

IDA RUPP PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2023

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Ida Rupp Public Library was called to order on Thursday October 12, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Ida Rupp Public Library. The following Trustees were present: Margy VanLerberghe, Lynne Kroeger, Jane Held, Laura de Roziere, Jim Widmer, Kevin Kast and Kevin Francis. Also present were Lindsay Faust, Director and Tim McKenna Fiscal Officer.

Margy VanLerberghe opened the meeting with the Board members reading the Mission Statement of the Ida Rupp Public Library: "The Ida Rupp Public Library facilitates free access to materials and services to support the diverse educational, informational, and entertainment needs of our community."

Dr. VanLerberghe then made a special thanks to the people serving on the Levy Committee: Barbara Wenzinger, Maryanne Laubner, Jim Widmer, Larry Hattan and Jim Boule

In addition, she offered thanks to the local Friends of the Library groups for their support.

Dr. VanLerberghe then reiterated the statement she made at the September meeting: "In light of the current controversy in our community, and in consultation with the Kaleidoscope Youth Center in Columbus, it has been determined they cannot safely send representation to our library, nor can our library reasonably guarantee the decorum or the safety of participants of such a presentation. Therefore, Kaleidoscope is off the table. No October presentation for the board. No teen presentations for the foreseeable future. This in no way represents the board forfeiting its responsibility to its mission statement."

"Additionally, we have appointed a special board committee to do a full and comprehensive review of all children and teen library policies. This committee has already had a preliminary meeting and will report on it tonight."

Public Comments

Rev. Jarrod Schaaf offered comments about the library as a resource for the community.

E. David Baker thanked Lindsay Faust for her response to his letter to the Director at the September meeting. He also asked about the Board of Trustee terms in office. He also wondered about the "granularity" of library programs should the Levy fail.

Cynthia Walker, a member of the Marblehead Friends group, is a supporter of the levy and the library. She talked about the role of the public library in our community.

John Mack read a letter to the Board (attached) with concerns about communication from the library. Also Asking that the books be labeled to identify them, move books containing obscene material to the adult section, require parental consent for certain materials.

Kathy Smith submitted an open records request about books that have been relocated out of the children's and teens areas.

Dawn Dress stated that we have the freedom to choose what is right for ourselves and that there are very pressing issues facing children today such as mental health, abuse and drugs. Kids these days get on line at a very young age. The Library should be seen as a safe space.

Kristina Smith expressed that she is grateful for all the good things that the library does for the community and that it provides vital services. That there is a form to formally request that a book be reviewed and that it would be impossible to put stickers on books each time it was requested.

Michael Bassett reviewed a story from his childhood about how "The Prince of Tides" by Pat Conroy got him reading. He also stated that if you want to know what the "No" group wants removed it is all on their web site. It is better to provide information than advance a viewpoint.

Carl Koebel wondered if it makes sense to ask the library staff to do more with less funding.

Maryanne Laubner related the story of taking her seven year old granddaughter to the library in Lakewood where was very excited to be able to get her own library card.

Margaret Phillips, a former teacher, said that reading is a number one activity in their home. If you are offended by what is in the library, either don't go there or don't check that material out.

Debbie Smith commented that she was glad that the Kaleidoscope program took place in April. It looks to her that most of the books targeted are LBGTQ and race oriented. The library is a great resource for the community.

Sue Lonsway stated that she is a supporter of the library, that parents are the best guide for their kids, that books can help get children through childhood. Trust the library.

Carol (last name not clear) expressed that their group is not about banning or censoring books.

Greg Fox expressed concern that the minutes may not be accurate. He wants the library to be a place for dialogue.

Amanda Riznikove said that she was raised in the library as were her three kids. She has a son in the LGBTQ community who did not tell his family until he was 18, but he had friends at the library.

Jean McGraw wondered why this issue was being used to try to defund the library.

Beth Gillman, a member of the Port Clinton City Council, stated that the library is a wealth of information and diversity. The library is a sign of a healthy community.

Richard Norgard, writer, stated that the library holds a special place in his heart and mind. Please don't take it away.

Maria Mowel, a mental health therapist, stated that the average age when children access pornography is age 8. Mostly via a tablet or computer. Parenting is the key. There needs to be parental guardrails in place. Books do not make a kid change their identity.

Lissa Gillman said that she loves the library. It is where she learned to sit and listen. If you live your life in a bubble you will not go far.

Carol Fox said that her father was once on the library Board. She wants books that are inappropriate taken out of the children's section. She is against books that are inappropriate and have sexual content. She said she received messages about her support of the NO vote.

Tammy Blackburn said that she was the person who messaged Carol Fox. She cannot believe that she has to drive past the signs against the library. The NO signs are bullying and should be gone.

Jean McGraw wondered what the real reason was for voting against the library.

Nick Kwiatkowski wondered why the group was trying to censure books.

Lindsay Faust responded to some of the public comments:

She stated that the library policy on labeling/stickering books is done for holidays and biographies as a way to help staff with shelving. The library has a policy that "The Library does not label materials except to aid the public in finding them in the library/ Labels or ratings that provide assessments such as "This material contains language which some may find offensive" are not applied by the library." So far there has been one book, "Gender Queer", that was moved to the adult section.

Ms. Faust also stated that renovation funds are not coming from COVID monies, but rather salary savings from staff being laid off during COVID, a lack of materials to purchase and the inability to have programs in person. Much of the renovation funding would be reallocated to cover operations if the levy fails. Ms. Faust also addressed a comment that we had added the "Statement of Concern" form after identifying a hole in

the policy. The hold in the policy was a lack of a programming policy, the existing form was slightly altered to make it clear that the form was to be used for library materials or library programs.

Margy VanLerberghe commented that no one has actually initiated a conversation with the Board or Director. They have not been unresponsive. The Kaleidoscope programs are meant to be a safe space for teens.

Kevin Francis wondered why just 1% not liking something could destroy 99%. Additionally, he suggested that the people that have a problem approach the director and the board president to have a discussion and come to some type of understanding.

Jim Widmer stated that in his 23 years on the board there were never many members of the public in attendance at meetings until this year and that the Board is navigating new territory. There is a review of some policies under way.

Kevin Kast stated that the First Amendment does provide the right of free speech.

Laura de Roziere said the kids can get access to materials even if the library got rid of them. We do live in 2023.

Approval of Minutes

Lynne Kroeger pointed out two typos in the minutes, the spelling of Dave Kimmel's name and the missing first name of Kevin Kast on page three.

Kevin Kast moved to approve the minutes with corrections. Jane Held seconded. Motion carries by voice vote.

Staff Recognition

Staff anniversaries are Dave Kimmel, two years; Patty Curry, One year

Review, Discussion and Approval of Financial Report

The Financial Report for September 2023 was distributed and reviewed by Tim McKenna

Revenue: \$112,549.98
Expense: \$159,947.87

Salaries:	\$ 61,908.14
Fringe Benefits:	\$ 15,512.56
Supplies:	\$ 2,037.00
Purchased and Contracted Services:	\$ 28,966.64
Library Materials:	\$ 16,699.84
Capital Outlay:	\$ 34,823.68
Other:	\$ 0.00
Contingencies:	\$ 0.00

There was also a breakdown of the revenues and expenditures by branch location. Kevin Kast moved to accept the Financial Report. Second by Jane Held. Motion carries by voice vote.

Donations to Library

Helen Taylor Robertson donated \$500.00 without restriction.

OWLS group at Put-in-Bay donated \$80.00 in memory of their deceased members.

Terese Wallack Waldron, Author, donated her book, "Sophie and her Sisters Decorate Easter Eggs", in memory of Phyllis Moor.

Directors Report – Lindsay Faust

- The StoryWalk® at Meadowbrook Marsh is complete. Thanks to Dave Kimmel and Margaret Warren for helping get the frames attached to the posts and the first story installed: *Pete the Cat Goes to the Library*.
- The StoryWalk® at Ida Rupp is progressing and construction should be underway soon.

From Courtney McGrath

- September was a busy month. The highlight was the event with "Pete the Cat" author James Dean. There were over 100 people in attendance at the Performing Arts Center on September 24. Mr. Dean did a book signing after the event and spent time with each participant as well as photo opportunities.
- Prior to the event, Mr. Dean sent two canvas paintings of Pete the Cat. These are now in Ms. McGrath's office and will be incorporated into the new children's area after the renovation.

From Laura Vollmer

- Very happy with the transition to one Facebook page for all three locations.
- A patron said the he's been in various libraries across the country and ours is one of the best. That we are "warm, welcoming, and quaint."

Adult Services – Alana Sutherland

- The first showing of the Manhattan Short film festival was September 30 from 2:00 – 4:30 pm. There were 20 people in attendance.
- Tech Help this month has been well attended

Youth Services – Courtney McGrath

- Sharlene Anderson, our new teen librarian, started on September 20th. She came to us with experience at the Bluffton Library.

From Megan Osborn

- Story Times: Her confidence is growing. There was the first bilingual (Spanish) story time with 22 in attendance.
- Monarchs, Milkweed and More had the highest turnout for a children's program this month with 18 patrons. There was a brief write-up in the Sandusky Register about this program on September 27th.

- There were three fifth grade girls in the Adventures in Writing program.

From Corvid Griggs

- Great comment from a regular caregiver at story time praised her for working on getting it back to where it used to be.
- VOX and Wonderbooks are officially out for circulation. These came through the Libraries Accelerating Learning Grant. She is eager to start school visits again.

Marblehead Peninsula Branch – Dave Kimmel

- September 6, Lorrie Halblaub spoke about the Marblehead Lighthouse Keepers to six patrons.
- September 5 and 19 Dave offered the writing group to five participants.
- The MPBL staff continued their systemic collection-weeding project, this time for the Children's Non-Fiction section. They have discarded 113 titles. They will plan a children's book sale with the Friends in December.

Erie Islands – Karen Wilhelm

- They had their first reader, Nadine, complete 1000 Books Before Kindergarten.
- Thank you to the IRPL Board members for taking the time to see their unique library.
- Excited to welcome back the school children in September. Each elementary classroom from kindergarten through grade six visits the library for 20 – 30 minutes weekly
- September 13: Karen gave a brief talk about the library to the Ottawa County Leadership group.

The full Director's Report is attached including Library Statistics.

Committee Report

Lynne Kroeger reported that the new Children and Teens Committee met on October 11, 2023 to begin the review of the processes for selecting materials. They will also review the policy on unattended minors.

Items for Discussion

- 2024 Board Nominations: Jane Held and Kevin Kast to be the nominating committee.
- StoryWalk® Update: Lindsay Faust reported that the Meadowbrook Marsh is up and running and that construction has begun at the Ida Rupp Public Library. Ms. Faust also reported that the selected benches have a twelve to thirteen week wait time and the company is unable to offer a lift gate delivery. POD is working with the bench vendor to see if they have a partner who can deliver and install the benches.

Adjournment

7:14 pm: Jim Widmer motioned to adjourn. Second by Kevin Francis. Motion carries by voice vote.

Jane Held, Secretary

Margy VanLerberghe, President

Tim McKenna, Fiscal Officer