

Portage Lake District Library  
58 Huron Street, Houghton, MI 49931  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Minutes – Corrected  
Wednesday, May 27, 2020

I. Call to order and Roll Call

- a. Meeting on Zoom called to order at 7:04 pm
- b. Members present: Jennifer Donovan, Bob Kinnunen, Sylvia Matthews, Lora Repp, Joan Suits, Tom Suchenek
- c. Members absent: none
- d. Staff present: Dillon Geshel,
- e. Public present: none

II. Additions to the Agenda

- a. All public attendees will be given time to speak during public input but will be muted until then.

III. Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for April 2020 as corrected and amended. Bob moved. Sylvia seconded. Motion approved.

IV. Reports

- a. Director
  - i. A pair of executive orders issued last week mandate that the library remain closed through June 12. Fortunately for us, we have not yet published start dates for our 4 phase reopening plan, so we don't need to revise any public information. As it stands right now, the earliest most of our staff could return to work would be June 13.
  - ii. Hancock Public Schools awarded PLDL with the Copper Country Association of School Boards "School Service Award" at their May board meeting. The award is presented for giving outstanding service to education, and making notable contributions to the quality of education above and beyond expectations. It's really a testament to the work Boni is doing to keep kids engaged during the closure.
  - iii. The Library of Michigan announced last week that a portion of CARES Act funding will be granted to Michigan libraries to assist with purchasing PPE and funding projects that help increase community internet connectivity which can be hotspots, laptops, etc. Every library that applies for the PPE funding will be awarded funds. Both libraries are all but assured funding for Internet connectivity projects as well, based on the high rates of poverty and low rates of broadband in Houghton County.

- iv. This is a project that we may end up working on alongside Portage Health Foundation (PHF). They are also working on Internet connectivity projects, and are installing three dozen mobile hotspots at various “drive-up” locations in our 4-county area. At PLDL and the Hancock Library, we're looking at using those funds for laptops or Chromebooks, to compliment the Foundation's hotspot program. Five libraries in Houghton County are eligible for a combined \$8,000 in funding for Internet connectivity projects, made available through CARES Act funding. Dillon is hoping we can work with those neighboring libraries, to ensure they turn in applications for internet connectivity funding that they're all but assured to receive. This money will not go far, but it may be enough to encourage PHF to offer a match. That is the incentive for area superintendents to work with him on this - If you apply for this minimal funding for your library, PHF could someday add a substantial amount on top of that.
- v. We have not yet published a start date for our Summer Reading Program, but we do plan to start in mid- to late-June. This year, PLDL seeks to engage residents in summer reading while also helping our local non-profit community heal from the COVID-19 pandemic. “Read for Relief” incentivizes participation in summer reading by awarding funds to area non-profits if a specified reading goal is met by all readers. With funding support from the Portage Health Foundation, “Read for Relief” will pair community recovery efforts with the library’s long-standing youth literacy programming, and increase summer reading participation in the process.
- vi. As part of Read for Relief, PLDL will kick-off a fundraiser that asks donors to help raise \$15,000 to support PLDL and HSPL with anticipated revenue losses tied to the pandemic. The Portage Health Foundation will match these contributions, dollar for dollar, up to \$15,000, to be distributed to our selected “Read for Relief” non-profits. Participants who complete all reading challenges will have the opportunity to select one of three local nonprofit organizations to receive a donation. If participants log 5,000 books during “Read for Relief”, the Portage Health Foundation’s full match will be distributed to the selected nonprofits.
- vii. We're also preparing to launch our Biblio Bistro events this summer, although they will be online this year. We're working with the PHF on this project as well, and will be using high quality video equipment to produce these cooking tutorials. Recipes and information about the program will be made available alongside our homebound book delivery program for those who do not have access to the Internet, and we hope to do a twice-monthly

column in the Gazette to reach those folks, too. PHF has funding for this project and we're investing through staff time.

- viii. At the end of April, Dillon sent a letter to our Michigan legislators, highlighting our recent award from the Library of Michigan and the great work we've been doing to keep people connected to resources during the pandemic. He plans to send another letter this week, highlighting our plans for tying summer reading to community recovery. He wants to make sure our representatives know how important our library is to our community.
- ix. Library Assistant Sarah Eles has stepped up to produce new content for our patrons online. She's sharing a new presentation each week about her 1,900-mile bike trip with her daughter last summer. Her daughters are also putting together weekly craft videos that we share on our Facebook page.

- b. Treasurer
  - i. No report

#### I. Old Business

- a. Library Redesign Project
  - i. The Board last considered the Redesign Project at the January meeting.
  - ii. Dillon suggested that due to the anticipated drop in revenue from penal fines and from the state as well as other requests in the budget such as increasing internet connectivity, for example, investing in other digital resources (a new firewall and server will cost \$10,000) that the Board consider selecting a contractor but postponing construction.
  - iii. Discussion.

#### II. New Business

- a. Workplace Preparedness Plan
  - i. Dillon presented the Plan for approval. Andra is currently on site working on inter-library loan, as is Michael who does not have reliable Internet access at home. The Plan outlines safety measures. We have gloves and masks. Sneeze guards are on order. Staff in the office will be six feet apart. The first two phases, we will not be open to the public.
  - ii. Discussion.
  - iii. Joan moved. Tom seconded. Approved.
- b. PLDL Phased Reopening Plan
  - i. Dillon presented the Plan, which is only a guideline and changes constantly.
    - 1. In Phase I, the staff will be back at half normal hours, shelving books, preparing for public use, removing chairs, and installing sneeze guards. Returned books will be quarantined for 24 hours.

2. In Phase II, there will be curbside pick up and return with no contact interaction and a possible home delivery program.
3. In Phase III, patrons will be in the building with time and access limits. There will be no meetings or public programs.
4. Phase IV has an ambiguous date with a semblance of normality.
5. Dillon hopes to promote the dates soon.

c. Upcoming Director Evaluation

- i. Jenn has sent a survey to the Staff. The deadline is May 31. Jenn, Joan and Sylvia will compile the surveys. Jenn requested that the Board return their surveys by the beginning of next week.

d. Board Vacancy

- i. Since Chelsea has left the Board, there is a need for another member from Houghton. Dillon will notify the City.
- ii. Discussion.

III. Public comment

- a. Opportunity for the public to address the Board.
  - i. No public present.

IV. Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

V. Adjournment at 7:56 pm.