

FREEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
September 11th, 2024 – 6:00 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Freeport Public Library Board of Trustees was held in the Library Boardroom on September 11th, 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:

Renee Barr, RoseMarie Brubaker, Al Evon, Alan Greene (6:30pm), Julie Reynolds, Mary Kaufman

Members Absent:

Betty Butler, Tasha Mazique

Also present, Executive Director Ashley Huffines and Kya Eckert acting as the Recording Secretary.

II. CHANGES/CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

No longer need to enter Executive Session.

Questions for Comments from Public/Media

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(Reynolds/Barr) Motion to approve the August 14th, 2024 meeting minutes.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

Kramer reviewed the financial report.

(Reynolds/Brubaker) Motion to accept the August 2024 financial report.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kaufman congratulated Amanda Meyers for her dedication to the Youth Department and a successful summer! She also highlighted Stephanie Brashaw's 25 years working for the Freeport Public Library.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Administration

Huffines spoke briefly about adding a part-time librarian's assistant to the team, explained further in New Business.

Huffines has been working on the first draft of the FY2025 budget. She shared the draft with the board to review and will move further in this process in the next month. She plans to bring a final budget to the October board meeting. Evon asked if becoming a library district would significantly affect the library's budget, to which Huffines replied yes and no. There would be different financial outcomes depending on if the library were to go with the school district or other avenues. She spoke about the logistics of becoming a district, control of the levy, campaigning for a higher property tax, and board elections.

Facilities

Parking lot repairs were completed last month. We are waiting on the final clean-up and the invoice. When the invoice is paid, the payment will appear on the budget report differently, but Huffines is working with the finance director to ensure the transaction goes smoothly.

This week, new carpeting has been installed in the Meeting Room. This update is a significant improvement and creates a more welcoming environment for the various community groups that utilize the area.

June Sloan is running the cafe until December 31. Although Jonah and Valentina are no longer working in the cafe, they worked with June to revamp the menu. The new hours of the cafe are Monday-Friday 11-2. I already have two interested businesses that are preparing proposals for the board.

The computer project is progressing well, and we are learning as we go. We are using Microsoft 365 on the new devices. However, we have found that the free software does not meet our requirements. As a result, Huffines will budget the necessary Microsoft 365 software for the necessary devices. Also in August, Huffines was contacted by CPR Electronic Recycling, and we had the opportunity to recycle years' worth of technology that was taking up space in our storage room.

Huffines reviewed her outreach and meetings. Current projects include updating the facilities plan, website accessibility, and the benchmarking study.

After her report, Huffines presented information from the library's HR Source Benchmarking study. The data was developed and analyzed by utilizing surveys from other libraries and non-profits. The report shows that the Freeport Public Library has 0 positions below the range minimum and 0 employees above the range maximum, with all 17 positions falling in the middle of the pay scale. Employee pay rates slightly exceed the competitive average by 1.5%. This report will help Huffines make decisions regarding job descriptions and compensation for the next 3 years. Huffines is aiming to finalize a pay scale for non-bargaining positions with a policy for minimum and maximum pay in November. The board discussed the parameters of bargaining and non-bargaining positions as well as the financial stability of the library if we were to move towards becoming a district. Huffines provided some clarity on the logistics of becoming a library district. We aim to have this policy in place and ready for negotiations for FY2025.

VII. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

Adult Services

Huffines reviewed the adult program attendance and outreach. Also reported gearing up for One Book One Freeport 2025.

Circulation

Circulation went down slightly in August, which is expected. The report shows ebooks and audiobook usage is still very strong.

Youth Services

Amanda Meyers attended the meeting to update the board about her very successful summer. She presented, showcasing her variety of programs for kids of all ages, such as Make it Mondays, Library Olympics, Family Fort Night, and Stella the Sloth. In total, there were 6048 program attendees, marking a 25% increase from the previous year. Amanda and the Librarian's Assistant, Erin Schrader, organized and held 141 programs in 10 weeks. Amanda praised Erin for quickly adapting to her role and taking on programming, particularly mentioning the success of the Library's Art Camp and teen programming. Looking ahead, Amanda expressed her enthusiasm for the upcoming homeschool happenings program, which saw 50 kids attending the first event!

You can listen to the same report given at the [9/9/24 City Council Meeting](#).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

2025 Holiday Closures

(Greene/Reynolds) Motion to approve the 2025 Holiday Closures.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

2025 Board Meeting Dates

(Brubaker/Greene) Motion to approve the 2025 Board Meeting Dates.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

Part-Time Librarian's Assistant: No names will be used, so we do not have to enter Executive Session. An employee asked to reduce their hours, and to accommodate this request, Huffines discussed the matter with Board President Kaufman. Kaufman gave her approval to move forward with the process of adding another Librarian's Assistant to the team. Huffines worked with city finance and HR before posting the position, and the entire transition will be internal. The board applauded Huffines for her impeccable judgment, recognizing her careful consideration of all options, and her efforts are greatly appreciated.

(Greene/Brubaker) Motion to approve the addition of the part-time Librarian's Assistant position.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

IX. DISCUSSION

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

(Reynolds/Greene) Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 pm.
7 in favor/0 opposed. Motion carries.

Submitted by Kya Eckert