

**MINUTES OF THE KEOKUK PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
July 20, 2020**

1. **ROLL CALL:**

Ed Bazow	— Present	Rex Muston	— Absent
Joe Fierce	— Present	Sherry Stice	— Present
Nancy Graham	— Absent	Karen Szawiel	— Present
Kristal King	— Present	Kathy Fox and Martha Marsot (liaisons)	— Present
Mike Marsden	— Present		
Robin McKray	— Absent		

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

President King called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting was conducted over Zoom. A motion to approve the agenda with an addition was made by Bazow. Fierce seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. There were no conflicts of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The minutes of the June 15, 2020 meeting were presented for review. A motion to approve the minutes was made by King. Marsden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

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

Rohlfs stated that the library had received several patron comments, two thanking the library staff for picking out books for them, one praising the offering of OverDrive so she could share with her students during this time, one thankful that staff located a death date for a family member that they had never been able to find, and some positive comments on the True Crime Book Club and Story hour being offered online so people could participate safely and enjoy.

5. **APPROVAL OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Fiscal responsibilities were presented for review. A motion to pay all bills and salaries was made by King. Fierce seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

6. **COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:**

None.

REPORTS:

a. **LIBRARIAN'S REPORT:**

DONATIONS

We received anonymous donations in the drop box, a VHS from Paul Marshall on the Flood of 1993, two books about Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass from the Keokuk Association for Rights and Equality (KARE), and 6 portraits by CreativeSoul photography, donated by the photographers, Lisa Spees, and Director Emily Rohlfs. As a thank-you for using an image from our local history collection, author Beth Cody donated her book *Iowa Gardens of the Past: Lost and Historic Gardens of Iowa: 1850-1980*.

Terry Welker is organizing donations and withdrawn items for a virtual book sale on GovDeals! Stay tuned for details.

COVID-19 For the historical record, as I am typing this on July 15th, 13.4 million people worldwide have contracted COVID-19, and over 580,000 people have perished. The United States has 3.48 million confirmed cases and 138,787 deaths, and Iowa has 36,322 confirmed cases (9.4% individuals positive) and 772 deaths. Lee County has had 54 confirmed cases and 2 deaths.

CURBSIDE SERVICES

Curbside Services are in full swing. As Rohlf's pointed out in a recent press release – curbside is more than just checking out books. In the last month we've fulfilled at least half a dozen curbside notary requests, completed many free fax jobs (including a 32-page fax), fulfilled almost daily photocopy and print orders (Rohlf's personally fulfilled 8 photocopy orders for one happy patron), and we've even completed lamination orders. We've continued to provide telephone, email, and now chat reference, and Angela and Tammy continue to work on local history and genealogy requests for obituaries and more (more on that later). Rohlf's submitted three press releases on modified library services (Curbside and more), Library by Mail, and Radio Story Time.

Library staff are working hard to provide Reader's Advisory for patrons that miss browsing. Rohlf's made some videos on how to search the catalog for DVDs, Large Print, and youth books for a variety of age levels. Kat Cook has been making short videos with new book covers and short descriptions, always ending with instructions on how to order and pick up Curbside. Merissa Lewiston, who has a background in Theater, has been pairing titles and reading descriptions and the first few pages of books, from non-fiction to genre fiction like mystery, historical, inspirational, romance, and science-fiction. Merissa has made 30 videos that have received 40-60 views each. The books she highlights are quickly requested by patrons.

GENERAL ELECTION & ABSENTEE VOTING

Emily has been talking with the Denise Fraise, Lee County Auditor, about the upcoming election. She said that our precinct might be combined with other precincts for safer in-person voting in another location, but she advised on how the library can help voters with absentee ballot request forms. Rohlf's offered to print the forms for our patrons and have them available for pickup. Fraise said that voters can return a completed request form in the ballot box next to the courthouse on Blondeau Street, or they can put them in the library drop box and the library staff can take them to the ballot box. Bazow questioned whether or not the library could be held accountable if people were dropping them off here and then they might say we lost them if they didn't get counted. It was also suggested that the county auditor be contacted in regards to the latest date those ballots could be requested.

LIBRARY BY MAIL

Library by Mail has begun! So far we are offering this service for free, limiting it only to one order at a time. Polaris, our library catalog, made it so easy to place a book by mail order that, combined with our tight budget next year, we may have to place limits on the service at some point. For that reason, Rohlf's stressed on the website, in the newspaper, and on social media that this is a service for people who need it – those that can't come during curbside hours for any number of reasons.

We have also started reaching out to nursing homes to see if they would like a box of withdrawn Lee County Large Print books. Good to know: Large Print books and audiobooks may ship free through USPS ("Free Matter for the Blind and Physically Handicapped").

WE ARE OFFICIALLY FINE FREE

Patron overdue fines have all been officially waived.

VIDEO SECURITY

Everything has been installed – training is the last thing needed.

PROGRAMMING

Programming is being adapted online and curbside for the pandemic, to the credit of library staff. Kat Cook and Merissa Lewiston are distributing a survey to find suggestions. Those responses have provided some very helpful ideas already.

Rohlfis is planning two Take & Make craft programs for August and September, ages 13+, with the option of doing the craft together on Zoom. We have permission from a paper craft artist to reproduce her Monarch butterfly and hummingbird shadowboxes, each for 25 participants.

Kat, Merissa, and Emily continue to record and edit chapters for Radio Story Time for Radio Keokuk. There are 38 chapters in Anne of Green Gables, so each staff is reading, recording, and editing 12-13 chapters. Chapter recordings are 10-40 minutes each, but it takes a lot more time to record and edit. Chapters 1-3 are available on www.keokuklibrary.org/radiostorytime!

From Merissa Lewiston, Patron Services:

I have been busy recording and editing the Gardening video series. I record and upload those twice weekly, if the weather allows. Other tasks include tending to the garden and researching things like pest control and food preparation so that I can better educate the audience. Most of these videos get 100-200 views. There are twenty videos right now. I am also brainstorming simple recipes that I can cook after a good harvest to highlight in future videos.

We launched the KPL's first Adult Summer Reading Program! I'm keeping track of the Adult SRP reading logs, and so far 20 individuals have read 114 books! Emily and I are discussing prizes for participants and for the top 5 readers.

I'm also working on a new program called "Stitch Niche," where patrons can work on sewing or craft projects and socialize at home.

From Kat Cook, Youth Services:

The Summer Reading Program for kids is still moving along. Thus far, 19,225 minutes (over 320 hours) have been logged by 45 active participants. We're still offering multiple weekly programs online, including Story Time (ages 5 and under), Stay-In Story Time (ages 6-9), Twisted Fairy Tales Book Club (tweens and teens), and Kid Krafts (ages 5+). Twice a month, we go to KCSD and Salvation Army meal sites and hand out literacy packets, which has been well received.

August programs are usually a bit slower, but we will still be offering a weekly Story Time for ages 8 and under via Zoom. Patrons who register before August 1st will receive small kits for easy crafts that will be completed following the books each week. They have the option to sign up for any or all of the crafts that month. For the tweens/teens, we are offering "What the Craft?!", a weekly guided craft via Zoom. Again they have to sign up by August 1st to receive the kits for the crafts and can sign up for any of them.

Programs starting in the fall:

Mondays 6PM (pre-recorded) – "Mindful Minute": Simple meditation for kids that adults could easily benefit from. I'm looking up different ideas now, but have a few already.

Tuesdays, 4PM – "Kids Bingo" on Zoom.

Wednesdays, 10AM: “Zoom Story Time”: Normal rotation of Pint-Sized Picassos, Bilingual, Movers & Shakers, and Scien-Tots.

Wednesdays, 4PM: “Virtual Preschool Circle Time”: Pre-K circle time-inspired Story Time. Weekly letter, weather, calendar, books, and some sort of activity, like writing, counting, etc.

One Saturday a month – “Passport Pals”: A Story Time for a broad spectrum of ages centered on a specific place. There will be landmarks, virtual tours if available, and some cultural insights.

One Saturday per quarter (starting in October) – “#OwnVoices Family Book Club”: we will choose books by diverse authors in juvenile fiction or non-fiction, such as Amina’s Voice by Hena Khan, The First Rule of Punk by Celia Perez, Ghost by Jason Reynolds, or George by Alex Gino. Offering it quarterly gives people a chance to access our physical copy or virtual copies.

I’m also brainstorming the following:

Literary Chalk Art competition (participants would create a scene from their favorite book in chalk on a sidewalk and submit a photo).

3 Sentence Horror Story Competition in October.

Monthly Virtual Cooking Club (teens and adults)

GENEALOGY & LOCAL HISTORY, A REPORT FROM ANGELA GATES

There have been a lot of requests for obituaries, information on the history of various residences (in one instance to learn more about a letter found in a wall!), and verification of burials in Oakland Cemetery. More specific research requests have been made about the cannons displayed in Keokuk parks, Keokuk Medical College, and the history of what would have stood as the predecessor to the Union Depot. Some researchers have been working at their queries for years and we have been able to provide them with answers. Others have continued long-term projects, books, or papers. I’ve been asked for information to help resolve a bank’s Cemetery Care Trust case, and another for material to present to a committee making a county decision.

The Carnegie Historical Museum inquired about a photo for Dr. J. M. Shaffer, which the library has displayed in the genealogy and local history area. The museum houses a taxidermy collection from Dr. Shaffer and they have been working on preparing the exhibit. Dr. Shaffer, along with C. F. Davis, were charged with bringing the bones of Chief Keokuk back to our city in 1883. Dr. Shaffer’s diaries were kept daily throughout his life in Fairfield and Keokuk and have proven to be remarkable in terms of biographical and historical material.

An obituary collection we located during quarantine is in the process of being indexed. Just yesterday this file provided an obituary which would lead to a newspaper search and then finally to a date which had been unknown to the requestor. I was able to provide a birth date for a deceased child and closure to a family member. She had long suspected that the child’s death record was incorrect and the details I provided verified that information.

As for the Bickel project, we are about 70% done with scanning. So far, over 6,000 pages have been scanned! We are currently working on indexing the last three binders – a project that had never been done before.

THE NEXT PHASE

Board members asked for the capacity of the building as per Fire Code. Ed Love with the Keokuk Fire Department reported: the whole building’s occupancy capacity at one time is 140 people. The Round Room by itself is 64 with chairs and tables, or 137 with chairs only. (This struck Rohlfs as a large

number. A very crowded adult event with chairs and 2 tables comfortably seats 50-55 in her experience, but staff have seen much larger children's events, chairs around the perimeter for adults with kids in laps and on the carpet, with about 100 in attendance.) Love pointed out that if we had 137 in the Round Room we could have 3 people in the rest of the building. We were not told the capacity of the ICN Room or the Lower-Level Meeting Room at this time.

We are waiting on a few final PPE items before moving into the next phase of reopening for library appointments. We are waiting on our sneeze guards and poles with chains from a local company. We're waiting on disposable face masks and plastic wrap to cover keyboards (as suggested by other libraries), but we have prepared the rest of the library.

Like most libraries, KPL staff put most of the chairs in the meeting rooms, so there are less surfaces to touch and clean and patrons will limit their stay. Signs were printed to put in the aisles – 1 person or household per aisle. Three well-spaced desktop computers were selected, and set our computer software to limit computer reservations and give a number of free copies/prints.

Monica and Emily discussed library appointments and created a schedule. It would allow for 20 book browsers, 4 adult computer users and 2 child computer users per day. Reservations would be staggered in the mornings three days per week and the afternoon 2 days per week, leaving part of the day for staff to clean and shelve.

With the US now the epicenter of the pandemic, Rohlfs is worried about opening a public building, but a mask rule would make library staff more comfortable. We don't have a State or City mandate requiring masks at this time, and for these reasons and more the State Library suggested back in April that mask rules would be difficult to enforce. Attitudes and policies regarding wearing masks seem to be changing for the better recently. Today Walmart in town is requiring masks for all staff and customers, and now City Hall requires masks. Rohlfs thinks the policy at City Hall gives the library more justification to set a mask policy to safely move into the next phase.

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

KPL FOUNDATION

The KPL Foundation's fountain on the corner of the library park is on and flowing. There was an issue with the water so Rohlfs informed the library Foundation, who informed Abolt. Then Foundation members and Rohlfs were trained in how to adjust the flow of water, and shown the electrical panels. Mike Woodring gave her the combination to both panels later, in case the library staff needs to give the combinations to someone servicing it, or staff have immediate concerns. Rohlfs was confused about the instructions for winter preparations, but it sounds like the Foundation can simply ask the Keokuk Municipal Waterworks to shut off the water for the winter after someone turns off the power on a panel.

The KPL Foundation elected new officers – Martha Marsot and Kathy Fox were elected as Co-Presidents. Andrea Rogers continues as Vice-President, Jack Smith remains Secretary, and Mike Woodring continues as Treasurer. KPL Foundation by-laws now state that their President is the liaison, while Ed Bazow remains the liaison on the library board.

Rohlfs chatted briefly with the Foundation about the library's curbside reading programs, virtual programs, curbside crafts, and asked the Foundation for another \$5,000 contribution for library programming for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. They unanimously voted to contribute \$5,000 for programming, but in two checks to maximize interest income. They were thankful that the library was able to purchase the security system without help from the Foundation, and that an external camera

faces the Park. They also discussed over \$13,000 of Gray Fund interest income that belongs with the library board but is in the Foundation's custody, and they know that the library will eventually ask for those funds to help pay for books, magazines, movies, etc. for the collection, probably in the second half of the fiscal year.

- b. **KPL Board/Foundation Liaison report:** Bazow reported that the Foundation met briefly and went over some of the issues with representatives from Abolt. The water fountain is working but he was unsure as to whether the light was working or not.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Community Cultural Partnership renewal: The KAC board agreed to continue the current contract and resume talks in December.

Plan update: Becky Heil from the State library was open to meeting over Zoom but no time/date has been set yet.

Bench: Since Rohlf's has not heard from the city, the board suggested she reach out to them to get an update.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **COVID-19 and Phase 2:** Rohlf's shared the appointment schedule sheets with the board. Marsden wondered how they could sign up—Rohlf's explained that they could call up to a week in advance, but that a staff member would be at the back door during that time and if the schedule was not full, they would be allowed to come in or sign-up for another day. She stated that we will have laptops available for those needing more than the allotted thirty minutes to complete a form, resume, or have a test proctored. She stated that the next phase would be open with limited stay, but she is not sure when that phase will be safe and appropriate. Marsden offered up that the school district is considering a metric of the percent of positive cases of those who get tested. Currently Lee County is at 4.5%.

Discuss Mask Requirement for the library: Rohlf's stated that she would like to have a policy in place that requires masks for those coming into the library. She stated that while the governor has not mandated masks be worn, city offices have a sign posted stating that masks are to be worn. Most libraries that have opened are asking patrons to wear them, and this week most privately-owned businesses are requiring them of customers. Bazow and Marsden commented that it is not too much to ask for people to wear masks. Fierce stated that it was sensible to ask. A motion to require patrons to wear a mask while in the library, and to post signage stating that fact on the doors, was made by Bazow. Marsden seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- b. **Library Board Continuing Education:** Rohlf's stated that she would forward an article about programming outside the box.

- c. **Other:** None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm. The next meeting will be held on Monday, August 17 at 4:30 pm, on the Zoom platform, unless notified otherwise.