

**MEDINA COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**May 17, 2021**

The Medina County District Library Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday May 17, 2021, via Zoom. With a quorum present, President Ryan Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Roll call:** The following members teleconferenced (in accordance with the March 15, 2020 opinion from the Ohio Attorney General's Office): Ryan Carlson, Dr. Maria Griffiths, Brian Harr, Sharon Jenks, Mary Schultz and Kyle White. Gail Ostrowski was absent.

Library staff members in attendance via teleconference: Julianne Bedel, Director; Molly Koch, Fiscal Officer; and Kelly Conner acting as recording secretary.

Additional individuals were also in attendance by phone.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Ms. Schultz moved, Mr. Harr seconded to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

**Recognition of Guest and Comments from the Public:** Mr. Carlson welcomed all in attendance. There were no comments from the public.

**Disposition of Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Schultz noted a minor correction to the April 2021 minutes. Ms. Jenks moved, Dr. Griffiths seconded to approve the corrected April 17, 2021, meeting minutes. The minutes with correction were approved unanimously.

**Executive Session:** Mr. Harr moved, Dr. Griffiths seconded to move into Executive Session to Review Collective Bargaining Negotiations at 6:05 pm. Ms. Bedel, Ms. Koch and Ms. Muniak were asked to attend. **Roll call vote:** Mr. Carlson – Aye; Dr. Griffiths – Aye; Mr. Harr – Aye; Ms. Jenks – Aye; Ms. Schultz – Aye; Ms. White – Aye.  
Open session resumed at 6:14 pm with the following recommendation:

**Resolution #21-07:** Dr. Griffiths moved and Ms. Jenks seconded that the Medina County District Library Board of Trustees approves the 2021 Wages Reopener Agreement with Service Employees International Union, District 1199 WV/KY/OH effective May 17, 2021 – May 31, 2023. The resolution was passed unanimously.

**Approval of Financial Report:** Mr. Harr moved, Ms. Schultz seconded to approve the April 2021 financial report. Fiscal Officer Molly Koch reported that April 2021 revenues totaled \$977,860; expenses were \$906,470; cash balance totaled \$15,060,702; and the unencumbered balance totaled \$13,246,433. The unencumbered balance is slightly higher over last month because the encumbrances/purchase orders are down due to starting to close some open purchase orders that are no longer needed for the rest of the year. Ms. Koch noted that 69% of the revenue received this month was from real estate tax advanced payments; 27% from the PLF and ~.5% from investment income. April 2021 PLF was up 21% from last April and up 16% year to date. Ms. Koch expects this rise to continue for the next eight months. Ms. Koch highlighted expenses broken down as

follows: Salaries and Benefits – 65%; Contract Services, Library Materials and Supplies – 34%; and Capital – 0%. Salaries and Benefits increased 5% over the prior month with the remaining expense categories going down slightly. Mr. Carlson and Dr. Griffiths questioned if the increase in salary and benefits are the result of expanded hours and new employee training. Ms. Koch confirmed that a portion of the increase were due to these two issues. Ms. Koch noted that the library is as close to full staff as it has been in recent years. Mr. Harr noted that the library has \$1.2 million coming due by October 18, 2021, at decent rates. He stated he doesn't think those rates exist now. He asked if Ms. Koch had any thoughts on what the library is going to do. Ms. Koch stated that she needs to speak with the library's investment partners to see what might be available and was open to any ideas that the board might have. Mr. Carlson asked Ms. Koch and Ms. Schultz about the possibility of investing in AAA rated fixed rate insurance annuities which are paying a rate of approximately 2.5%. Ms. Koch was not certain but planned to investigate. The Financial Report was approved unanimously.

**Director's Report:** Director Julianne Bedel reported that in the reporting packet issued to the board members that the first six lines she referred to the years as 2019 and 2020. The data was, of course 2020 and 2021. Sorry about that! As noted last month, the year-over-year comparisons now and in June will be odd, since we were closed to in-person services during much of those periods. In July, those comparisons will be more meaningful.

Ms. Bedel continues to look at the six-month rolling window of usage and the library is still trending modestly upward overall as community restrictions ease.

Also in your packet was a summary of the Community Survey conducted March 15 through April 5. We didn't uncover any surprising priorities or demands, but it was a solid confirmation of what we had identified as priorities moving forwards: Returning to in-person programming and events as soon as possible, removing the mask requirement as soon as possible, and generally returning to pre-pandemic routines as much as possible. 41% of the respondents indicated that they visited the library on a WEEKLY basis prior to the pandemic, and that number fell to 21% currently. By contrast, 10% of the respondents indicated they RARELY visited the library pre-pandemic and that number quadrupled to 42% currently, so of course we know we have our work cut out for us in getting regular library visits – in person and virtual – back into the life routines of our patrons.

Ms. Bedel announced that Jenna Elswick will be joining the MCDL team as our next Human Resources Manager. Jenna comes to us with human resources experience in a variety of environments. She has had positions of progressive responsibility in talent acquisition, onboarding, training, benefits administration, and employee development. During her time with the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, she became familiar with the parameters of working in a public entity. She has had experience working in both union and non-union environments where she has effectively built positive relationships. At Pepperidge Farm – Campbell Soup Company she worked to support 900 employees, and while at AK Steel Corporation, worked with 375 union and salaried employees.

Jenna earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from John Carroll University with a concentration in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. She is SHRM-CP certified and is also working towards her Master of Science in Human Resource Management, with an expected graduation date of May 2022. She brings a nice mix of skills and experience that will stand her in good stead as she acclimates to MCDL.

**Communications:** There were no formal communications to the trustees.

**Approval of Personnel Report:** Dr. Griffiths moved, Mr. Harr seconded to approve the Personnel Report. Ms. Bedel highlighted that as part of our 2021 rehiring plan, nine co-workers joined us this month. Three people changed status, and six people resigned or retired. Eleven positions were posted for hiring in April. Nine leaves of absence occurred which is still high for a normal period but is a reduction compared to the last six months. We had one milestone (multiple of 5's) anniversary in April. Sue Schuld, Technology Services Manager, celebrated 20 years at MCDL. Congratulations and thank you, Sue!  
The personnel report was passed unanimously.

**Board Committee Reports:**

**Finance Committee:** No meeting.

**Personnel Committee:** No meeting.

**Policy and By-Laws Committee:** No meeting.

**Building Committee:** Ms. Jenks reported that the committee met on May 4, 2021 and discussed options for Lodi Library window replacement. Repairs are a result of weeping holes becoming blocked at some point in the last few years, and the damage that followed by having still water inside the windows and attached areas. Pella is providing good faith replacement windows.

**Resolution #21-08: Lodi Window Replacement:** Upon recommendation of the Building Committee, the Board of Trustees hereby approves the proposal from the Gunton Corporation in the amount of \$17,248 for window replacement and related repairs at Lodi Library.  
Resolution carried unanimously.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**New Business:**

**Highland Branch Presentation:** In October 2020, Eric Lucius transitioned from the Branch Manager at Lodi Branch to Branch Manager at Highland Library. Mr. Lucius discussed his adaptation of the philosophy that Highland is a “destination” library, comparing it to the concept of destination restaurants; those that are not located in commercial or heavily trafficked areas. He and his staff are working on ideas to make Highland a destination, a place people will go out of their way, out of their weekly routine of stops, to visit. Mr. Lucius discussed all the changes within the

building specifically with the New Adult materials, creating a zone of new, highly sought-after items at the front of the building. Mr. Lucius also gave a recap of the Highland signature event – 3,2,1 Read! It was smaller in scale than what he would like to do with signature programs, but they were limited because of the pandemic. A big change was the story walk, replacing the alphabet that has previously been there. Finally, Highland Friends had a book sale since we had an enormous amount of material stored up. Mr. Lucius didn't know the total count yet, but the sale was very successful. Mr. Lucius is looking forward to the pandemic restriction easing and normal library activities and patron increase.

**Board Communication with Fiscal Officer:** The board trustees received a communication about who was meant to be the board liaison with the Fiscal Officer. Mr. Carlson had thought that it was the Vice President's role, but it appears it should be the Finance Committee Chair. Mr. Carlson asked if there were no objections from the board members that the board liaison with Ms. Koch be changed from Dr. Griffiths to Ms. Schultz. There was no malice involved in this decision – just a misunderstanding of whose role it is. All agreed to the change.

**Service Recognition for Debbie Bonezzi:** Mr. Carlson recognized Business/Purchasing Coordinator Debbie Bonezzi for her 27 years of dedicated service in the Business Office. Debbie retired April 30,2021. The Board of Trustees congratulated Debbie on the decades of service that she has devoted to our library community.

**Donations:** Dr. Griffiths moved, Ms. White seconded, to approve with gratitude the following donations:

1. Sarah Jane and Roger Ingraham: \$50 in Memory of Pat Boyle
2. Friends of MCDL: \$17,500 for SRC, Writers Live, Signature Programs and Staff Development Day
3. Friends of the Brunswick Library: \$1,500 for SRC in Brunswick
4. MCDL Staff Members: \$420 for art piece in Brunswick reading garden in honor of Lois Huff.

The Board accepted the donations unanimously with gratitude.

**Other:** Mr. Carlson wanted to open a discussion regarding the possibility of moving the next Board of Trustees meeting to a hybrid meeting – combined in person and Zoom. Ms. Jenks appreciated the idea of having the option of a hybrid meeting as she is still not comfortable with having an in-person meeting. She also voiced her concern about once in person meetings take place. She wondered if it was possible to move it to a larger location especially if members of the public attend. Dr. Griffiths per discussion with Ms. Bedel commented that the State is still allowing virtual meeting through the end of the year. She liked the hybrid option as a good compromise. She stated that she is looking forward to meeting in person again. . Ms. Bedel and Ms. Schuld discussed logistics of room and sound equipment required to have a successful meeting. Mr. Carlson asked if anyone had an objection to the hybrid version of a meeting. No objections were noted.

**Trustees' Comments:**

Ms. Jenks thanked Mr. Lucius for his presentation. She looks forward to seeing the new story walk and how it gets updated. She sent a thank you to all in the community who responded to the survey. She wished Ms. Carragher luck and much happiness in her next chapter and thanked her for her dedication to MCDL. She welcomed Jenna and thanked the Virginia Martin Wheeler Family History Center for the story on Mr. Goddard. Congratulations to Ms. Schuld on 20 years of service and finally thanks to the negotiating teams.

Ms. Schultz thanked Ms. Koch for the new agenda style with the role call. She sent congratulations to management and union for reaching a contract settlement quickly and without a lot of conflict.

Mr. Harr echoed Ms. Jenks and Ms. Schultz comments. He thanked everyone.

Ms. White echoed her colleagues' statements and wanted to wish Ms. Bonezzi the best and thank her for her service. She welcomed Jenna. Thanked all for the generous donations and thanked Ms. Schuld for all she does. She commented on Mr. Lucius' presentation and his creativity. She is looking forward to coming out and seeing what he has done.

Dr. Griffiths dittoed what everyone has already said. She thanked/congratulated/welcome all those retiring and joining us. She commented that she enjoys Mr. Lucius' enthusiasm and creativity. She stated that she continues to be amazed at the ability of the staff to adjust, adapt and be creative with all the changes that continue to happen during this time.

Mr. Carlson commented that anytime he interacts with Mr. Lucius it is always impressive to see his enthusiasm and his willingness to take on things from a new angle. Mr. Carlson stated that he is looking forward to really good things from Mr. Lucius and is glad that he stayed with MCDL. Mr. Carlson welcomed the new faces and said goodbye to the old faces with best wishes. He is appreciative of the work of management and the union. He looks forward to the next chapter as things hopefully get back to normal.

**Executive Session** None.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Dr. Griffiths moved, Ms. Jenks seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING  
Monday, June 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

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**Ryan Carlson – President**

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**Sharon Jenks – Secretary**