

## **Rocky River Public Library**

### Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

The January meeting of the Board of the Rocky River Public Library was held in the Auditorium of the Library on Wednesday, February 1, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was originally scheduled January 25, 2023.

An audio recording of the meeting was created.

Present: Melissa Stickney, Jill James, Audra Bednarski, Dave Sansone, Cynthia Schafer, Jennifer Fisher, and Ann Gynn

Also Present: Trent Ross (Interim Director), Will Costello (Fiscal Officer), Peter Matera (Support Services Manager)

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Stickney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Megan Alabaugh. Ms. Alabaugh expressed concerns amidst big changes at the library. Ms. Alabaugh stated despite pay rates being approved at the December 2022 Board meeting, the Board approved their intention to further increase Mr. Ross's salary should he return to Deputy Director after his Interim Director appointment. Ms. Alabaugh questioned whether the pay rate of the Fiscal Officer was in line with industry standards. She stated that she did not begrudge these potentially fair-market salaries but that all staff deserves fair market wages. Ms. Alabaugh expressed concern that without notice the Board approved pay increases for staff at half the COLA rate and ended merit pay, and that staff wages were approved at the lowest available salary scale. She stated library staff is overworked and underpaid and immediate action was needed on the EASE @Work climate assessment. Ms. Alabaugh cited bylaws to ensure competitive pay and the strategic plan to ensure a healthy organization, concerned that the library has neither. Ms. Alabaugh said she was looking forward to how staff will be involved in the Director search.

3. **INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES:** Mr. Ross provided an introduction of new employees, alphabetical by last name, with job titles and brief biographical information. Some of the employees were in attendance, as follows: Becky Barrata (present); Ben Buehrle (not present); Linda Miller Costa (present); Natalie Flamik (present); Drew Gannon (not present); Diana Horvat (not present); Edy Keeper (not present); Jacob Marquis (present); and Laurie Murray (not present).

#### 4. **BUSINESS OF THE BOARD**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Ms. Stickney referred to a document listing a proposed slate of officers for 2023 as follows: Jill James, President; Jenny Fisher, Vice President;

Dave Sansone, Secretary. With no further comment, Ms. Stickney asked for a motion to accept as proposed. Ms. Schafer motioned to approve the slate of officers as proposed, seconded by Ms. Bednarski. All trustees voted yes. Ms. James resumed control of the meeting as Board President at 7:13pm.

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

Ms. James led the Board in reciting aloud the Rocky River Public Library Oath of Office of Board Member document together.

**APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES—DECEMBER 7, 2022:** Mr. Ross noted a correction that Ms. Fisher was recorded as being absent from the entire meeting when in fact she was present for part of it. Mr. Costello noted that his attendance was not recorded and that he was present at the meeting. Ms. Fisher motioned to approve the December 7, 2022, minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Gynn. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING—JANUARY 12, 2023:** Mr. Sansone motioned to approve the January 12, 2023, Special Meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Bednarski. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**FISCAL OFFICER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Mr. Costello confirmed that the Trustees received his written report. Mr. Costello stated that the Library ended the year in a good financial position—revenue outperformed in almost every category, including interest-bearing products and the PLF, and expenditures were favorable to the budget. Mr. Costello emphasized that the Library benefitted from higher interest rates and a higher PLF than budgeted; though well-managed, had everything come in at budget then expenditures would have put the Library at a deficit. Regarding the 2022 fiscal year, Mr. Costello said he had not closed it yet at the time of the meeting due to one outstanding Paylocity question. Ms. Bednarski asked if Paylocity had been responsive to his inquiries. Mr. Costello replied that Sherry Shuster, HR Manager, had been working with them and as Ms. Shuster has been responsive to Mr. Costello, he believes Paylocity must have been responsive to Ms. Shuster. Ms. Stickney asked if Mr. Costello had predictions about interest rates for 2023. Mr. Costello replied he has had conversations with Brian at Fifth Third Bank and anticipated rates may continue to rise a little but based on news reports inflation is starting to come down. Mr. Sansone asked how reactive the Library's Star Ohio investments are to the interest rate changes. Mr. Costello replied they are very reactive, that they almost mirror the jumps. Ms. James asked for any other comments or questions. Mr. Costello added that the 2022 report is due to the Ohio system by March 1, so the Library is not behind in closing the year; this report is typically prepared in February.

**APPROVE NOVEMBER FINANCIALS:** Ms. Schafer motioned to approve the November Financials, seconded by Ms. Fisher. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVE NOVEMBER GIFT REPORT:** Ms. Stickney asked about the gift of \$5,300 from the Stell Foundation. Mr. Ross replied they sometimes give to the library directly, sometimes to the Foundation. Ms. Stickney confirmed the gift was unrestricted. Ms. Stickney motioned to approve the November Gift Report, seconded by Mr. Sansone. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVE DECEMBER FINANCIALS:** Ms. Stickney asked about the Check Register entries for HMH Restoration and Uline. Mr. Ross replied he believed the Uline amount was for replacing shelving in Circulation. Mr. Ross commented that HMH Restoration do masonry and tuckpoint work. Ms. Stickney asked if HMH Restoration were on an annual contract or used as needed. Mr. Ross replied he believed they did routine work every other year. Ms. Bednarski commented they were on schedule. Mr. Ross replied this was work completed earlier in the year. Ms. Bednarski motioned to approve the December Financials, seconded by Ms. Gynn. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVE DECEMBER GIFT REPORT:** Ms. Fisher motioned to approve the December Gift Report, seconded by Mr. Sansone. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**APPROVE ANNUAL PURCHASE ORDERS OVER \$10,000:** Ms. James asked Mr. Ross and Mr. Costello to refresh the Board about annual purchase orders Mr. Ross explained annual purchase orders over \$10,000 are used throughout the year or on repeat annual expenditures that are known in advance. Ms. Stickney commented on the annual CLEVNET fee, asking whether it went down. Mr. Ross replied that yes it did go down. Ms. Stickney motioned to approve the Annual Purchase Orders over \$10,000 as presented, seconded by Ms. Schafer. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried. Ms. James inquired whether a roll call was needed for this. The consensus was no.

**INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Ross pointed out that passport services have been phenomenally busy—in January, 98 applications were processed within the first 15 days, almost double the usual volume. Appointments are booked almost continuously. Ms. Bednarski asked Mr. Ross to tell staff the Board appreciates their work.

Mr. Ross said the Cowan appraisal was complete. Mr. Ross recognized Greg Hatch's work on installing the largest on-loan exhibit of a Cowan artist's work in at least five years—the Thelma Frazier Winter exhibit takes up six display cases, is mostly on loan from the Western Reserve Historical Society, and it will be on display for the remainder of the year. Mr. Ross acknowledged Mr. Hatch did a phenomenal job

establishing the exhibit, which is making an impact on library visitors. Ms. Bednarski noted that nothing in the appraisal gave her pause or was striking, that the increase or decrease in figures was not huge. Mr. Ross said what was most notable was that over 50 pieces were added. Discussion moved on to the Climate Assessment. Mr. Ross stated in January, conversations with managers started on how to incorporate feedback. Mr. Ross said immediate steps included more access to executive leadership. Mr. Ross said Sherry Shuster is working one evening each week. Mr. Ross said he is increasing all staff communication from executive leadership. Mr. Ross intends to provide monthly updates to staff on the climate assessment. Ms. Fisher asked if Mr. Ross can provide that information to the Board to keep them apprised. Mr. Ross responded yes, he would include the Board in the monthly updates. Mr. Ross said the Library Foundation met on January 24, 2023 and went from four to fifteen members by the end of the meeting. Mr. Ross said members have a wide variety of experiences. They intend to meet monthly and are planning a fundraiser in October 2023. Mr. Ross said he was excited for the new enthusiasm and new memberships.

**APPROVE ITEMS TO BE DECLARED SURPLUS:** Ms. James inquired about items to be declared surplus. Mr. Ross said the magnifier in the Schlather room is rarely used and when someone recently went to use it it was broken. The microfilm reader can enlarge text; the Library also has reading glasses and full page magnifiers available for patrons. As the magnifier in question was broken and determined to be redundant, it is no longer needed. Ms. Bednarski motioned to approve the Items to be Declared Surplus, seconded by Ms. Schafer. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**PERSONNEL REPORT:** Mr. Ross said the Board had met some of the most recent appointments this evening during introductions of new staff; the remainder will be on next month's report. Mr. Ross commented on Chanel Steiner's separation; she has taken a position at the RTA, where she has an opportunity to grow and advance in her career in a way she cannot at the library. He acknowledged Ms. Steiner had transformed the *Inside View*, the library's social media presence, and library marketing. Ms. Stickney mentioned the library website. Mr. Ross said what she has done over the last 15 years will have a lasting impact. Ms. Stickney asked if Ms. Steiner's separation should be noted in February's Personnel Report, as that is the month of her separation. Mr. Ross said he would amend this and bring it back in February. Ms. Stickney said Ms. Steiner was an asset in so many ways, that she set a high bar, and that it has been a pleasure seeing her work. Ms. James thanked Mr. Ross and Ms. Stickney for their comments about Chanel's work. Ms. James said meeting new employees is a highlight of the Board meeting and she looks forward to meeting new faces in the future. Mr. Ross mentioned Sandy Etterling's reduction

of hours. Mr. Sansone motioned to approve the Personnel Report, seconded by Ms. Gynn. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Ms. James thanked library staff for their first month in the interim phase, saying this is a new year and a new adventure. Ms. James said the Board will be thoughtful about their approach with library priorities and the community.

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:** Ms. James referred to the committee assignments as noted in the Board packet. Ms. James said Ms. Bednarski's term ends this summer. Ms. James said the Search Committee for the Director would be Mr. Sansone and Ms. Gynn, as they are Chair and Co-Chair of the Personnel Committee, but that all Board members would have a voice. Mr. Sansone asked if the Search Committee could be called a Task Group, citing that committees continue indefinitely and task groups disband when the job is done. Ms. James said she would amend the wording.

**DIRECTOR SEARCH DISCUSSION:** Ms. James recognized Organizational Architecture and Bradbury Miller as the two firms under consideration for the Director Search. Ms. Stickney stated both were well done, she appreciated both presentations, that they had different approaches and different strengths. Ms. Stickney said she felt Bradbury Miller's presentation and fee structure was a stronger fit. Ms. Stickney said she was impressed with Organizational Architecture's human resources angle. Ms. Stickney states it was a close call, but she was more persuaded by Bradbury Miller. Ms. Schafer agreed, saying Bradbury Miller was a better fit, more focused on the process and uniqueness of the library. Ms. Schafer commented the Board may consider Organizational Architecture for future human resources needs. Ms. Bednarski said Bradbury Miller had more strengths in specifics of the search, for example where they would look for talent; this gave her confidence. Ms. Fisher said both proposals were strong, and she felt Bradbury Miller was more tailored to RRPL. Ms. James said she felt Bradbury Miller was a better fit, both were extremely strong and presented different strengths. Ms. James noted Bradbury Miller included more details in their approach. Ms. James said there will be an opportunity to look at Organizational Architecture for other avenues of the library. Mr. Sansone said he was in agreement, that Bradbury Miller specializes in Director searches while Organizational Architecture does other things as well. Ms. Gynn concurred with the discussion. Ms. James asked for clarity by those in favor calling out "aye"—all called out in favor. Ms. James motioned to enter into an agreement with Bradbury Miller at the same terms in their proposal with room to negotiate all but price given to the Search Committee, seconded by Ms. Schafer. All trustees voted yes. Motion carried. Ms. James said she would contact both firms then connect with the Search

Committee. The next phase would be information gathering. Ms. James noted a virtual meeting might be needed. Ms. James thanked the Board.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

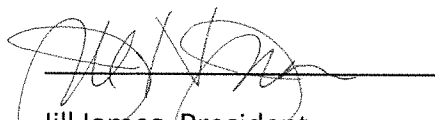

**BUILDING & GROUNDS:** Ms. Stickney reported that she held a Building and Grounds Committee meeting before her official appointment as Chair because of the postponed Board meeting. Ms. Stickney said Greg Jackson and Mr. Ross outlined potential projects for 2023 to the Committee, including: elevator work, addressing the humidity issue, a minor roof repair over the Schlather Room, lighting retrofitting, a new alarm company, the mural, and options for memorials. Ms. Schafer said a former Board member had approached the Board with a proposal several years ago. Jamie Mason and Mr. Jackson received the information, but the project was tabled. Ms. Schafer asked that the Committee keep Bill Henson informed if anything develops. Ms. James referred to Mr. Costello's previous comments about expenditures and noted these items are all part of the building assessment plan. Ms. James said the Library has been budgeting according to this plan all along, which is one of the values of having the assessment.

**PERSONNEL:** Mr. Sansone said that Ms. Fisher, Ms. Gynn, Ms. Stickney, and he attended the most recent Personnel Committee meeting. Mr. Sansone said they discussed the climate survey and Mr. Ross provided updates on options going forward. Ms. Fisher provided updates on the review process for the Director. Ms. Fisher said they would likely not do a full review of the Director at the usual time because that person will not have been Director for 12 months at the end of the year; they will do a review of the new Director but not the full review.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:** Ms. James commented on the Department reports in the Board packet. Ms. James said she loved seeing the outreach into the community. Ms. James said she realizes how much work goes into creating these reports and that they provide great information about what is going on; she thanked department managers. Ms. James asked about the podcast project. Mr. Ross said editing has been difficult; there is about one season's worth of content, but podcasting will not continue as a regular thing. Ms. Stickney commented on the difficulty of creating podcasts, the skillset involved. Mr. Ross said the podcast was great, but editing has been difficult. Ms. Fisher commented that Department reports are her favorite part of the Board packet; they're valuable and in reading them one learns so much. Ms. Fisher asked if they are shared among managers. Mr. Ross said yes, they are shared on the staff intranet. Ms. Stickney said they were a way to build communication between departments. Ms. Fisher thanked Mr. Matera for the year in review he provided in the Support Services report. Ms. Fisher noted the PaperCut usage stats. Ms. Bednarski asked how PaperCut was going. Mr. Ross and Mr. Matera agreed that

they were surprised by the revenue it generated despite \$10/week toward free printing and copying. Mr. Matera said he was happy with the usage, that he expected a 6-8 month learning curve for patrons as they may not visit the library regularly. Mr. Matera said the learning curve seems to have settled for the most part; there are still issues but not as many. Ms. Stickney said she thinks the PaperCut service is underutilized and that she loves seeing it advertised, more people should be aware.

6. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

  
Jill James, President  
Dave Sansone, Secretary

