

**MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

1. At a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Library System held on February 9, 2004 at the new Ida Branch Library, the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Fred Lux. Roll call by Secretary Larry Gregory follows:

**Present:** Cathe' Calder, Chair (arrived at 6:10 p.m.); Fred Lux, Vice-Chair; Larry Gregory, Secretary; Elizabeth Taylor, Trustee; Nancy Colpaert, Director; and Diane Fetterly, Recording Secretary.

**Excused:** Barb Mazur, Trustee

**Staff:** Nancy Bellaire and Barb Drodtt

A quorum being present, the Board proceeded to transact business.

2. Motion by Trustee Taylor, supported by Secretary Gregory, to accept the agenda as printed. Motion carried.

3. Motion by Secretary Gregory, supported by Trustee Taylor, to accept the minutes of the regular board meeting on January 12, 2004 as presented. Motion carried.

4. Public Comment - none.

5. Joyce Davis, chair of Ida Library Advisory Board, thanked the board for their continued support working with the township on facilities. In the past five months, the Ida branch has seen library services increase 50%. Monday nights are extremely popular, we are open until 8:00 p.m. Two people are always on the Internet, with two waiting. We could use more computers. Traffic is constant. We are serving the public very well and they are taking advantage of services offered. We could always add to the collection; interests change and would like to provide new items in the collection. We would appreciate additional hours, more staff help on Monday night. It's a good thing to have these types of problems; we are very pleased to have this new building.

6. Barb Drodtt, Ida Branch Librarian, reiterated it's nice having a community room for meetings such as tonight's. She enjoyed operating the bookmobile, could tell you where every book was in it, and the same thing in former Ida library. Now she can't do that as much, things move quickly, very busy behind the circ desk. Could use another circulation computer, people are waiting to check out things. Two story times are offered and parents appreciate the two sessions. She'd like to see the board add more hours, possibly one more evening. Teachers are encouraging their students to use the library at night.

Barb is serving as a member of the senior task force committee. The committee is looking into coordinating services with other senior services such as Meals on Wheels, and getting the word out about the Library of Michigan's services for the Blind & Physically Handicapped.

7. Doris Dunsmore, Friends of Ida Library, said they have a treasury of funds to spend. They have very successful used book sales. The group would like to install a lighted sign. The township would like to maintain control of the sign. The Friends group has purchased two wing backed chairs, a clock, and many other items with their money.

## 8. Consent Agenda

Motion by Vice-Chair Lux, supported by Secretary Gregory, to accept the items on the consent agenda, including the January 2004 Financial Report, and place on file. Motion carried.

## 9. Committee Reports

### Finance Committee

Finance met on Friday and went through a number of items. It was noted that we paid out more in bills than we received in revenues during January. At this time of year, we are dependent on how taxes are paid to us. Money carried over from last year made it possible to pay January bills.

It is important for us to start thinking about the millage. We are working on a timetable and next month we need to take a closer look at how much money we need to ask for as we approach the millage election set for August. We have two different millages to look at; one is a renewal of the standard one that has been in place for 8 years, and the other is the renewal of the 2000 millage increase. The question is do we bundle the two together to ask voters in one vote? In bundling them, do we add them, this is what we currently have, this amount of money has now brought us into 2004 to the same level of services that we were able to deliver in 1995. Do we ask for additional millage on top of that? Do we bundle what we now have or do we bundle and add some? All are significant questions we have to hash out. We will need to seek approval of the County Commissioners in April to put the request on the August ballot. All the work in the Strategic Plan is directly tied to millage. How much of the strategic plan will we be able to deliver if we do not have additional millage?

Secretary Gregory would like a list of agencies asking for increases this year too and how much.

### Policy & Personnel Committee

Committee met on Feb 6th. Chair Larry Gregory noted Director Colpaert has started her Open Door Meetings and commended her on the move to educate the public on exactly what we are doing and what services we provide. The committee discussed computer time limits, but didn't come up with a solution since not all branches have the same amount of space.

The Facilities Committee, Community Partnering Committee and Technology Committee did not meet. There was also no meeting for the Woodlands Library Cooperative Governing Board for January.

### Legislative Update

Secretary Gregory reported that the State of Michigan budget woes will continue into 2005, with a projected billion dollar shortfall.

#### 10. New Business

Motion by Trustee Taylor, supported by Secretary Gregory, to approve the bills for month ending January 31, 2004 in the amount of \$598,659.86. Motion carried.

Motion by Vice-Chair Lux, supported by Trustee Taylor, to approve the fine amnesty program waiving fines during the automation system upgrade from March 6 through April 15. Motion carried.

Motion by Vice-Chair Lux, supported by Secretary Gregory, to change library policy to allow two renewals on VHS videocassette tapes, to be implemented as part of the automation upgrade. DVD's are not included. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Taylor, supported by Vice-Chair Lux, to approve the change to Section 1.206 (3) B. of the Retiree Health Care Plan as recommended by Retiree Health Care Attorney Michael VanOverbeke. Motion carried.

#### 11. Director's Report

Director Colpaert received a call from a patron suggesting that we enlarge the picture used on the 2003 Christmas card featuring the riverbank at Ellis and sell it as a fundraiser.

We have submitted all of our applications for USF discounts prior to the February 4th deadline. We receive more than \$50,000 in discounts for long distance services, phone lines at branches, the wireless area network, etc. each year.

Open Door Meetings at branches have begun and a schedule of dates and branches was distributed. Board members were encouraged to join her.

She displayed a few of the 500 books five branches of the Monroe County Library System received from the Brownstone Foundation. Ms. Diane Brownstone from New York is encouraging young children to read or have their parents to read to them and gave books to school districts in Michigan who failed to improve in their reading skills.

The Low Vision Coalition is sponsoring a Low Vision Fair at Ellis on Wednesday, February 11. Fifteen agencies are participating in this event.

We received a \$4,000 MCACA grant for Black History Month activities. The big concert culminating events is Saturday, February 28th at River Raisin Centre for the Arts.

Assistant Director Nancy Bellaire shared pictures of the interior and exterior of the Bedford Branch Library renovation site. The contractor said the project is expected to be done June 23.

## 12. Board Comments

Board members discussed the time Director Colpaert is spending answering letters from Dean Patten regarding his concerns about the Monroe County Library System and the letters he is circulating to Monroe residents containing inaccurate information about the library. Board Chair Catharine Calder and Director Colpaert will meet to discuss how to address the misinformation for the general public.

## 13. Board Comments

Vice-Chair Lux said it is great to be back following surgery. Trustee Taylor's suggestion about dealing with negative publicity is right on target. That is the major issue facing us right now.

Trustee Taylor commented on letters attacking MCLS and Director Colpaert personally.

Secretary Gregory is glad Vice-Chair Lux is back. He commended Barb Drodts and the Ida staff; he was here at the grand opening. He also commended Nancy Bellaire for doing a good job monitoring the Bedford renovation project.

Chair Calder also welcomed back Vice-Chair Lux. She thanked Director Colpaert for keeping the board up to date with Dean Patten letters and dealing with it in a levelheaded way. She is excited about the Low Vision Fair. The committee started a couple of summers ago, broadening into a wide coalition. She encouraged board members to attend Black History Month activities in branches.

## 14. Public Comment - none.

## 15. Announcements

Date of Next Board Meeting - Monday, March 8, 2004 @ 7:00 p.m., at the temporary Bedford Branch Library location, 6642 Lewis Avenue, Temperance.

## 16. Adjournment

Motion by Secretary Gregory, supported by Vice-Chair Lux, to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 p.m.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Gregory, Secretary

Catharine Calder, Chairperson