

**FREEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

August 14th, 2024 – 6:00 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Freeport Public Library Board of Trustees was held in the Library Board Room on August 14th, 2024. Board President Mary Kaufman presided and called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Notice is hereby given that a majority of a quorum of the members of City Council of the City of Freeport may be present at the above-referenced meeting. No action on the part of the City Council will be taken.

Members Present:

Julie Reynolds	Renne Barr	Mary Kaufman	Betty Butler
Al Evon	Alan Greene		

Members Absent:

RoseMarie Brubaker	Lucas Kramer	Tasha Mazique
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Also present, is Executive Director Ashley Huffines. Kya Eckert acted as the Recording Secretary.

II. CHANGES/CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(Greene/Reynolds) Motion to approve the July 10th, 2024 meeting minutes.
6 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

Huffines discussed the balance sheet and budget report, confirming that everything is on track. The report shows that taxes have been collected. She also mentioned receiving grants from the Community Foundation of Freeport and the state earlier this week. The topic of janitorial expenses was raised again, with Huffines discussing the reappropriation at the end of the budget process.

(Reynolds/Greene) Motion to accept the July 2024 financial report.
6 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kaufman thanked the board for their guidance in leading the meeting. She also spoke about her first phone call from a patron as the Board President. Fortunately, Kaufman was able to take the call and discuss their concerns. This generally does not happen, but if someone does have a complaint, the board takes it as an opportunity for improvement. She also mentioned the photos from the library's recent Facebook post about the end of the Summer Reading Party.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

July was another really good month for the library. Summer Reading ended on August 10th and the End of Summer party was on August 8th.

Administration

Huffines will start working on the initial draft of the 2025 budget in the next few weeks. She will be presenting it to the city on October 7th, and the draft should be available for the September meeting. There is also a plan to meet with the foundation to finalize the 2024 budget and discuss the process for the 2025 budget.

Benchmarking study with HR Source has been completed, and Huffines, Kramer, and Kaufman will review it and report findings to the board. This information will be beneficial for the 2025 negotiations.

Facilities

Parking lot repairs went very well. All communications went smoothly between Fehr Graham and NTrak. We are waiting for the final cleanup and striping in the next 2 weeks, weather permitting.

Capybara Cafe: In late July, Capybara announced that they would not be renewing their lease as they are relocating their business to Milwaukee. They have recently spoken with Huffines about possibly breaking their lease and closing as soon as the end of August. The board members expressed their disappointment in losing the cafe.

Huffines reviewed her outreach for the previous month, including the Rails member meet-up held at the library on July 17th. Her current projects include updating the facilities plan, website accessibility, the 2025 budget, and the benchmarking study.

State of IL Technology Grant Project Progress

Huffines discussed the introduction of new staff computers, as well as new processes and procedures for storing, sharing, and accessing documents due to the switch to browser-based Microsoft 365.

Evon inquired about also transitioning patron computers to browser-based Microsoft. Huffines mentioned meeting with IT from the Rockford Public Library to gather more information on that. Evon also asked about storage for the patron information software, to which Huffines replied that it is hosted through our consortium.

Capital Improvement Plan Review

Due to unexpected obstacles in the previous month, Huffines has not made progress on the Capital Improvement Plan, but projects to have it ready by the end of the year, along with the 2025 budget.

VII. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

Adult Services

Huffines reported 121 library program attendees for adult programming last month, the highest attended being the John Lynn presentations, with 39 attendees. As always the crafts were well attended, and outreach is going well.

Circulation

Huffines reported that the circulation for July was about 9300. We are still seeing steady use of our digital collections. There has been a significant increase in kids' card registrations over the summer. When Kaufman asked about the age for getting a library card, we mentioned that kids can have one at any age as long as their parents want them to have it. However, most parents don't get their kids their cards until they are older because it's easier to keep track of them that way. Kaufman also commented on the consistent growth of card registrations across different age groups.

Youth Services

No Summer Reading statistics yet! Amanda was unexpectedly out of the office recently, so we don't have those numbers yet. But July was a really busy month for youth with record-high numbers for

programs and participation. Highlights included Stella the two-toed Sloth from Animal Quest visiting the library and storytime at the Stephenson County Fair. There were 2066 total program attendees for July and great numbers for teens as well.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Change Order Approval for Parking Lot Project

Kaufman mentioned that Huffines reached out to her a few weeks ago about the change order for the parking lot repairs. Greene confirmed that Huffines sent an email to the board members about the change order. She explained that after the first week with Darren and Alex from Fehr Graham, they assessed what had been completed and identified areas that needed attention but were not part of the original plan. This led to an increase of up to \$54,000, bringing the total price to just under \$137,000. The work has already been completed. Huffines explained that she sought counsel and spoke to the city manager about this decision. Butler commented on the email sent out and said she's fine with doing whatever needs to be done for the parking lot.

Some feedback that Huffines has received from the public is confusion about what work was done. Her response is that often, maintenance is not about fixing large problems; it can be about preventing them.

(Greene/Barr) Motion to approve the change order for the parking lot project as presented. 6 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

X. DISCUSSION

None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

(Greene/Barr) Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 pm. 6 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

Submitted by Kya Eckert