

**Bridgman Public Library
Board Minutes
October 26, 2021 - 9:00 a.m.**

Meeting Called to Order: 9:00 a.m. by Valauskas

Present: Board Members: Valauskas, Bogue, Kole, Wilk, Collins, Janoskey

Staff: Kreps, Abele

Agenda Revisions: All agreed to move the Discussion Item “BPL Technology Plan (2021-2024): Draft” to November’s meeting agenda as it is in the early stages of development.

Guests: Julie Bernstein (Friends of the Library), Cathy Worcester and Rick Fuller (Candidates for vacant board member positions)

Public Comments: None

Introduction of Board Member Candidates: BPL currently has two vacancies for Bridgman City Residents on its Board of Trustees. An application deadline of October 15th was posted. Two city of Bridgman residents and business owners, Cathy Worcester and Rick Fuller, expressed interest in these positions.

Cathy Worcester is a candidate to fill the vacancy requiring completion of the final year left in the current term. Addressing the board, she described her regular use of the Library to check out audio books due to her visual challenges. She noted a goal to draw more attention to audio books and to serve as an advocate for digital library and content streaming services like OverDrive and Hoopla, which provide access to a variety of digital content, such as eBooks, audio books, movies, music and TV programs.

Rick Fuller is a candidate to fill the vacancy with 5 years remaining in the current term. He is a native to Bridgman, but has lived and worked in many locations around the world. He has been facilitating BPL’s 2nd Wednesday book group for the last 6 years and is a big fan of the library. Rick desires the opportunity to be a member of the board to be able to provide input and direction on the decisions being made about the library.

Friends of the Library (FoBPL): Bernstein gave an update on the renovations underway in the Friends Book Shoppe. The desk has been removed and three stationary wooden bookshelves, donated by the Library, are being installed in its place. These shelves will increase book storage capacity by 50%. The Friends Book Shoppe sells donated books at affordable prices as one means of supporting the BPL summer and winter reading programs and other library projects.

The FoBPL have also approved up to \$5,000 for purchase of mobile materials shelving units for use in the Library, and \$500 in support of winter reading program incentives for all ages.

Committee Reports:

(1) Facilities Committee:

Bogue reported that the committee met on October 18 and discussed multiple items:

- a) **Back-up Generator:** A representative from Wolverine has conducted a site visit and will provide us with a range of options for cost and capacity. The Committee also suggested contacting Beaudoin Electrical for an additional estimate for comparison.
- b) **Interior and Exterior Lighting:** Mead & White Electric has been onsite to review previously approved interior and exterior lighting projects. Lighting in the storage closet has been replaced. Interior track lighting is being evaluated for repair or replacement. Exterior (main entrance) lights will be replaced when new fixtures are acquired.
- c) **Roof Leaks:** Future Construction will schedule a leak/flood test to pinpoint the origins of the leaks.
- d) **Drinking Fountain:** Ace Plumbing has been contacted about replacing the patron drinking fountain in the lobby of the library.
- e) **Garden Shed Key Box:** An exterior key security box is scheduled to be installed on the garden shed next week.

(2) Finance Committee:

- a) Kole mentioned that the draft of the audit report has been received. The Committee is currently reviewing the report and discussing possible edits.
- b) Specified surplus operating funds available due to COVID-related reductions in spending are being considered to support improvement projects for the Library and grounds. For example, purchase of a back-up generator would enable the library to provide community-wide support services in the event of another city-wide power outage.

(3) Personnel and Policy Committee:

- a) Kreps is creating a Library Organizational Summary which will include Staff job descriptions and responsibilities, an overview of Library operations, and workflow descriptions. Photos of staff members will also be included. A draft of this document will be provided to board members for the November Board meeting.
- b) Kole and Collins have been researching Library Director job descriptions and have found a few samples they will use to create an official job description for Kreps.
- c) Valauskas reminded the Committee that they need to prepare a slate of officers for the November meeting.

Directors Report: Kreps reported that the library continues to expand in-person programming options and group meetings. The recent Halloween Hijinks drop-in event was well-attended despite being a different format than the traditional Halloween Party.

Kreps also stated that the library has received positive responses from its recent email communications pertaining to upcoming library events and local community efforts.

Requests were made by several board members to highlight *virtual* program participation and to include website visits in the monthly statistics report. Concern was expressed over the lower-than-normal foot traffic numbers; Kreps stated that this is not un-common in the current pandemic environment. The reduction of large in-person programs and activities has impacted use of the physical building, as has the popularity of virtual programming.

Approval of Minutes: Janoskey requested a minor wording change under “Discussion Items: Board Vacancies – Progress Report.” It should read: “*at* (not *in*) the board meeting.” Motion made by Bogue to accept the September 28, 2021 meeting minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Collins. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report/Financial Reports: None

Discussion Items:

- **Audit Update:** The Finance Committee is reviewing the latest Financial Report draft from Kruggel Lawton, CPA. Kreps will email the current report to board members. Brian Hake, lead auditor from Kruggel Lawton, plans to attend the November Board Meeting to provide feedback and to answer any questions.
- **Berm Landscaping Working Group - Update:** Janoskey, Valauskas and Kreps met with staff from Fernwood Botanical Gardens on October 22 to discuss options and hear expert recommendations about improving the library’s berm. Improvements will be practical and pleasing and make the library building more visible. Valauskas stated that a landscaping plan is being created and will soon be available for review. Carol Line, Director of Fernwood, is investigating grant opportunities in support of the project; possibilities for involving local schools by adding educational elements to the *Berm Refurbishment Project* will also be explored.

Action Items:

- **Approval of Bills:** Motion made by Wilk to approve payment of September 2021 bills totaling \$30,708.34. Motion seconded by Kole. Motion carried.
- **Approval of New Board of Trustees Members:** Motion made by Kole to appoint Worcester and Fuller to the BPL Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Bogue. Motion carried.
- **Chikaming Township Library Service Contract:** BPL is one of three area libraries, including New Buffalo Township and Three Oaks Township, from whom residents of Chikaming Township may select as a “home library.” The current Library Service Contract provides monies from Chikaming Township’s general fund, and State of Michigan Penal Fine funds, all of which are divided equally among the three libraries.

This Library Service Contract is due for renewal and is being reviewed by the libraries and the Township. Partner libraries have proposed amending this contract to assess a \$25 fee for Chikaming Township resident/household who applies for a library card. BPL however will recommend renewal of the existing contract *without* (BPL) requiring a \$25 non-resident fee.
- Motion made by Wilk to approve BPL’s Library Service Contract with Chikaming Township *without* requiring payment of a \$25 non-resident fee. Motion seconded by Collins. Motion passed.

Communications and Correspondence:

- **Louis and Nellie Sieg Fund:** Valauskas announced that the library received a donation of \$5,000 from the Louis and Nellie Sieg Fund to assist in acquiring a back-up generator. Identifying the donation as a matching grant is being considered in an effort to encourage broader community support for the project.
- **Harvey Kimmel:** Kimmel has expressed an interest in providing financial support and assisting in the sourcing of additional funds. The Kimmels are also open to providing financial support for the Berm Refurbishment Project – provided an educational component for BPS students is incorporated.

Meeting adjourned: 10:35am

Next meeting: November 23, 2021, 9:00 a.m. at the library.

Submitted by

Dennis Kreps

Approved by the Secretary: _____ Date: _____