

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A regular meeting of the Brown County Library Board was held on **September 25, 2024**, at **5:15 p.m.**
Central Library, 515 Pine Street, Green Bay, WI 54301

PRESENT: KATHY PLETCHER, DAVID RUNNING, and JOHN VAN DYCK.
JAYME SELLEN, MARISSA MELI, and WENDY WOODWARD attended virtually.

EXCUSED: BRIAN ANDERSON, ANNETTE AUBINGER, and KIM SCHANOCK

ALSO PRESENT: Sarah Sugden, Emily Rogers, Sue Lagerman, and Curt Beyler (staff). Danielle Zeamer and Leah Liebergen (staff). Jill Proulx, Kathy Blaney, Marne Meyer, Maureen, Flietner (Green Bay).

1. **CALL TO ORDER** President Sellen called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.
2. **APPROVE/MODIFY AGENDA AND MINUTES** In consideration of attending guests' time, Sellen proposed moving agenda item # 9 to follow agenda item #3. **Motion** by Running, seconded by Pletcher, to approve the modified agenda, and minutes. **Motion carried.**
3. **COMMUNICATIONS AND OPEN FORUM FOR THE PUBLIC** Kathy Blaney spoke to the board last month and is attending again to follow up about concerns of the number of book club meetings being reduced. She wants a reasonable answer to let it continue. Maureen Flietner commented that social gatherings are important and are great for seniors. She said that she was shocked to learn that the library wasn't going to support this book club. She stated that books are the core of the library - change shouldn't happen for change's sake. She stated that both the Appleton and Manitowoc public libraries offer book clubs for adults. She commented that the little amount of staff time that is needed is a small concession - keep book clubs alive and encourage participation. Marne Meyer told the Board that she joined the club six years ago when she retired and asked if not at the library, then where would book club take place? She said it was sad to think it might go away.
4. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING BOOK CLUB PROGRAMMING AT EAST BRANCH** Sugden explained that a broader dive into library programming began in 2019 to gain a clear understanding of all the facets of programming. There has been a shift and change in programming in libraries in the last 20 years. The work the library has been involved in is for the purpose of understanding the library's ability to provide programming and how it fits into broader library operations. Rogers wants to marry programming to staffing. Staff surveys and time logs gave insight on how staff time was being spent and the related cost of that time.

There was a lot of programming across the library system and that caused competition among the branches. It was found that a reduction in programming still attracted the same number of attendees. Rogers explained that the library is interested in partnering with experts to provide programming and move away from self-run programs. The library created programming buckets that organized the types of programs being offered and how staff was being utilized to facilitate these programs. This resulted in mindful selection and pulling back on programs. This includes book clubs. Staff was being paid on work time to read the book. Presently, a new calendar for 2025 will rely heavily on partnerships. Staff can reserve space and reserve books but cannot facilitate programs. The change to the book club is a reduction of one club meeting. The group can have access to a meeting room and materials, but staff can no longer facilitate. The library is interested in working with East Book Club. Increasing the size of the East Branch has increased demand for room use but there has not been an increase in staff. Funding constraints are impacting our ability to offer programs. The book club could continue as it is without staff. Woodward, a big supporter of book clubs, commented that library staff being involved is a concern. She supports access to books and spaces.

Motion by Van Dyck, seconded by Pletcher, to open the floor. **Motion carried.**

Kathy Blaney stated that the librarians do not read books – they never have. She knows there are club kits. She said she was told that if she runs the show, it won't be the East Branch Book Club, it will be Kathy's Book Club. Meyer commented that staff is really only facilitating six and that's not that many. There are a lot of children's programs so one time a month for an adult program is reasonable. Blaney commented that she doesn't want to run it. Running asked what Blaney's expectations are of the staff. The book club has between 15-20 members. Van Dyck confirmed that the club wants a facilitator, assistance in acquiring the books, and booking the room. Sugden restated that the library has book club kits, and it can be more time consuming and challenging if individual copies are requested. She would like to further discuss this next month. Sugden thanked the club members for their advocacy. Sugden and Rogers will set up a meeting with the book club members.

Motion by Van Dyck, seconded by Pletcher, to return to the regular order business. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Van Dyck, seconded by Woodward, to refer to staff to report back at the October Board meeting. **Motion carried.**

5. UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES IN BROWN COUNTY

Pletcher reported that OneDenmark is waiting to hear about the Flexible Facilities Program (FFP) grant. The award announcement was originally scheduled for October 1 but has been changed to “early October.” OneDenmark is currently writing two grants – one related to health and wellness including equipment and training programs and the other for healthcare screenings and mental health services. The group is focused on private fundraising. The final decision about the School District transferring the property to OneDenmark will take place at the school board meeting on October 14. A health and wellness advisory group and a business advisory group will be formed with members of the community. OneDenmark plans to apply for Give Big Green Bay again.

The new Bookmobile is on the road.

The offer to purchase the former Family Dollar in Pulaski was unanimously approved at the County Board meeting. Last week, a Pulaski meeting with Jim Pyle/County Board Supervisor District 26, Keith Deneys/former County Board Supervisor, Keith Chambers/Pulaski Village President, Gordie Black/former Pulaski Village Board member, Allison Space/Pulaski School District Superintendent, Mary Chrisman and Polly Peplinski/community advocates, Stacey Von Busch/Pulaski/Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Mark Heck/Director Pulaski Area Community Education, Kim Schanock, Sarah Sugden, Sue Lagerman, and Becky Phillips took place. 2025 will focus on design development and community visioning. Some online comments referred to a lack of sidewalks. There is ease of access from the neighborhoods that surround the site. Many come to the library by vehicle as evidenced in a transportation survey the library conducted. In recent travels around Wisconsin, Van Dyck commented that he noticed that many small communities with populations of 2000-4000 all have libraries. He commented that while there has been some squawking about money being spent on libraries, there is no reason why there shouldn't be libraries in Wrightstown, Denmark, and Pulaski.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE BID FOR NEW ASHWUBENON BRANCH. The Library Facilities Committee made the recommendation to accept Miron Construction's bid less alternates 4, 6, and 7. **Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Pletcher, to approve the Library Facilities' Committee recommendation to award the contract to Miron Construction in the amount of \$3,670,507. **Motion carried.**

7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT OFFER TO PURCHASE – NEW ASHWAUBENON BRANCH CORE AND SHELL The addendum to WB-15 acknowledges that the library will be responsible for the costs related to any changes to the project's scope for which they've consented to.

Motion by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to approve the addendum to WB-15 offer to purchase. **Motion carried.** Pletcher abstained.

Proposed changes to the new Ashwaubenon Branch core and shell offer to purchase were presented. Concord verified that costs are reasonable for mechanical room, underground plumbing, electrical services, telecom conduit installations, and fencing including all footings and concrete.

Motion by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to accept the changes to the Ashwaubenon Branch core and shell in the amount of \$135,376.98. **Motion carried.** Pletcher abstained.

8. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING TABLE OF ORGANIZATION CHANGE The Library, collaborating with Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS) and the Bay Area Workforce Development Board (BAWDB) launched the first ever JobPod in March of 2024. Based on this work, the Department of Workforce Development has awarded BAWDB and NFLS a grant to allow for the expansion and further development of this valuable work, supporting employers, job seekers, and those who assist them. This grant allows BCL to dedicate a .75 FTE to provide documentation, training, and promotion of the JobPod concept with other libraries across the state of Wisconsin, in collaboration with NFLS and BAWDB. **Motion** by Pletcher, seconded by Running, to approve the Job Pod Project Librarian (LTE) position. **Motion carried.**

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING COMMUNICATION FROM COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING RENAMING OF CENTRAL LIBRARY PINE ROOM This suggestion was to honor a current staff member and the contributions they have made – a lovely gesture. Sugden spoke with this individual and while appreciated, the staff member isn't comfortable with this. Sugden recommended that the staff member's

preference is honored and respectfully declines the offer. **Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Pletcher, to receive and place this communication on file. **Motion carried.**

10. CENTRAL LIBRARY HVAC ARPA/SALES TAX PROJECT UPDATE Hurckman Mechanical, who was awarded the project, will begin cutting roof penetrations next month. The construction schedule is phased - moving around different parts of the building. It accommodates regularly scheduled meetings in the lower level (Ed & Rec and County Board). Sugden stated that the library is committed to maintaining library services during this time and limiting disruption to the public. The library is looking forward to a healthy, efficient HVAC system!

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING COMMUNICATION SUBMITTED AT THE COUNTY BOARD MEETING TO: "REQUEST THAT THE LIBRARY CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF OFFERING PASSPORT ISSUING AND TAX COLLECTION SERVICES AT THE CENTRAL LIBRARY AND THE 4 REGIONAL BRANCHES IN ORDER TO GIVE CITIZENS IMPROVED ACCESS TO THESE SERVICES." Van Dyck commented that this topic came up at the County Board meeting because of the change in the hours of operations of county offices. Offering these services at the library, which the library can lawfully provide, is an opportunity for the public. The intent is for the library to make money to offset any expenses that might be incurred. Sugden would like to take some time to explore this as well as notary public and other services that have minimal impact on staff. She noted that the library does not have the staff or resources to make this happen at this time. Perhaps it can be revisited in the future. Running is in favor of offering these and similar services since they can add value to the library. Van Dyck asked if Sugden can collect more in-depth information from other libraries that currently provide them. Running supported this request. Van Dyck isn't assuming this would be additional work for existing staff. The county could move resources around to put a person in place at the library. Woodward recommends hitting pause for a year and give staff space due to heavy workload. **Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to refer to staff and report back in 90 days. **Motion carried.** Woodward opposed.

12. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF LIBRARY BUSINESS

A. Financial Update Sugden thanked the Finance Committee for the recent meeting. Several journal entries need to be made so the profit/loss reports make sense. YTD figures don't show anything out of the ordinary. Running asked what the plan is going forward. The library has access to a junior accountant from the county. Contracting with a senior accountant is being explored. The Finance Manager position is not a full-time position. Van Dyck asked about timeline. Sugden will set up a meeting in the next month with Chad Weininger/County Administration. Van Dyck asked if, in the interim, has the library looked for temporary help. There could be firms with senior accountants that could assist.

B. Facilities Update Beyler reported that Sandy Rymer, part-time maintenance staff, is working her last shift before retirement. She has been an extraordinary employee. Sugden commended Beyler on his outstanding work on all these ongoing facility projects.

C. Personnel and Public Services Update Rogers reported the following:

Hired: Bryce Sickles, Library IT Technician; Grace Grocholski, Kress Associate; and Nekita Krisko, Ashwaubenon Clerk (former Weyers-Hilliard Shelver).

Recruiting: Three clerks - two at Kress and one at Wrightstown; Central Circulation Associate; and Kress/Wrightstown Manager - interviews will take place the week of October 7 interviews.

Resignations: Eva Domencich, Wrightstown Clerk; Nafatina Vang, Kress Shelver; and Sandy Rymer, Maintenance.

NicCon (NFLS joint staff development day) is happening tomorrow at Central Library. Dr. Alonzo Kelly is the keynote and Jamie Matczak will present on customer service.

Performance Planning is underway.

The new Bookmobile resumed regular community stops and attended its first big event – Big Event for Kids. Its collection size is different, so an overflow collection has been established for easy replenishment. Looking at ways to enhance the interior with signage and how to create attractive spaces. Also looking at the locations where the Bookmobile goes.

Preparations for Summer Reading Program 2025 have begun! This year we had planning teams. To further this work, we are hoping to have two committee chairs. The impact on kids' reading is documented through

the public surveys conducted.

D. Community Engagement Update Lagerman reported the following:

The County Executive made a special proclamation at Central Library's 50th anniversary block party. A photocopy was included in the board packet.

Fundraising efforts for the new Ashwaubenon are proving successful.

Application to participate in the downtown Holiday Parade on November 23 was made. Working on a plan to decorate the new Bookmobile as a book worm.

A joint media event with Achieve Brown County and the County Executive is scheduled for October 1 at 11:15 am at the East Branch. The topic is the state of literacy in Brown County.

Featured upcoming programs include the 36th annual Local History Series and PopCon™ on October 5.

Pages & Stages: Grow with Books is a new initiative of the Friends of the Brown County Library and the WIC program at N.E.W. Clinic. New books will be given to children, up to age 5, at their wellness visits. This was inspired by the Reading Success Summit and is one of the many positive things happening in the community and is an excellent example of the collaborative action of Reading for the Future.

- 13. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT** Sugden indicated immense gratitude for John Hickey who is stepping down from Library Foundation. He served on both the library board and the Nicolet Federated Library System Board. He is a wonderful support and advocate – a true library champion.

Sugden expressed real pride in the library for initiating the JobPod project and bringing in the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS). Staffer Danielle Zeamer has been a main lead. The team and Bay Area Workforce Development (BAWD) applied for a grant to expand JobPods throughout the state. Ultimately, every Brown County Library will have a JobPod. Zeamer shared that the governor wants to have a JobPod in every WI county. People are responding to the simplicity of the project. An upcoming news event will announce a new partner – Microsoft.

- 14. PRESIDENT'S REPORT** Referring to the FFP grant the City of Green Bay applied for, Sellen called Mayor Genrich who explained that the grant's inclusion of a library was only an example. It wasn't intended that the space would include a library.

- 15. OTHER BUSINESS** Pletcher announced that she, Sellen, and Woodward will be conducting Sugden's annual performance review on Wednesday, October 2. The results will be shared in closed session at the October Library Board meeting.

Pletcher also announced that the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) has selected John Van Dyck as Trustee of the Year 2024. Danielle Zeamer was selected as Paralibrarian of the Year. Both will be formally recognized at the WLA Conference Awards dinner on November 7 in Green Bay,

- 16. SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS ARE AUTHORIZED BY LAW** None.

- 17. ADJOURNMENT Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. **Motion carried.**

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

October 17, 2024 | 5:15 pm | Central Library

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Lagerman | Recording Secretary