

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

President Angela Neeley called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library to order at 4:38 pm in the Lolita K. Adair Board Room of Main 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, Michelle Alleman, Mike Bianchi, Carrie Burrier, Andrea Cowgar, Carla Davis, Mike Derr, Pat Manning, Ryan McCoy, Heather Otto, Peter Schantz, Sara Schwendeman, Val Sherman, and Melissa Walker.

Mr. Frola moved, seconded by Mr. Rich, to adopt the agenda as presented. 24-07
The motion was adopted without dissent. AGENDA

Mr. Weber moved, seconded by Mr. Rich, to adopt the minutes of the 24-08
December 14, 2023 regular Board meeting as printed. The motion was adopted DECEMBER MINUTES
without dissent.

Ms. Neeley stated her gratitude for all that Library staff do. She said she PRESIDENT'S
truly enjoyed the MLK lecture, which had standing room only. Ms. Neeley thanked REMARKS
the staff who made the event happen.

Michelle Scarpitti, Fiscal Officer, presented the executive summary and NOVEMBER 2023
financial report for November 2023. The main revenue was the Public Library Fund. FINANCIAL REPORT
There was a rental refund of \$200 due to extenuating circumstances.

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the financial report 24-09
for November 2023. The motion was adopted without dissent. ADOPTION OF
FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Scarpitti reported that in December the Library received an E-Rate DECEMBER 2023
reimbursement of \$69,483, including \$17,000 for the hotspot lending program with FINANCIAL REPORT
approximately \$52,000 related to funding the IT side of the public network. The
Development Fund was credited \$34,295 for the Nick Offerman event. There is an
outstanding advance on the statement of cash. Since it has been outstanding for
several years, Ms. Scarpitti will be contacting the Auditor's State Office to ensure
it is reflected appropriately in the accounting system.

Mr. Casey questioned the three-month subscription to Solis cyber protection
reflected in the November report and whether this subscription will continue or stop
eventually. Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Executive Director, commented that Ryan
McCoy, Technology Director, would report more on Solis during his presentation
later in the agenda.

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the financial report 24-10
for December 2023. The motion was adopted without dissent. ADOPTION OF
FINANCIAL REPORT

<p>Ms. Scarpitti presented the donor/gift list. The Library received \$8,550 in monetary donations. Two of those donations were credited to the new Fund 280, which is the location for smaller donations and gifts. The Library also received one and a half pages of other donations.</p>	<p>DONOR/GIFT LIST</p>
<p>Mr. Rochford moved, seconded by Mr. Weber, acceptance of the donations and gifts with great appreciation. The motion was adopted without dissent.</p>	<p>24-11 DONATIONS AND GIFTS</p>
<p>Ms. Scarpitti presented the investment report for November 2023. There were no changes in investments in November. The interest earned totaled \$76,262.24, and approximately 61% was credited to the General Fund.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER 2023 INVESTMENT REPORT</p>
<p>Ms. Scarpitti presented the investment report for December 2023. There were no changes in investments. The interest earned totaled \$79,207.08, and approximately 60% was credited to the General Fund. She highlighted a few investments will be maturing the first half of 2024.</p>	<p>DECEMBER 2023 INVESTMENT REPORT</p>
<p>[The investment reports are appended to the minutes]</p>	
<p>Ms. Scarpitti requested to adjust the appropriations of Employees FSA Fund 701 by increasing the fund by \$5,800. This request is related to covering payments through December 2023.</p>	<p>BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS</p>
<p>Mr. Weber moved, seconded by Mr. Frola, to adjust the appropriations of Fund 701 by an increase of \$5,800. The motion was adopted without dissent.</p>	<p>24-12 ADJUSTED APPROPRIATION</p>
<p>Ms. Scarpitti requested to adjust the appropriations related to the C. Blake McDowell, Jr. Fund 870 by an increase of \$2,225. This Fund provides scholarships to Library staff for a Library Science degree</p>	<p>24-13 ADJUSTED APPROPRIATION</p>
<p>Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adjust the appropriations for Fund 870 by an increase of \$2,225. The motion was adopted without dissent.</p>	<p>ADJUSTED APPROPRIATION</p>
<p>Ms. Scarpitti asked the Board to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Advances of Taxes for Tax Year 2023, Payable in 2024. This authorizes Summit and Portage Counties to send to the Library levy proceeds, as they are available.</p>	<p>RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ADVANCES ON TAXES</p>
<p>Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, adoption of the Resolution Authorizing Advances of Taxes. The motion was adopted without dissent.</p>	<p>24-14 RESOLUTION ON TAXES</p>
<p>Heather Otto, Human Resources Director, stated there are no changes to the personnel report for December 2023. Ms. Otto introduced Sara Schwendeman, Ms. Hickson-Stevenson's new Executive Assistant. Ms. Otto announced the retirement of Carla Davis, Marketing Communications Director. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson celebrated Ms. Davis' 24 years at the Library and deemed Ms. Davis as an Akron celebrity for her public relations work, her singing, and her commitment and service</p>	<p>PERSONNEL REPORT</p>

to the community. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson announced there would be a retirement reception for Ms. Davis at Main Library. The Board congratulated Ms. Davis.

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Personnel Report – January 2024

RESIGNATIONS:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Aladich, Madeline	Public Service Assistant II	01/06/2024	Richfield
Farley, Melody	Shelver (Casual)	01/10/2024	Ellet
McCulloh, Imani	Shelver (Casual)	01/20/2024	Odom
Slaughter, Emmaleigh	Shelver (Casual)	12/30/2023	Green
Weaver, Chad	Public Service Assistant II	12/30/2023	Fairlawn Bath

SELECTIONS:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Bader, Emily	Public Service Assistant II	01/16/2024	Mogadore
Conley, Caitlyn	Local History & Museum Specialist	01/16/2024	Special Collections
Grmek, Mary	Public Service Assistant II (Floater)	12/18/2023	Public Services
Harman, Jillian	Microbusiness Specialist	01/02/2024	BG&S
Leslie, Aiden	Public Service Assistant II	01/16/2024	Mogadore
Ozbolt, Mary	Public Service Assistant II	01/02/2024	Goodyear
Richardson, Carol	Public Service Assistant II	01/02/2024	Goodyear
Schwendeman, Sara	Executive Assistant	01/02/2024	Administration
Vondruska, Deborah	Public Service Assistant (Sub)	12/18/2023	Public Services

CHANGE OF CLASSIFICATION (STATUS)/TRANSFER:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Beck, Stephanie	Clerical Assistant Administrative Assistant	12/18/2023	Collection Development
Beck, Stephanie	Administrative Assistant (PT) Administrative Assistant (FT)	01/01/2024	Collection Development

PROMOTION:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Adkins, Emily	Public Service Assistant (Sub) Public Service Assistant II	12/18/2023	PSO Circulation
Moore, Meile	Librarian (Early Childhood) (JS) Librarian (Adult Services) (FT)	01/15/2024	Highland Square Highland Square
Porter, Daniel	Public Service Assistant II TechZone Assistant	01/02/2024	Goodyear Electronic Services
Vasquez-Cox, Brittany	Public Service Assistant III Librarian (Intermediate/Teen)	12/18/2023	Children’s & Teen Children’s & Teen

RETIREMENT:

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Davis, Carla	Marketing Communications Director	02/29/2024	M&C

Carla Davis Employment History

06/05/2000 – 02/29/2024 – Marketing Communications Director

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

	<u>06.16.09</u>	<u>06.09.10</u>	<u>01.15.19</u>	<u>01.15.20</u>	<u>01.15.21</u>	<u>01.18.22</u>	<u>01.16.23</u>	<u>01.17.24</u>
Full-Time Staff:	291	270	276	272	248	255	250	257
80 Hrs. Exempt					44	42	43	43
75 Hrs. Non-Exempt					204	213	207	214
Part-time/Job-Share Staff:	68	54	48	44	39	40	43	42
Shelvers (Casual):	86	73	76	79	51	46	52	60
Total number of Staff:	445	397	400	395	338	341	345	359
Full-Time Equivalents:	339	307	309	305	274	279	278	285

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>
White, Tommie	Shelver (Casual)	Termination of employment	12/14/2023	Culture & AV
Vaughan, Pamela	Security Officer	First-level Reprimand	08/16/2022	Security
		Suspension with pay	12/13/2023	
		Termination of employment	12/15/2023	

Mr. Rich moved, seconded by Mr. Weber, to adopt the personnel report. The motion was adopted without dissent.

24-15
PERSONNEL
REPORT

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reported the final update on the 2023 Work Plan is in the Board packet. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reported being very pleased with the progress made in 2023 despite the obstacles of the ransomware attack. She commented she is looking forward to how the 2024 work plan will unfold.

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTORS
REPORT –
FINAL 2023 WORK
PLAN UPDATE

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson continues to hear remarks from the community on how great the Nick Offerman event was. People have asked who is coming next.

NICK OFFERMAN
EVENT

One of the plans for the sesquicentennial is to hold a community reads project, which entails selecting a single title that will be featured in book discussion groups and celebrated with a visit by the author. The Library has identified the Native American author, Tommy Orange. For this event, the Library has applied for a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

COMMUNITY READ
EVENT

Fundraising efforts will continue in 2024, and Michael Derr, Development Director, will provide a presentation about fund development efforts at the next board meeting.

OTHER

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson introduced Melissa Walker, new Technical Services Coordinator.

Mr. Rich read the report of the Marketing Communications & Library Services Committee meeting.

REPORT OF
MARKETING
COMMUNICATIONS
& LIBRARY
SERVICES
COMMITTEE
MEETING

Report of Marketing Communications & Library Services Committee Meeting Tuesday, January 23, 2024; 4:00 pm; Lolita K. Adair Board Room, Main Library

The Marketing Communications and Library Services Committee met Tuesday, January 23, 2024, in the Lolita K. Adair Board Room at Main Library. Committee Chair William Rich called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm, with committee members Angela Neeley and Joe Ferrise present. Also attending were Library staff members Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Carla Davis, and Michelle Alleman.

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

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson presented a recommendation to amend the Customer Behavior Policy by adding a statement prohibiting petitioning inside Library facilities. The statement to be added to the prohibited conduct section read “Petitioning inside Library facilities, regardless of the candidate, organization, issue, or cause.” Mr. Rich commented that the word “petitioning,” which means presenting a formal request, should be replaced with the phrase “circulating a petition.” He also stated that the phrase beginning with the word “regardless” should be deleted, as it was unnecessary.

Ms. Neeley moved to recommend to the Board adoption of the amended Customer Behavior Policy with the statement as amended. The motion was adopted without dissent, and this now comes as a recommendation to the Board.

With no discussion, the motion to adopt the amended Customer Behavior Policy was adopted without dissent.

24-16
CUSTOMER
BEHAVIOR POLICY
AMENDMENT

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson presented a revised draft Social Media Policy, which reflected the changes recommended at the October 2023 Committee meeting. Mr. Rich recommended several changes to the list of comments that would be prohibited on the Library’s social media accounts.

Mr. Ferrise moved to recommend to the Board adoption of the Social Media Policy as amended. The motion was adopted without dissent, and this now comes as a recommendation to the Board.

With no discussion, the motion to adopt the amended Social Media Policy was adopted without dissent.

24-17 SOCIAL
MEDIA POLICY
AMENDMENT

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson next presented a recommendation for the Library to stop charging overdue fines when an item is past its due date. She provided an overview of the growing number of public libraries around the country that are adopting this practice, in the interest of removing barriers to access. She highlighted two tables showing metro and northeast Ohio public libraries that no longer charge fines. She also drew attention to a table that showed revenue from overdue fines has totaled three-tenths of a percent or less for the last four years. She commented that as the use of digital materials, which expire automatically, grows, revenue from overdue fines will continue to decline. She also explained that research has shown little correlation between charging overdue fines and lowering overdue rates. She stated that customers would still be responsible for paying for materials they do not return or materials they damage. Committee members discussed various aspects of the proposal.

Mr. Ferrise moved to recommend that the Board of Trustees approve discontinuing the practice of charging overdue fines and waiving all current overdue fines on customer records effective March 1, 2024. The motion was adopted without dissent, and this now comes as a recommendation to the Board.

Mr. Rochford questioned the March 1 date. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson explained the date will allow Library staff to prepare, and the date coincides with the ASCPL opening its doors on March 1, 1874. Mr. Weber questioned how having fines limits access. Mr. Rich replied part of the explanation includes people no longer being able to access the library. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson added that studies show there is very little connection between charging fines and lowering overdue rates. Additionally, there are studies that show people living in poverty are disproportionately impacted by overdue fines. Another unfortunate issue is that some parents will misuse their children's cards, and then the children are blocked from accessing the library do not return. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reported ASCPL is the last of the nine metropolitan libraries to go fine free. Public libraries in Medina and Cuyahoga Counties are completely fine free as well as other Summit County independent public libraries. Customers will still be charged for items that are damaged, lost, or unreturned. The Library works with a collection agency related to these cases. Further discussion was held related to the Library helping to teach responsibility through fines and the consistency of the studies showing the impact of fines. Mr. Ferrise stated the Marketing Communications and Library Services Committee plans to continue to look at the effect of going fine free should the motion be adopted. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson commented she would work with the Admin team to see what can be tracked and create benchmarks.

The motion to discontinue the practice of charging overdue fines and waiving all current overdue fines on customer records effective March 1, 2024 was adopted without dissent.

24-18
OVERDUE FINES

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson reviewed options for appeals of a reconsideration decision made by the Executive Director. She found three approaches, one of which has been recommended in the draft amended Collection Development Policy that has been proposed to the Board. That approach is providing no option for an appeal to the Library Board. A second option is to provide a process for appeals based solely on adherence to the Collection Development Policy. A third option is to provide a process for appealing a decision based the content of the material under review. Mr. Rich commented that the third option would be de novo review, "de novo" being a Latin term for "from the beginning" or "anew," because the Board would engage in the same process used by the staff committee. Committee members discussed various aspects of the three options and concluded by asking Ms. Hickson-Stevenson to draft two additional versions of the proposed Collection Development Policy featuring each of the appeals options. She also asked her to report on the approach to hearing appeals used by the other metro libraries in Ohio.

Without objection, Mr. Rich adjourned the meeting at 5:09 pm.

Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Executive Director

There was no new business.

NEW BUSINESS

Ryan McCoy, Technology Director, presented on the Library's condition post-cyber security incident. When the ransomware incident happened, the first call

ADMINISTRATIVE
TEAM

was to a cybersecurity firm. IT staff begin working on backup systems. The integrated library system was down a few days, but there were no external attempts to access the Library's most important database and systems. After a few weeks, the public computers were back online. Mr. McCoy deeply researched cyber security options and discussed recommendations from several IT leaders in the community. Solis Security provided the Library with three free months with their response team and then extended their services on a month-to-month basis. The Library decided to stay with Solis Security. The Library should see a lower quote for Solis Security in the future due to competitor bids. The public website and staff intranet are now back online. Regarding phones, the Library has switched to Cisco, a cloud-based system. Mr. McCoy expressed gratitude for Linda Harrison, Administrative Assistant, who staffed the phone line to which every call was redirected while the Library worked on getting the phones online. Duo Security was purchased for the Library's VPN protection. The IT department is working towards an immutable backup in the cloud. Mr. McCoy obtained an encryption key that made it possible to restore almost all files. Both the staff and public domain are back to where they need to be, but there is still work to do with recovery and cyber security. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson thanked Mr. McCoy and his team for their hard work in bringing the Library back to functioning. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson further expressed her gratitude to the general staff for extending patience, grace, and support to the IT team. Mr. McCoy expressed his appreciation for the Library staff as well.

There was no public participation.

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION

Mr. Schantz invited the Board Trustees to look at the South side of the Main Library for its latest architectural feature of the newly installed cladding of the steam and chilled water pipes.

FOR THE GOOD OF
THE ORDER

With no further business, Ms. Neeley adjourned the meeting at 5:42 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

President

Secretary