

**MINUTES OF THE KEOKUK PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 18, 2020**

1. **ROLL CALL:**

Ed Bazow	— Present	Robin McKray	— Present
Joe Fierce	— Present	Rex Muston	— Present
Nancy Graham	— Present	Sherry Stice	— Present
Kristal King	— Present	Karen Szawiel	— Present
Mike Marsden	— Present	Duane Taylor (liaison)	— Absent

2. **AGENDA/CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:**

President Bazow called the meeting to order at 4:36 pm. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting was conducted over Zoom. Rohlfs asked to add “Nominating Committee” under New Business to the agenda. A motion to approve the agenda with the addition was made by Muston. Graham seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. There were no conflicts of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The minutes of the April 20, 2020 meeting were presented for review. A motion to approve the minutes was made by King. Stice seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

4. **PUBLIC PRESENTATION, OR DISCUSSION WITH BOARD:**

None.

5. **APPROVAL OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Fiscal responsibilities were presented for review. Bazow had a question about the laptops that were purchased. Rohlfs explained that staff needed ones to work from home as the computer class laptops are old and very slow – the ones that still function, that is. These were purchased to replace those when things return to regular business. A motion to pay all bills and salaries was made by Graham. Marsden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

6. **COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:**

Rohlfs reported that she had been in contact with Kimi Buerklin about curbside pickup of the student art work hanging in the Round Room. They will meet on Wednesday, May 20 to get that taken care of. Ellen Norman will meet Emily on Tuesday, May 19 to take pictures for the *Daily Gate City* before it comes down.

REPORTS:

a. **LIBRARIAN’S REPORT:**

COVID-19

For the historical record, as of May 12th 4.28 million people worldwide have contracted COVID-19, and 292,000 people have perished. The United States has 1.4 million confirmed cases and 83,082 deaths, and Iowa has 12,373 confirmed cases and 271 deaths. Lee County now has 18 confirmed cases, and library staff members personally know some of these cases.

On April 27, after our last meeting, Governor Reynolds announced that libraries and businesses could open to 50% capacity starting May 1st. Rohlfs met with Keokuk fire fighters days later to measure the library so they could calculate “capacity.” Informal numbers of the meeting rooms were close to numbers she had been given. It was approximately 65-70 for the Round Room, 40 for the Lower-Level Meeting Room, and about a dozen for the ICN/Small Conference Room. We haven’t received the final numbers yet, including for the main library.

The State Library of Iowa, rather than put out guidelines for reopening, sent libraries a long list of questions for libraries to consider before reopening, in an email entitled “COVID-19 and Iowa Libraries: Considerations on Re-opening to the Public.” The questions, stressed the dangers to staff and the public and issues of finding reliable supplies and equipment, and seems to suggest that libraries consider a slow, phased approach to reopening. It also raises questions of how we could better serve our patrons, even with the doors closed.

Library staff, who have been talking daily online and meeting weekly on Zoom, seemed in agreement after that announcement that new services could be added after meeting CDC guidelines of a 2-week decline in cases for our area.

Discussions in the weeks since have evolved. The library staff are working on plans and procedures to return to the building later this month and begin Curbside Services on June 1st. This way our patrons are not traveling to other libraries in search of service. Library staff are discussing sneeze guards for the circulation desk and what we will need in place to reopen - when conditions are safer. For now, the public is safest outside of public buildings.

Questions for the library board to consider:

Do we want to handle money right now? What can we make free for our patrons, within reason/limits, and how can we encourage patrons to use library resources when they may have past fines and fees? As our patrons face hard economic times and uncertainties on top of a health crisis, this could be a good opportunity to go “fine free” and forgive past fines if the items are returned.

Staff have also floated ideas like – free printing, free faxing, free inter-library loan, and free obituary scanning and printing for Iowa residents. All of this would have to be flexible, based on staff time, supplies, and cost.

Jack Smith asked today if the public would be able to pick up the Howard Jackson grant this summer, and I suggested that those applications could be requested during curbside hours.

A Books by Mail service would be great for essential workers and those at highest risk for COVID-19. Unlike Inter-Library Loan, we would pay for postage twice for this service by including a return mailing label. We would want to test this out, limiting orders to the size of one reusable mailer.

Another question to consider – should we temporarily adjust loan periods, so that patrons leave the house less frequently, and perhaps simplify them as well, so they make just one trip? Currently our longest loan period is 3 weeks, with new books 2 weeks, audiobooks/cds/cake pans/DVD sets 1 week, and other DVDs 3 days.

PHASE 1: CURBSIDE SERVICES – JUNE 1ST

Library staff will work in shifts in the building to maintain physical distancing, and continue to work part-time from home. Work at home includes digitizing and indexing genealogy and local history resources, planning and arranging programs, email reference, and working on

personal continuing education and public outreach. We will work on adjusting job descriptions to reflect working conditions.

The plan is to have curbside hours and telephone reference available 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Returned items will be quarantined for 3 days before staff clean them, check them in, and shelve them or loan them to the next patron.

When patrons are notified that their order is ready, theoretically, they will pull up to (or walk up to) the front of the building, call us when they arrive, and we will put on a mask and wheel out a cart with their item(s) on it. Hopefully they can grab the items through a car window or pop the trunk if they are in a vehicle. I've asked staff to back away from the cart, as library carts are less than 6 feet long. If there are multiple cars, they may form a queue along 5th street.

Inside we will also be cataloging, processing new items, shelving, organizing, inventorying, researching genealogy and local history requests, providing telephone, email, and (NEW!) chat reference, signing people up for library accounts remotely (loosening ID and signature requirements), and working toward online programming and outreach goals.

We have decided not to bring back the student Pages at this time, for everyone's safety.

The board asked what the other Lee County libraries were doing; Rohlf's said she knew of curbside services in Fort Madison with the Director being the only person working, and she had heard of no plans for them to open as of yet.

#KPLVIRTUALSRP

Library staff have been busy this month! Kat Cook, Youth Services, transformed an in-person Summer Reading Program that was almost ready to go, with events meant to draw up to 150 children and their guardians, into an at-home and online program with just weeks' notice. Families are already signing up for the Keokuk Public Library's first Virtual Summer Reading Program. Participants, ages 2-17, are encouraged to track their reading and attend online programs.

At sign-up participants are asked if they would like an SRP bag, which can be picked up curbside – a bag with a paper reading log, various activities, and supplies for 8 crafts, so they can craft along with Kat's "Kid Krafts" on Facebook Live. 200 SRP bags are being put together – $200 \times 8 = 1,600$ crafts kits currently being assembled. Almost every member of the library staff has been cutting out mermaid and unicorn parts, cutting up egg cartons, slicing paper for paper baskets, and preparing other materials. I just wanted to take a moment to applaud the staff for pulling together to make at least 200 summers a little brighter. The great thing about these crafts is that they require simple, recyclable items that most people have at home – a paper plate, some toilet paper tubes, an egg carton. We made 200 kits, because we've averaged 200 participants - but if 200 is not enough, we hope kids will be able to find these materials at home. Kids that submit their reading time and other tasks for the week will be entered into a drawing for prizes they can pick up curbside.

Kat is also recording Radio Story Time for the Keokuk radio station. She has been researching out of copyright books that she can read, chapter by chapter.

Merissa is brainstorming ideas for an Adult SRP, similar to Kat's (minus 1,600 crafts). And she has started a Facebook Live gardening show, so we can follow her adventures in planting a Victory Garden at home!

I've been mulling over ideas like community audio projects and at-home contests and challenges. I also have a cat/bird Shadowbox craft we could put out for curbside pickup, with a Facebook Live or Zoom program.

HOME DIGITIZATION PROJECT: ROMEO J. BICKEL SCRAPBOOK COLLECTION

Angela Gates and Tammy Phillips have received and installed flatbed scanners, and the digitization of Bickel's scrapbooks has begun!

Angela estimates that 11 binders have been scanned out of 44 - 25%. She currently has Circus II, Civil War, Crime & Police, and Tammy has Theaters, Hospitals, and Steamboats. A few of the binders were not indexed, so Angela and Terry Welker are indexing those binders at home. Apparently there are also loose pages that were never indexed or organized to deal with.

Unfortunately, nothing about this project went as smoothly as we had hoped. Decision #1 was to pay for Omeka.net, so we didn't have to purchase a separate server. As it turns out, the University of Iowa's advice was written for Omeka.org, and the difference between the two is more than any of us expected. Their detailed research and advice, for the most part, didn't translate, but it gave us a jumping off point. After much research, Angela and I worked out a (complicated) process to bulk upload binders and their metadata - after a Master index is completed and refined.

Angela Gates: "The public support for this project has been very strong. The Bickels have been a popular request. It has been a long road to get to this current stage, but it's going to be so awesome once we're finished!"

ONLINE SERVICES

Wi-Fi use at 210 N. 5th Street in April was 50% of January and February usage. OverDrive ebook check-outs are 50% higher than previous months. Online subscription usage was dismal. Gale (online journals and Chilton's auto repair) is doing the best, followed by Ancestry.com. Transparent Language had two language learners, which is actually better than previous months. Only five movies were viewed on Kanopy, our new streaming video service. There is room for improvement and opportunities to promote these better this summer.

A motion to accept the librarian's report was made by Stice. Muston seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- b. **KPL Board/Foundation Liaison report:** Taylor was absent and Bazow could not attend the meeting that was held earlier this month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Security Cameras: While the Foundation has met several times about grants and concrete tinting, Rohlf's has not approached them about partially funding this project. Hopefully that is the next thing to get checked off the to-do list.

Community Cultural Partnership renewal: There is no news on the contract with the Keokuk Art Center. Rohlf's asked if the board would like to just keep rent at the current price of \$125 per

month and go forward from now with a one-year extension and then set a tentative time to meet in December 2020 to start negotiations again. The board agreed.

Plan update: Tabled.

Bench: Tabled until summer.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Fines and loan periods:** Rohlfs presented a plan she had been thinking about in regards to what the library could make free at this time to help with the current economic problems patrons may be experiencing. She proposes that now may be the time to go fine-free! Items that have been long overdue could be returned to the library with no cost, but any lost items would still be billed to the patron. She wondered if the board would be willing to go ahead and give permission to waive past fines as well—allowing more access to the library for those who have been unable to do so because of previous fines. A motion that the library will discontinue charging overdue library fines and forgive past library fines in a spirit of community solidarity was made by Fierce. Graham seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- b. **COVID 19:** With the beginning of curbside services looming, Rohlfs presented some options to the board to make things a little easier on staff and patrons. She suggests temporarily changing the loan periods, making all items due one month from the check-out date. The board was in favor of extending those loan periods at this time. As outlined in her report, staff will be working in the building for 4 hour shifts, three staff members per shift. Work from home will continue during the time staff is not in the building. The Round Room area will be made into a quarantine area for returned items. As with any new experiment, things will continue to be monitored and adjusted as procedures go from theory to reality. A Library by Mail program will be instituted starting July 1 for patrons who cannot make it to the library during curbside hours or just aren't able to get out.
- c. **Other:** Rohlfs gave a few tips on Zoom meetings. Graham also expressed a desire to have the next board meeting in person, rather than on Zoom—she would prefer to see faces. Bazow suggested the board could spread out in the library; Rohlfs suggested outside was better than inside, but it may be difficult to hear; Muston thought sitting around the edges of the Round Room would work, but Rohlfs mentioned an article about respiratory particles dispersed through AC vents and those run around the edge of the room. Marsden said we should be role models for the community and set a good example by not meeting in-person just yet. Bazow said we would plan on having the June meeting on Zoom unless things change, and then the board would be notified.
- d. **Nominating Committee:** Bazow explained that it was the time of year to renew officers. A nominating committee brings a slate of officers to the June meeting. It is their job to ask people to serve in those capacities. He also stated that if you are on the nominating committee, you are not eligible to run for office. Szawiel volunteered to head the Nominating Committee.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm. The next meeting will be held on Monday, June 15 at 4:30 pm, on the Zoom platform, unless notified otherwise.