

Rapid City Public Library Board of Trustees
Board Meeting
Monday, December 13, 2021 12:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Rapid City Public Library Board of Trustees was held by video conference call, and was called to order by Faye Bice on December 13, 2021 at 12:01 p.m.

Present by roll call: Faye Bice, Mary Garrigan, Jim Emmert, Christine Jones, Emily Tupa, and Travis Lasseter. A quorum was present. Darla Drew arrived at 12:03 p.m.

Absent: None.

Additions or corrections to the agenda:

Bice asked Terri Davis if it would be possible to switch the order of the training and executive session on the meeting. Davis replied that it would work and that if time was running out, the training could be continued to a later meeting.

Motion by Jim Emmert, second by Emily Tupa to change the agenda by moving the training to after the executive session; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Darla Drew arrived at 12:03 p.m.

Introduction of Staff:

Ashley Bethke introduced herself as a new Library Associate II responsible for early education and spoke briefly about her former positions and time in England. Brady Jones introduced himself as a new Library Associate who used to work at the Spearfish library.

Public Comment:

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

Consent Calendar Items – Action required authorizing the Finance Officer to issue warrants or treasurer’s checks, drawn on proper funds, in payment thereof. The following items are consent items for final action to be taken on by a single vote. Any items may be removed from the Consent Calendar by a Board person, the Director, or a citizen, for separate consideration.

Consent Calendar Items:

Approve Minutes from the Library Board of Trustees Meeting, November 8, 2021

Approve Financial Executive Summary, including Bill List (see attachment)

Motion by Mary Garrigan, second by Tupa to approve the consent calendar as presented.

Terri Davis indicated that there was a typo in the first line of the financial summary which replaced a comma with a period. The year to date revenue was actually \$33,021. For expenditures, \$225,000 has been moved into an appropriate line item and encumbered for the bookmobile. The library has received two resignations since last week – one staff member is leaving to attend library school and another took a position in the legal field. After reviewing online job advertisements, it’s evident that other libraries are also looking to hire right now.

Bice asked if the vacancies would impact open hours at the library. Davis replied that while the library had to close on Sundays earlier in 2021 due to vacancies, she doesn't see this happening again in the immediate future. We have filled several positions.

Christine Jones asked if the vacancies are impacting morale. Davis confirmed this and said that morale has taken a hit since COVID started and the ensuing impacts to staffing. Staff are working hard, there is very little time to focus on tasks off of the service points and seeing colleagues leave can be difficult as well. In response, the library continues to work on morale building. For example, there is a holiday party this week and we communicate with staff about hiring status.

In response to a question from Emmert, Davis replied that the only positions that require a degree in library science at RCPL are for the director, assistant director and senior librarians.

Darla suggested that the board could assist with filling vacancies by posting library openings to their social media and requested notification from Davis for when this is needed.

No further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Director's Report:

Davis reported that we have a new library associate, Brady Jones, who started with us in November. The Friends of the Library donated \$35,000 for the bookmobile and the Library Foundation received a \$50,000 grant from the Vucurevich Foundation. As this leaves us in a good position to purchase a bookmobile, there will likely be action at the library board meeting in February.

In response to a question from Mary Garrigan, the library website has been down for over a week due to a security certificate issue. The issue was resolved immediately before the board meeting.

Motion by Emmert second by Jones to acknowledge the director's report as presented; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

POLICY COMMITTEE

FE Technologies Contract:

Motion by Tupa, second by Emmert to approve a contract with FE Technologies for purchase of replacement security gates and self-check kiosks, in the amount of \$32,371 plus \$2,721 annually for licenses and support.

In response to a question from Bice, Davis indicated that this contract is coming to the board because the cost is more than she's authorized to approve. After reviewing multiple quotes from vendors, the FE Technologies solution is the best option based on cost and features. Both the security gates and self-check kiosks are replacements for technology already in place at the library.

Tupa asked about the replacement cycle. Davis replied that because there are so many different technologies that need to work together at the library, individual pieces need to be kept up to date or else it becomes impossible to provide working solutions.

In response to a question from Garrigan, library cards will continue to work as they do now with the new self-check kiosks.

No further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Library Closure:

Motion by Tupa, second by Jones to close patron access to the inside of the library Monday, January 3 through Friday, January 7, 2022, for replacement of the patron entryway.

Davis explained that the current entryway doors were moved over from the original entrance during the 2002 remodel and as they are aging, replacement parts are becoming more expensive and difficult to find. After reviewing options, it was determined that sliding doors would simplify access to the building for patrons. There are 3 contractors required to complete installation and the next available time to do so is during the recommended closure window. Services will still be provided at the drive-through and online.

Davis confirmed that the board has already approved this project when asked by Bice. There are also no other ADA options to provide patron access to the library while this work is ongoing. However, it is possible that the library will reopen before the 8th if work is completed faster than anticipated. There will be broad advertisement of the closure to ensure the public is aware.

No further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Fines Recommendation:

Motion by Tupa, second by Garrigan to eliminate charging of overdue fines, to be effective January 1, 2022.

In response to a question from Bice, Davis indicated that overdue fines have been charged as long as this library has been in existence. The original intent of fines was to motivate people to bring materials back on time. In more recent times, fines have been shown to be ineffective at encouraging the return of materials in multiple studies. Instead, they become a barrier to service or discourage patrons from returning materials entirely. Many other libraries have taken steps to eliminate fines – most recently New York Public Library. Over the last 4 years, fines as a percentage of the overall budget has decreased. As compared to the significantly higher cost impact of lost materials, overdue fines over 4 years have totaled only \$87,000. If this change is approved, the library would still charge for lost and damaged items.

Tupa expressed her support for the change.

In response to questions from Jones, Davis replied that materials are considered lost after being overdue for 31 days and accounts owing \$50 or more in lost materials are turned over to collections. Jones followed up by asking how other libraries are handling lost items in terms of not charging fines. Davis said that it depends on the library, with some libraries choosing not to charge for particular materials and others charging the manufacturer's suggested retail price or other fees.

Travis Lasseter asked if this change only affected overdue fines and if there was any tracking for the impact on returns when fines on children's materials were eliminated. Davis replied that this change is only for overdue fines and unfortunately tracking numbers are unavailable for the impact of the elimination of fines on children's materials. Anecdotally, there has not appeared to be any negative impact and we did get materials back when a fine amnesty was done during library card sign-up month. If this change does show to have a negative impact on the return rates of materials, then the library could look at reinstating fines or increasing the cost for lost items.

Jones suggested a trial period for the change with tracking. Davis replied that there are limits to the kinds of statistics that can be tracked in the current library software, but we will track what we can. Tupa said that the rollout of this change should focus on the positive side of things but also clarify that there are still consequences for lost materials. Tupa said while tracking data is interesting, there's so much evidence from other libraries that have made the switch already that this would be a good thing to do for our community. Jones agreed.

Bice asked how reinstating fines after a change like this would proceed. Davis said that reinstating overdue fines once this change goes into effect would be difficult, but one option would be to adjust the fees for lost materials.

Garrigan asked how much time staff spend working with overdue fines. Davis indicated that while there's no way to directly track that, they were thrilled with the idea when it was suggested as a possibility.

Emmert said that as long as we still have a process in place to go after the lost materials, it doesn't seem like it's worthwhile to keep overdue fines in place.

Darla expressed her support for the change and hoped that it would encourage people to bring their materials back.

No further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Travis Lasseter left the meeting at 12:55.

Motion by Tupa, second by Emmert to waive \$35.75 in out-of-county fees from 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2021, waive \$365.75 in reversed charges from 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, and waive all remaining overdue charges from 2015-current, amounting to approximately \$87,440.

Bice asked if the \$87,000 will have any effect on our budget and Davis replied that it won't as none of this represents money that has already been collected.

In response to a question from Jones, Davis indicated that the first two parts of the motion amount to accounting cleanup.

No further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

LIAISON REPORTS

City Council Liaison: Drew reported that the city council will meet on December 13 regarding vision projects. Drew thanked the library for working out funding of the bookmobile and said it will be life changing for people in the community. The vision project meeting starts at 5:30 and she invited everyone to attend.

County Liaison: No report provided.

Rapid City Library Foundation: Jones reported that the money is put together for the bookmobile and thanked the Foundation Chair Sharon Hasvold and Davis for the work they had done to pull together funding.

Friends of the Library: Minkel reported that the Friends of the Library elected new officers at their November meeting and voted to contribute \$35,000 towards the purchase of the library bookmobile.

Darla left the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

TRAINING

Motion by Emmert, second by Tupa to continue the scheduled training to a future meeting; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Tupa, second by Jones to enter executive session at 1:13 p.m. for the purposes of a personnel discussion pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1); no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Garrigan left the executive session at 1:29 p.m.; a quorum was maintained.

Motion by Emmert, second by Tupa to leave executive session at 1:45 p.m.; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

Davis rejoined the meeting.

Motion by Emmert, second by Tupa to place the Library Director salary on grade NU26, step 21 of the City wage scale effective December 5, 2021; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

Motion by Jones, second by Emmert to adjourn at 1:51 p.m.; no further discussion; upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

UPCOMING DATES AND BOARD TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Board Meeting	January 19, 2022 by Zoom
Board Meeting	February 14, 2022