

**GENESEE DISTRICT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
Via Zoom & Telephone
5:30 p.m.
March 15, 2021
Minutes**

- Call to Order: 5:30 p.m.
- Present: Bennett (Grand Blanc), Crites (Florida), Hostetler (Grand Blanc), Johns (Burton), Jones (Grand Blanc), Ryals-Massey (Grand Blanc) and Towarnicky (Grand Blanc).
- Also Present: C. Stritmatter (Corporation Counsel), D. Conklin, A. Goldyn, and E. Kish.
- Absent: Conerly-Moon.
- Public Comments: See page three.
- Approval of Consent Agenda: R. Crites moved to approve the consent agenda. Motion supported by J. Towarnicky. Motion carried unanimously.
- Board Development: C. Stritmatter stated that the changes to the Open Meetings Act to allow remote/electronic meetings during the pandemic expires on April 1, 2021. He stated after that date, there are specific reasons why meetings can be held remotely; such as, illness or state of disaster. He stated that updates may be coming from the State that would extend the order allowing meetings to be held electronically. L. Ryals-Massey stated that since an extension is likely to happen before the May meeting, she does not feel a motion is necessary at this time to continue remote meetings. C. Stritmatter stated that D. Conklin has the authority to continue remote meetings. L. Ryals-Massey asked D. Conklin to continue to monitor the situation as it would be difficult to hold in-person meetings at the Headquarters building and practice social distancing.
- MMLC: J. Towarnicky stated the next meeting will be in May.
- Corporation Counsel: Nothing to report.
- GDL Foundation: Nothing to report.
- Written Reports: D. Hostetler inquired why the graphs were not included this time. D. Conklin replied that it was not included because he only had one month of statistics to report. D. Conklin stated it will be included for the May meeting because he will have statistics for January through March to plot.
- S. Jones thanked D. Conklin for the report and loved all the programs listed. He inquired if we have had any staff that have tested positive for COVID. He also asked about incidents that happened at the Davison and Fenton locations where patrons did not want to wear masks. D. Conklin replied that there are anti-mask people out there. He stated that staff have been empowered to ask people without masks to leave the buildings if they refuse to wear one. He stated that people who state they have a medical reason for not wearing a mask are allowed to use the building. He stated that it was noted in one of his earlier reports that one staff member was COVID positive during the shutdown period and another one later on. S. Jones inquired if those that have tested positive can use sick pay to continue getting paid while off work. D. Conklin replied that in 2020 employees that tested positive for COVID continued to be paid under the CARES Act, which

Written Reports
(continued):

expired on December 31, 2020. He further stated that in 2021 employees have their PTO (a personal time off bank) that will be used to continue receiving their regular pay regardless of the reason why they are off work.

J. Towarnicky echoed S. Jones on the statistics reported for the programs. She was excited to see how well attended the virtual programs are and that she has participated in several of them. She encouraged other Board Members to attend these virtual programs. She inquired about the statistic reported for the Black History Month Brunch that was shown on abc12.

D. Hostetler stated that he is extremely impressed with M. Boisclair's initiative as the Children's Librarian with the virtual escape rooms, presentation during the Black History Month Brunch and the various online programs. L. Ryals-Massey stated that she is very appreciative of the creative progress M. Boisclair has made with the position.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that since there are several new members of the public just joining the meeting, she will circle back to Public Comments after Board Comments.

L. Ryals-Massey offered kudos to the Friends' group for the purchase of the new children's book cart and inquired if a thank you note had been sent to them.

L. Ryals-Massey offered kudos for purchasing new masks for the staff. She inquired if enough extra were purchased so that Board Members may sport a GDL facemask. D. Conklin stated that the new masks do not have the GDL logo on them; however, there are enough extra for Board Members that would be interested in them. L. Ryals-Massey stated that any Board Member interested in receiving a new mask with filter insert contact E. Kish.

L. Ryals-Massey thinks it's awesome that we are offering technology tutoring during this pandemic. It has been her experience through her church that more seniors are trying to learn how to use the new technology. She inquired if we have an idea of how many people have participated in the tutoring. D. Conklin replied that R. Tackabury had twelve people sign up for the tutoring during the month.

L. Ryals-Massey asked about the Among Us game. D. Conklin stated it is a very popular video game. He stated that the part of program is to help young people get interested in the library. He stated that the program is to get young people to use teamwork and develop critical thinking skills in a modern day "Clue" type of game.

L. Ryals-Massey inquired about the GISD collaboration for the Read Early Read Often and how is GDL getting the message out. D. Conklin stated that the schools are using their resources to get the message out about this initiative.

L. Ryals-Massey stated the Smart Money Michigan is a great way to teach children about money and inquired if we are partnering with local banks. D. Conklin stated that is funded at the Federal level and flows through the State of Michigan. He stated that in the past the Business Librarian had a program about it, but this year it is the Youth Librarian that is handling it.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that she hopes that we get the grant to provide Dementia/Alzheimer's activity kits. She stated she saw a special on Alzheimer's and found out that it is affecting more women than men. She thinks the kits will be a great way to help stimulate brain activity in our senior population.

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L. Ryals-Massey inquired about the limescale build-up on the HVAC equipment in the server room. D. Conklin stated that our vendor has agreed to maintain the equipment on a regular basis to prevent the build-up.

S. Jones inquired why there is a significant decrease in the investment accounts. A. Goldyn replied that the decrease is partly due to the transfer of funds to the OPEB trust at MERS and that we have not received our regular large property tax revenue check from Genesee County yet. S. Jones inquired how much went to the trust account and how much we are expecting from the County. A. Goldyn stated that we initially put two million dollars in the trust account and have made annual payments of three hundred thousand dollars. A. Goldyn stated that we are expecting approximately two million from the County any day now.

L. Ryals-Massey inquired about the State of Michigan reporting listed in A. Goldyn's report. A. Goldyn replied that she has to enter every employees' earnings for the quarter. L. Ryals-Massey inquired why that information is needed and A. Goldyn replied part of it is for income tax purposes and partly for any possible unemployment claims.

Monthly Statistics: Nothing to report.

Finance Committee: Nothing to report.

Personnel/Policy Committee: L. Ryals-Massey stated that she has taken over the Director's evaluation process in S. Bennett's absence. She stated that Personnel Committee needs to receive the completed evaluation feedback as soon as possible so they can begin to compile the results. S. Bennett thanked L. Ryals-Massey for taking over this process.

Public Comments: A. Young stated she is a community connector. She works at Flint Freedom School Collaborative as their Program Director and as an Education Outreach Coordinator with Legal Services of Eastern Michigan. She stated it has been a pleasure to attend tonight's meeting. She wanted to know more about our strategies for informing the public about our programs. She also wanted to know if there was a way to collaborate with Flint Freedom Schools with the digital tutoring. L. Ryals-Massey suggested to D. Conklin that we put A. Young in touch with K. Flynn, the Community Relations Manager. D. Conklin replied that he just sent his email address to A. Young in a chat message.

L. McGee-Harvey said this is her first meeting and said hello to S. Jones. S. Jones said it was nice to see her. L. McGee-Harvey stated she is just listening and learning. She was thankful for the invite to attend. L. Ryals-Massey stated we love having members of the public attend the meetings and we can use all the feedback we can get.

Ms. A. Clark-Brown stated she is new to Flint. She stated she is looking forward to finding out what type of programs are offered here and how she can be of assistance.

J. X the Student Minister with Nation of Islam in the City of Flint. He stated he wanted to know a little more about the Board and see how it operates. He also stated he wants to see what kinds of programs are offered that the people in the North and South end of Flint can participate in and how to inform them of the programs. He thinks we could do a better job of letting people with the least amount of means know about the programs offered. L. Ryals-Massey asked D. Conklin to share his contact information so everyone attending the meeting can be directed to the appropriate staff members.

Public Comments
(continued):

J. McKenney introduced herself as a resident of the City of Flint. She stated that she was invited by Mr. X to attend the meeting. She stated she is impressed with what she's heard that we are offering. She stated that it's been a difficult year for so many people and the resources in the County have really enhanced and enriched the lives of young people specifically. She thanked D. Conklin, the Librarians and everyone else for what they are doing. She stated she hopes to attend future meetings and learn even more.

Board Comments:

K. Johns stated that he attended a Neighbors Changing Flint meeting and it discussed accessing grant resources. He stated he mentioned how GDL has a subscription to the Foundation Center and how it is a wonderful resource.

D. Hostetler stated that he saw M. Delaney and she inquired about a possible event for the renaming of the Headquarters building to the William F. Delaney-Headquarters. He told M. Delaney that it was discussed at a recent meeting. He stated that he believes it was left up to D. Conklin to plan an event. He stated he told M. Delaney he would get back to her about any plans. He then inquired if any plans had been made. D. Conklin stated that he wants to plan a gathering, but it has been limited due to the pandemic. He stated that he would like to hold an event in the summer and ideally the day of a Board meeting. He stated he will follow up with M. Delaney and D. Hostetler about any future plans.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that she, D. Hostetler and J. Towarnicky attended Trustee training through the Library of Michigan last week. J. Towarnicky stated it was very interesting and appreciates that she was encouraged to attend. She stated that she is signed up to attend the part two of the training on Wednesday. She said that she can put together some thoughts after that to present to the Board. D. Hostetler stated he was surprised at all the different types of libraries. He stated it was very informative. L. Ryals-Massey stated it was Trustee 101 training and even though she's been on the Board awhile, it was nice to get some official training. She stated that when she was first appointed to the Board, she was told all Board development came from Corporation Counsel and nowhere else. She encouraged other Board members to attend if they are able.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that there was a missed opportunity during the Black History Month Celebration do some other things. She stated she will get with D. Conklin with these suggestions that was based on feedback given to her. She noted that it was the only Black History Month Celebration shown on abc12 during the month of February.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that S. Jones previously discussed diversity and inclusion in the strategic plan. She stated that she will be getting with D. Conklin on how to move forward with it. She believes there are some things we can do better. She wants to be one of the first organizations to address some of those things.

L. Ryals-Massey stated that during the Black History Month Celebration that she noticed there were no photographs of Board members during the past 19 years. She stated she would suggest that a professional photographer come in and take pictures of each Board member. She stated that there was also no mention of the committees that planned the Black History Month Brunch.

L. Ryals-Massey inquired if GDL was a member of the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce. D. Conklin stated that GDL is a member and also a member of the Grand Blanc Chamber. L. Ryals-Massey stated that at the annual Flint & Genesee Chamber meeting they will have a speaker talking about the 2020 Disruption Fueled Innovation which will reflect on the resiliency during a year of unprecedented challenges. She believes Board members can sign up to attend this event.

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Board Comments
(continued):

L. Ryals-Massey again asked Board members to complete the Director's evaluation and return it to her as soon as possible.

S. Jones mentioned that one of the public guests is an employee of the Flint & Genesee Chamber and has placed in the chat room a link to register for the Chamber's annual meeting event.

L. Ryals-Massey thanked all the public attendees.

Adjournment:

6:16 p.m.