

BAYPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES: June 15, 2021

PRESENT: Colleen Chute, Marie Hydukovich, Mary Ostertag, Jill Smith, Sara Wagner, Adriana Temali-Smith, Connie Carlson (Bayport City Council)

ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 6:02 p.m., with Marie H. and Connie C. arriving by 6:15.

PETITION TO THE CHAIR/VISITORS: None

ADOPTION/AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA: S.Wagner made a motion to accept the agenda. Second by Mary O. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS & RECEIPTS:

Bills:

- **220 Operating Supplies/Library**
 - West Music \$122.15 musical instruments for programs
- **420 Repair/Maintenance Library Bldg**
 - MEI \$198.95 elevator maintenance
 - Anderson Heating \$234.00 AC repair
 - Bachman's \$182.22 Blue Shag Pine for front yard
 - *From funds donated by Joanne Gustafson in memory of her husband, Dick. Leftover funds are to be used to purchase travel books. (See notes in Director's Report.).*

Adriana T.-S. made a motion to approve bills. Second by Sara W. Motion carried.

Receipts:

- \$50.00 in service charges

Sara W. made a motion to deposit receipts into City of Bayport Library Fund. Second by Mary O. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mary O. made a motion to approve the May minutes. Second by Adriana T.-S. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Colleen C.

- Colleen shared information from two different recent radio shows/podcasts.
 - **MPR Libraries Reimagined - Humankind Documentary:**
<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2921/04/05/humankind-doc-libraries-reimagined>
<https://www.humanmedia.org/product/libraries-reimagined/>
 - Today's libraries are "percolated by change"

- No longer just stacks of books and periodicals - revolution in how libraries serve patrons
- Repository of learning and literature in many forms
- Youth space and place to be after school
 - Quiet space in library vs. the library being more like a community center: meetings, collaboration, offering ear plugs if someone needs quiet. Reimagining what “library” looks like.
- Place where you can spend all day without having to or being expected to pay anything - community can come together with no expectation
- Social work partnerships

o **May 20 MPR show on libraries**

<https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2021/05/19/looking-for-the-heart-of-your-community-check-out-the-library>

- Libraries are not just physical infrastructure - social infrastructure
 - Post-pandemic - what kind of world do we want to build?
 - Time to create places for us to gather again- libraries are critical community spaces
 - Free - anyone can be a member – a library card gives you recognition that you’re a member of a community. It is someone’s first initiation into a community. It signifies that you belong.
 - Libraries learn to adjust to where you are and what people want
 - A good library dignifies everyone and affords the same level of respect to all
- Colleen visited the library with her children recently, signing them up for summer reading. She was thinking about libraries once being quiet places vs. a lively place in which people are engaged and excited to be in that space, as were her kids! A library is a place to engage: to listen, communicate, and connect.
 - In Denmark, there are libraries where you can “borrow” a person instead of a book to listen to your life story for 30 minutes. The goal is to fight prejudice.

FOUNDATION FOR BPL REPORT:

- Approved \$100,000.00 for our building project. Check has been received and acknowledged.
- Marie H. reported that the foundation now has their documents organized and archived on google drive.
- They have received some response to their spring appeal.
- The foundation is able to accept stock gifts for building project. Also, if someone does direct their check to the foundation instead of the library, the foundation will accept that check and pass it on to the library as needed. (That way, the donor will not have to re-issue a check to the Library.)

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Strategic Plan as outline

- As submitted (see attached)
 - Additional notes:
 - Jill shared photo of Blue Shag pine. Colleen will send thank you to Joanne Gustafson
 - Library has been really busy with kids out of school. Circulation up.
 - Sara W. shared her concerns about grounds: grass being dried up, weeds, front sidewalk needing to be cleaned up, dusty furniture. Suggests that furniture and sidewalk be hosed off once or twice a week by volunteer or cleaning crew.
 - Jill S. will talk to irrigation company.
 - Transition students used to clean the outside of the building, but they haven't been able to do so during the pandemic
 - Summer reading program: 92 kids and teens are signed up!

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance committee met before this meeting and discussed 2022 proposed budget.

COUNCIL REP REPORT: Connie Carlson

- Land and Water Legacy grant project is moving forward on time. This is the land between the beach house and going north that will become a park.
 - They expect a natural type area with walking paths.
 - There is some talk of moving the boat launch from where it is currently located at Andersen's. That has not been discussed, as it would need to be approved by DNR.
- Working with council on making a priority wish list.
- St. Croix Prep Academy has approached the City regarding a grant they were giving by Twins Corp. to help improve the ball field in Barker's Alps (the back field). Their request is to put a permanent fence in the field. Discussion followed regarding peoples' opinions about the fence.
- Bayport clean-up is this Saturday. City email blast went out regarding this event.

BUSINESS:

OLD

- **Building Project/ Fundraising Update**

- Jill S. and Sara W. reported on progress of fundraising campaign. To date, pledges total: \$1,479,500.00. The current goal is \$1,900,000.00 (to allow an additional 10% for inflation).

- Community-wide mailing will go out in July. Bayport Printing House will donate printing. Jill S. is looking into the possibility of using the City's bulk mailing permit. Sara W. shared draft of the letter.
- After the community-wide mailing, we will write another grant request to Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen.
- The next step is to get RFPs out for contractors to bid on project. We will have enough money to begin the project this fall.
- Colleen C. made the suggestion that we get the plans on the website so that it will be easy to access online. The community-wide mailing directs people to go to the website for more information. Any accompanying information to promote the building project would be helpful (a video, i.e.)
- Another suggestion: Postcard-size "take-away" handouts and/or bookmarks to be available at the library. Jill S. will ask Laura (staff person) if she can make these. She makes promotional flyers and posters for Library events.
- **Please send to Sara W. any names and addresses of individuals/patrons who you think should receive the mailing and live outside of 55003.** (The community-wide mailing will only be going to Bayport residents.)

- **Covid-19 Update** (see attached)

NEW

- **Proposed 2022 Budget**

- Jill will propose another \$10K for 2022 (most of increase will go for salary and health insurance increases).
- Discussion followed regarding the proposed budget.
- Sara W. made a motion to accept the proposed 2022 budget. Second by Marie H. Motion carried.
- City has workshops in August and September to discuss preliminary budget. Final budget is approved in December.

- **Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation:** Jill S. reported that Colleen wrote an excellent grant request for 2022 operating fund. Letter is included in board packet.
- **Statistics:** Jill S. reported that May 2021 circulation is higher than May 2019!

Adjourn: There being no further business, Adriana T.-S. made a motion to adjourn. Second by Mary O. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm. *Next Meeting: July 20 @ 6:00 p.m. AT the library, in the larger meeting room, with Marie H. joining us on Zoom.*

Director's Report for June 2021

The Library has been very busy so far in June! Patrons are very happy to be back in our space and are checking out a lot of materials!

Space

I purchased the new tree for the front lawn with funds donated by Joann Gustafson, one of the Master Gardeners who take care of our front garden, in memory of her husband Dick. She donated the funds in 2019. She shared this story with me:

“It means a lot to me and our family as it would to Dick. In all seasons, we spent a great deal of time at the Library, beginning September 2002, after moving to West Lakeland. Truly amazing was that all the library staff knew our names after one week. Even more significant than the help and service so freely given, we cherish(ed) everyone’s friendship and greetings at each visit.

Look forward to seeing the Pine, so important in the history of the St. Croix River Valley, at home in the garden! Incidentally, besides once being part of the name of current library building, the Pine trees harvested “Up North” and floated down river gave Dick’s grandfather, 19-year-old Peter Jonas Gustafson one of his first jobs in this new land after he emigrated from Sweden — that of a Rafter. Peter and his fellow rafters, are seen posed on a “street” of pine logs stretching from bank to bank of the St. Croix, in a photo taken by photographer John Runk, whose work captured an era.”

We are truly grateful to the Gustafson family, and so happy they felt at home in the Library!

In other garden news, they are looking at removing the native plants garden close to the tree and making it all grass. They will add some plants near the curved wall if it is allowed. I will work with Public Works and the Master Gardeners to create a plan for the fall. I would also like to add “LIBRARY” along the wall if it is allowed under the signage ordinance.

Unfortunately, we had to call the plumber for another restroom repair – the handle broke in the men’s restroom. We also had to have a repair to our air conditioning unit, as the air was not working in meeting room B or the reading room. At least it was working in the main part of the Library!

We have received many calls about the meeting room, and even one rental booking for next week!

Programs

The Summer Explorer’s program is off to a roaring start! We have 72 children and teens signed up as on Friday, June 11! We had 39 register all of last summer. Offering the free book just for signing up has really made people want to sign up!

Our virtual programs have not been nearly as popular. We only had 3 live viewers for the Jim Gill Facebook video, and 3 live viewers for Lalo’s Lunchbox. We ended up with only 24 one minute views for Jim Gill. As of Friday, we have 7 one minute views for Lalo, and the video is still up. I think people are looking for things to do in person this summer and done with remote viewing options. I may see if we can reschedule the Duke Otherwise performance as a live appearance.

On the other hand, the take and make kits have remained popular. All sessions that are open for registration have filled up! The first art kit goes out Monday, June 14.

We had four in person attendees and one person over Zoom for our first session of the Kids Book Club. We have four new people who have signed up, so we hope to see them next week!

We have 13 families participating in the toddler Sprouting Melodies group. There are 12 families signed up for the baby Sprouting Melodies group. Six tweens are participating in the United through Music group.

Collection

We have moved the nonfiction audiobooks to make more room for large print fiction titles.

We are keeping new books in the new book area for six months, both fiction and nonfiction. We are starting a project to inventory the collection. For the small collections we have done so far, relatively few materials are missing, with the exception of music CDs, where most of the missing ones were classical and country music titles. It was a relatively small number.

One thing to note, as we look to expand diverse books in our collection, I wanted to share a statement from We Need Diverse Books (diversebooks.org) about why they are no longer using the term #OwnVoices:

“We Need Diverse Books (WNDB) will no longer use the term #OwnVoices to refer to children’s literature or its authors and we have removed mentions of #OwnVoices from previously published blog posts. Moving forward, WNDB will use specific descriptions that authors use for themselves and their characters whenever possible (for example, “Korean American author,” or “autistic protagonist”).

#OwnVoices was created as a hashtag by author Corinne Duyvis in September 2015. It was originally intended as a shorthand book recommendation tool in a Twitter thread, for readers to recommend books by authors who openly shared the diverse identity of their main characters. The hashtag was never intended to be used in a broader capacity, but it has since expanded in its use to become a “catch all” marketing term by the publishing industry. Using #OwnVoices in this capacity raises issues due to the vagueness of the term, which has then been used to place diverse creators in uncomfortable and potentially unsafe situations. It is important to use the language that authors want to celebrate about themselves and their characters.

We Need Diverse Books believes in supporting diverse authors and their books, and we will continue to uplift their voices through our programming. “

<https://diversebooks.org/why-we-need-diverse-books-is-no-longer-using-the-term-ownvoices/>

Library staff will be mindful of this and look for better statements to describe how we are adding more diversity to our collections.

Partnerships

Working with the Bayport Community Action League, I attended the Ice Cream Social on June 9, bringing a craft activity for kids and information about Summer Explorers. I also arranged for the Bayport Library Troubadours (BLTs, formerly the Jammers) to play at the event. While a sweltering night, it was also great to see so many community members again!

Summer Success will once again be at Andersen Elementary this July. First, fourth and fifth graders are already scheduled for their weekly visits.

Technology

The new library laptop should be arriving this week.

Other

Website/Facebook

Website visits increased slightly to about 33 users a day over the past month. After visits to our main page – likely then searching the catalog – and the hours and location page, the Summer Explorers page was the next most visited page. We also saw more visits to the meeting rooms page.

Facebook Summary: Facebook engagement is up over the past 28 days. We have reached 181 people, up 39% from the previous period. Page engagement is also up, increasing 55% over the past month.

Leadership in the Valley – Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce program

I plan to apply to the Leadership in the Valley program with encouragement from the city. The Foundation has agreed to fund my tuition if I am selected as a participant. The program meets from September 2021 to May 2022. More details are here:

<https://greaterstillwaterchamber.com/leadership-in-the-valley>

I will be on vacation June 18 – June 21.

COVID Update June 2021

There is finally a lot of good news to report with COVID 19. Cases have steadily dropped, and have been below 10 in Washington County for the past week. The 14 day case rate per 10,000 people has dropped to 10.38, from 41 mid-May. We are up to 63% of those 12+ with at least one dose of the vaccine in Washington County, and 71% of those 16+. We still do one or two curbside pickups a day, and we're happy to continue to offer that service.

Washington County Library is back to their pre-COVID open hours and is doing some in person programming.

Stillwater Public Library has increased their open hours to 10 AM to 7PM Monday – Friday and 10 AM to 5 PM Fridays and Saturdays. They have usually been closed on Sundays in the summer. They have added a locker system for pickups. They are not allowing meeting room or study room use until the fall.

We are back to normal services. Mask use has definitely dropped off after the first couple of weeks without the mask mandate. I am planning to start in-person storytimes on Tuesday, July 13 at 10:30 am. At this time, I still plan to do a brief Facebook live storytime on Tuesday mornings through August.

I will continue to keep my eye on variants and case levels in our area. I am hopeful that we can continue moving forward with normal library services, and use the lessons of this pandemic to be better prepared for any future disruptions in library service.