

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES OF THE
COOK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

December 9, 2020

Call to order: The special meeting of the Cook Memorial Public Library District was held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, December 9, 2020 as authorized by Illinois Public Act 101-0640. The meeting was called to order by President Wendy Vieth at 6:35 p.m. Trustees in attendance in addition to Ms. Vieth were Jim Larson, Ann Oakley, Phyllis Dobbs, and Laura Valenziano. Jen Banek and Karen Singer were absent. In Ms. Banek's absence, Mr. Larson served as Secretary Pro-tem.

Staff members in attendance were Library Director David Archer, Assistant Library Director Lauren Cerniglia, Business Manager Russ Cerqua, Human Resources Generalist Marla Littlefield and Administrative Assistant Gabriella Pantle. Also in attendance was the Library's attorney Jim Ferolo and district resident James Spencer.

Ms. Singer joined the meeting at 6:36 immediately after roll call.

Public Comment: None.

Review and Discussion of Library Policies: It was noted that at the June 24, 2020 board meeting, Trustees unanimously approved a temporary process whereby library policies would be reviewed by the full board at special board meetings instead of at the usual Policy Committee meetings until May 2021. At these special board meetings, trustees will review any recommended revisions made by administration and then have the opportunity to make further revisions. The Board President will then poll trustees to determine their support of the revisions to each policy. If a majority approve the revisions, the policy will be drafted with the updated language for approval via a resolution at the next regular board meeting. This process will allow staff to get enough direction to finalize each policy before board approval is given.

Mr. Archer then explained the review process that the Policy Committee has followed in the past noting that the committee last met in December, 2019. He reported that while a majority of the policies that were reviewed at that meeting were approved by the full board at the December, 2019 regular board meeting, a couple of the policies being presented tonight were deferred by the committee for legal clarification.

Electronic Participation in Board/Committee Meetings Policy

It was explained by Mr. Ferolo that this policy is based on a provision from the Open Meetings Act that allows a government body to have a policy regarding remote participation at board/committee meetings. The provision allows electronic participation under certain circumstances provided that a quorum is physically present at the site of the government body. He noted that this is separate from how we're operating today pursuant to the Governor's disaster declaration which is allowing government bodies to meet virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

After some preliminary discussion, trustees agreed that the language “attending by video or conference call” should be changed to “remote participation” to leave other options open for attending. Specifically with the use of Zoom if so chosen. Mr. Ferolo stated that as long as the technology exists and all can be heard clearly with the technology chosen, including the public, making that change would be fine.

After further discussion, some trustees questioned the necessity of Article I, item C which states that a majority of the applicable board or committee must vote to allow a member to participate remotely. Other trustees felt that this section prevents requests to participate remotely from occurring too often. It also gives the entire board an opportunity to ensure that the request complies with one of the three reasons set by state statute to attend remotely. It was noted that meeting in person should be the priority of all board members as often as possible. When asked if other government bodies that have this policy require a vote, Mr. Ferolo answered that it is fairly common. A long discussion ensued on whether voting to attend remotely should remain in the policy (Article I, item C) versus the request automatically being granted as long as there is a quorum and the request falls within the reasons stated in the policy.

Ms. Vieth then polled the board on whether Article I, item C should remain in the policy as is. The polling results were as follows: Yes votes; Ms. Vieth, Mr. Larson and Ms. Oakley. No votes; Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, and Ms. Valenziano. Ms. Banek was absent. Due to the split vote, this policy will be tabled for now.

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

Mr. Archer explained that the Policy Committee last reviewed this policy at the December 10, 2019 Committee meeting. Proposed changes to this policy were reviewed by legal counsel and updated to be in compliance with the Illinois Cannabis Regulation and Taxation Act. He further explained that the text highlighted in yellow represents content previously reviewed by committee members and that text highlighted in green represents updated content since the last committee meeting.

Trustees made additional changes to the policy and then directed Administration to provide a new draft with these changes incorporated for discussion at the next special meeting/policy workshop.

Victim’s Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Policy

Mr. Archer explained that the Policy Committee last reviewed the text highlighted in yellow at the December 10, 2019 Committee meeting and that these proposed changes were reviewed by legal counsel. Further updates were made to include a new definition of “Gender Violence” under Article II, as requested by Policy Committee members. This updated definition was provided by legal counsel and is highlighted in green. After review and discussion, trustees made additional changes in Article II, B and Article VI. Ms. Vieth then polled the board to accept all proposed changes including the changes discussed tonight. All trustees voted yes. Ms. Banek was absent. This policy will be brought to the next regular board meeting for final approval via a resolution.

Use of the Library Policy

Mr. Archer explained that most of the changes made by Administrative staff which are highlighted in yellow, are operational updates made for readability, clarity, etc. and proceeded to go over them. Ms. Vieth then polled the board to accept the proposed changes. All trustees voted yes. Ms. Banek was absent. This policy will be brought to the next regular board meeting for final approval via a resolution.

Personnel Policy

Mr. Archer explained that trustees had reviewed revisions to this policy at the December 17, 2019 board meeting which the Policy Committee had approved at their meeting earlier that month. Approval of the Policy by the full board was deferred at the request of Mr. Archer who reported that updated information had been obtained regarding tuition reimbursement for employees pursuing an MLS degree. Article XI, Section 3A has been reworked by administrative staff and is being presented for consideration and discussion at tonight's meeting. After review and discussion, Ms. Vieth polled the board to accept the changes as presented. All trustees voted yes. Ms. Banek was absent. This policy will be brought to the next regular board meeting for final approval via a resolution.

Adjournment: Ms. Larson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Oakley to adjourn the meeting. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. Roll call was as follows: Ayes; Ms. Vieth, Ms. Oakley, Mr. Larson, Ms. Dobbs, Ms. Singer, and Ms. Valenziano. Nays; none. Ms. Banek was absent. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary

Wendy Vieth, President