-74 APPROVAL OF 2025 ALTERNATIVE TAX BUDGET

Ms. Scarpitti requested the addition of a new appropriation of \$25,000 in Fund 280, the Minor Grants Fund, to accommodate spending gifts and grants already received and potential additional gifts and grants. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Weber, to increase appropriations in Fund 280, Minor Grants Fund, by \$25,000. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-75 FUND 280 APPROPRIATION INCREASE

Ms. Scarpitti next requested the Board to declare a wooden desk with hutch as surplus property. The Facilities team is working hard to clear out items that are in bad shape to increase storage space. SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, that the wooden desk with hutch tagged #000002 be declared surplus. The motion was adopted without dissent. 24-76 DECLARATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

Heather Otto, Human Resources Director, presented the Personnel Report and stated there were no changes to the report. Ms. Otto introduced the Library's new HR Generalist, Crystal Wooten. Ms. Wooten has been visiting branches and holding office hours to meet with staff. PERSONNEL REPORT

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Personnel Report – July 2024

RESIGNATIONS:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Bell, Rayshaude	Security Officer	06/29/2024	Security
Fagerstrom, Eleanor	Shelver (Casual)	07/13/2024	Goodyear
Hoaglin, Sydney	Shelver (Casual)	08/10/2024	Springfield-Lakemore
Hollander, Lindsey	Shelver (Casual)	08/17/2024	Nordonia Hills
Olman, Alanna	Shelver (Casual)	08/05/2024	Richfield
Seib, Nicholas	Shelver (Casual)	08/03/2024	Portage Lakes
Wallace, Richard	Akron Police Officer	05/20/2024	Security
Wood, Elissa	Shelver (Casual)	07/20/2024	Green
Woods, Olivia	Public Service Assistant II	07/06/2024	Maple Valley

SELECTIONS:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Buckner, Chelsea	Shelver (Casual)	07/15/2024	Portage Lakes
McDaniel, Emily	Shelver (Casual)	07/29/2024	Portage Lakes
Nicodemo, Luke	Public Service Assistant II	07/01/2024	Kenmore
Sorrent, Madeline	Public Service Assistant II	07/01/2024	Kenmore
Wooten, Crystal	Human Resources Generalist	07/01/2024	Human Resources

CHANGE OF CLASSIFICATION (STATUS)/TRANSFER:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Burke, Henry (Soni)	Security Officer (Full-time)		
	Security Officer (Part-time)	07/01/2024	Security

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

	<u>07.16.09</u>	<u>07.09.10</u>	<u>07.15.19</u>	<u>07.22.20</u>	<u>07.15.21</u>	<u>07.20.22</u>	<u>07.21.23</u>	<u>07.18.24</u>
Full-Time Staff:	291	270	274	238	249	254	256	257
80 Hrs. Exempt:	—	—	—	—	43	43	42	43
75 Hrs. Non-Exempt:	—	—	—	—	206	211	214	214
Part-time/Job-Share Staff:	68	54	46	38	39	44	39	45
Shelvers (Casual):	86	73	78	66	48	55	63	62
Total number of Staff:	445	307	308	342	336	353	358	364
Full-Time Equivalents:	339	307	308	*All other staff furloughed	274	283	282	287

NOTES:

- These numbers cannot be compared from month to month since the numbers may not reflect additions and deletions to the payroll system as the changes are made immediately before or after the date the personnel action is effective.
- Previously, the Library employed Student Assistant who had to be full- or part-time students and who worked between 8 to 20 hours per week performing shelving duties and other limited tasks. “Shelvers (Casual)” is a designation approved at the August 2023 Board of Trustees meeting. This role performs the same duties and works the same hours as Student Assistants, but it eliminates the requirement that the person be a student. Counts from before the September 2023 Personnel Report reflect those in the Student Assistant position and counts from September 2023 and thereafter reflect those in the Shelver (Casual) position.

CONFIDENTIAL:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Vanek, Robert	Akron Police Officer		05/01/2024	Security

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the personnel report. 24-77
The motion was adopted without dissent. PERSONNEL
REPORT
Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Executive Director, reported the Work Plan EXECUTIVE

update is in the Board packet. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson believes staff are making good progress.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – WORK PLAN UPDATE

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson announced the Summit Poll survey results are also in the packet. The poll results regarding opinions of the Library were positive with increases in a number of areas. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson is hopeful to see further increases in the 2025 poll due to the Library's Sesquicentennial year. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson believes going fine-free and the Library's anniversary play roles in the return of patrons to the Library along with continuing to move out of the pandemic. Library staff are encouraged by the increased numbers. An area for continued improvement includes marketing strategies related to paid ads and social media platforms.

SUMMIT POLL RESULTS

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson announced the estimated net income from the Gala was above \$70,000. The next fundraiser is on October 30 when Food Network star, cookbook author, and chef Carla Hall will be coming to the Akron Civic Theatre. Michael Derr, Development Director, continues to work on the program.

SEQUICENTENNIAL UPDATE

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson addressed a question regarding the Akron History Center. Bruce Fahey, a retired attorney, has volunteered to develop an operational agreement between the Library and the new Akron History Center. Meetings have taken place. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson remains optimistic an agreement be developed and implemented.

AKRON HISTORY CENTER

Ms. Rich presented a report from the Marketing Communications & Library Services Committee.

REPORT OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS & LIBRARY SERVICES COMMITTEE

On Thursday, July 18, 2024, the Marketing Communications & Library Services Committee met in the Lolita K. Adair Board Room at Main Library. Committee Chair Bill Rich called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. Also in attendance was Committee member Joe Ferrise. Ex-officio member Angela Neeley was absent. Library staff members Pam Hickson-Stevenson and Sara Schwendeman also attended.

Mr. Ferrise moved to adopt the agenda as distributed. The motion was adopted without dissent.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reviewed the recommended amendments to the Collection Development Policy discussed at the previous Committee meeting. Because some Board members expressed concerns at a previous regular Board meeting regarding the lack of a process for appealing a reconsideration decision by the Executive Director, Committee members discussed several options for an appeal. Mr. Rich suggested an additional option, which would feature a substantive review by the Board to determine if the inclusion of the material was in line with the Collection Development Policy and a reversal of the Executive Director's decision only if it was clearly erroneous.

Suggestions for further revision included

- *clarifying the Executive Director's role in decision making in response to reconsideration requests;*
- *specifying the mechanism for initiating an appeal to the Board; and*
- *specifying who appoints the Review Committee and who would serve on the Review Committee.*

All four appeals options will be presented to the Board Trustees for consideration and discussion.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reviewed the form for Reconsideration of Library Materials and the current review process. Mr. Ferrise asked how many reconsideration requests the Library received in the last two years. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson could not remember but estimated one or two. [She subsequently researched this and discovered that the last complete reconsideration process was in 2015. The form has been sent several times in the last few years, but the recipients did not submit the form.] Mr. Rich suggested clarifying the Reconsideration form is to be used for material currently included in the Library collection and not to initiate reconsideration of decisions not to include material in the collection. He asked if there should be a process for handling requests to include materials that have been excluded. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson explained that the vast majority of requests from customers to add materials are granted either through purchase or through borrowing from another library.

Once the suggested revisions are completed, the policy will be distributed to the Committee members for another review in the hopes to be on the Board meeting agenda.

Regarding the Collection Development Policy, Mr. Rich brought before the Board a question related to the procedures for reconsideration of materials in the collection, specifically regarding an appeal to the Board Trustees of the Executive Director's decision denying a reconsideration request. Mr. Rich distributed a document of four options for the Board to consider around the mechanism for an appeal process. The Board's decision will be added to the revised policy, which will be brought to the Board at the next meeting.

COLLECTION
DEVELOPMENT
POLICY –
MECHANISM FOR
APPEALS

Mr. Rich presented the four options: 1) no appeal, 2) an appeal that involves the Board in a review of the Executive Director's compliance with the procedure for reconsideration, which if not found, would require the Executive Director to comply with the procedure, 3) an appeal that involves the Board in a substantive review of the Executive Director's decision but with deference to the Executive Director's decision and a change only if it was clearly inconsistent with the Collection Development Policy, and 4) the same as option three but without deference to the Executive Director's decision.

Library trustees asked questions and expressed different opinions on the four options. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson was asked to explain why only librarians serve on the Request for Reconsideration Committee. She explained that all

humans have biases. Librarians are trained in the concept of intellectual freedom, which is the right of every individual to seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction and to explore and express ideas without interference. This means a wide variety of points of view need to be represented in the library's collection. Librarians understand they might have to overcome a personal disagreement or distaste to ensure people can find information on a variety of topics or perspectives and people can see themselves represented in the collection. It is not the librarian's role to endorse, promote, or support views that are on the shelves. It is the librarian's job to make materials available to others. This is a hallmark of the training, education, and experience for librarians with a master's degree and is the core tenant of the profession.

The discussion of the Library Trustees ultimately led to recognizing option three as the preferred option because it provides a mechanism for an appeal and a Board review with deference to the Executive Director. Mr. Rich stated the Marketing Communications & Library Services Committee will take the Board's guidance to include option three in the Collection Development Policy. There also was a suggestion to include notification to the Board when a reconsideration request is made, which will be added. The policy will be presented to the Board for consideration at an upcoming Board meeting.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reported the Customer Behavior Policy states illegal substances are prohibited at the Library and suggested the policy should be updated to include prohibiting marijuana on Library property. Committee members discussed where to include language regarding marijuana and decided adding it to item 6 in the policy was the best option. The new item would read, "Possessing alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs." Mr. Rich noted there is a potential conflict in language regarding the presence of alcohol in Library buildings between the Customer Behavior and the Meeting Room policies.

CUSTOMER
BEHAVIOR POLICY -
MARIJUANA
PROHIBITION ON
LIBRARY PROPERTY

Mr. Rich announced he later concluded there is not a conflict between the Customer Behavior and the Meeting Room policies.

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Ferrise, to amend the Customer Behavior Policy to include in item 6 that possession of marijuana on Library property is prohibited conduct. The motion was adopted without dissent and now comes as a recommendation to the Board.

24-78
ADD MARIJUANA
TO ITEM 6 OF
CUSTOMER
BEHAVIOR POLICY

The recommendation to add marijuana to item 6 of the Customer Behavior Policy was adopted without dissent.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reported Library staff are experiencing an increasing number of situations with customers bringing large or multiple bags and wagons or carts into the Library, which causes safety hazards. Committee members discussed imposing some limitations on what could be brought into the Library. Some libraries base limits on what can fit under a chair. Another option would be prohibiting objects that impede movement or interfere with other patrons' use of the Library. Staff will conduct more research and bring additional

information to the Committee.

Without objection, Mr. Rich adjourned the meeting at 4:50 pm.

Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Executive Director

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson presented change orders distributed to the Board. The two change orders are related to the HVAC replacement project at the Norton and Odom Branches. One involves rerouting ductwork previously installed incorrectly at Odom, adding a total of \$7,916.50. The next change order involves reusing the existing ductwork at Norton, which is a deduction of \$4,696 from the project's total cost, bringing the net add for the project to \$3,220.50, which is within the contingency budget.

NEW BUSINESS –
CHANGE ORDERS

24-79
CHANGE ORDERS –
HVAC PROJECT AT
ODOM AND
NORTON BRANCHES

Mr. Weber moved, seconded by Mr. Frola, to approve the change orders for an added total of \$3,220.50 to the HVAC project at the Odom and Norton Branches. The motion was adopted without dissent.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson introduced Greg Trask, Manager of the Northwest Akron Branch. Mr. Trask reported on Northwest Akron Branch partnerships. The first is with the City of Akron Northwest Recreation Center next door. The Branch and the Center collaborate on programming and on two large events each year. The Center also allows the Branch to use space when programming does not fit in the Branch's rooms. The Branch also has a partnership with Ideastream Public Media for children's story times and workshops with food provided to the participants. If participants attend all the workshops, they are given a tablet, which particularly assists underserved populations. The Branch also partners with the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank for afterschool snacks. Northwest Akron Branch also hosts a monthly program for differently-abled adults. These programs typically feature craft or physical activities along with performers to engage the participants in socialization. All partnerships have been beneficial.

ADMINISTRATIVE
TEAM REPORT

There was no public participation.

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION

There was nothing for the good of the order.

FOR THE GOOD OF
THE ORDER

With no further business, Ms. Neeley adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

President

Secretary