

Regular meeting
Bedford Public Library System Board of Trustees
Minutes for August 1, 2023
Bedford Central Library, Peaks Room

Members present: Debra Bahouth, Randy Cox, Olivia Madison, Pamela Palmer, Tracey Reichard

Members not present: Anna Stevens, Hope Cupit

Staff present: Jenny Novalis, Library Director; Cassandra Baldwin, Youth Services Coordinator

Mrs. Palmer called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Mrs. Bahouth motioned to approve the agenda, Mr. Cox seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Palmer asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes from the previous meeting. There were none and the minutes were accepted.

No public comments

The Board read through the final revisions for the public comment policy. Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to accept the policy, as revised. Mrs. Reichard motioned, Mrs. Madison seconded. There was no further discussion. Mrs. Palmer put a vote before the board to accept the amendments to the BPLS public comment policy. The motion passes unanimously.

Ms. Baldwin presented the final report on the 2023 summer reading program. Highlights were discussed. Bedford and Montvale had the most increase in program attendance of all the branches. The Larsen's Reptile show had the highest attendance of all the large programs. Overall, 1,133 kids or teens registered for the online portion of the program. Ms. Baldwin noted that between attendance at the large performances, branch special craft programs and online participation, the community was well represented with these figures reverting to pre-COVID participation numbers. She also mentioned the community had a lot of positive comments about the program, overall. Statistics for the summer reading program were distributed.

Mrs. Novalis presented the final report on the library's FY2023 usage. The statistics were distributed and several highlights were discussed in relation to the goals of the library's strategic plan. Mrs. Novalis also distributed feedback on the library's programs and discussed how these comments were received and applied toward meeting the library's goals for our external audiences.

Mrs. Novalis and Mrs. Palmer discussed the Montvale Preservation Society's presentation given to the Board of Supervisors at one of their work sessions regarding

activities at the old Montvale Elementary School. On a positive note, the County has completed the roof replacement over the library, and the persistent leaks are no longer there. Several on-going building-related issues were discussed, including increased rodent activity, mold being discovered in one of the classrooms, and ongoing water/drainage issues. Mrs. Novalis noted that the utilities are not separate between the two parts of the building, nor are any of the conduits that run water or electricity through the building. The Board discussed next steps and when would be an appropriate time to bring these ongoing building concerns to the Board of Supervisors.

Mrs. Novalis presented the expenses through the end of July and noted she met with Bedford County Finance staff, to review the FY22 financials and will have some more information regarding the Library's overall financial position at a later meeting and after consulting with the Board Treasurer, Hope Cupit. The FY22 yearend revenue report was also distributed.

Board Member Comments

Mrs. Madison asked if there was any feedback on the Newsbank service. Mrs. Novalis noted that some patrons are unhappy about not receiving a paper copy of the newspapers but most are understanding, especially given the significant subscription price increase of the local papers. Mrs. Madison commented that her husband enjoys Newsbank and finds it useful.

No new business

Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cox motioned to adjourn, Mrs. Bahouth seconded, all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.