

PARK FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

February 20, 2020

The regular meeting of the Park Forest Public Library Board of Trustees opened at 7:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Those present were:

Park Forest Public Library Board Members: Sevena Merchant, Linda Marron, Dannthy Garçon, Janis Elmore, and James Pressler

Absent: Felicia Rangel (arrived 7:35 pm)

Park Forest Public Library Staff: Barbara Osuch, George Manno, Jennifer Oosterbaan, Millie Robles, Katherine Goosby, Brittany Coleman, and Mary VanSwol

Also present: Park Forest Village Trustee Glenna Hennessy, Alice McBride

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting of November 21, 2019, were approved as submitted.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Library Director Osuch shared a thank you note from Nancy Dannels for her anniversary gift. She celebrated 15 years of working at the Library. The Library received two thank you letters from the Helm family for the flowers sent. The Library received a thank you letter from Women of Love Ministries for our involvement in their toy drive.

Library Director Osuch distributed the March calendar of events at the Library. The Share Space in the Library is on Mindful Living. The Library is giving away tea bags to patrons.

In December, Brittany Coleman completed her Masters of Library Science, and Library Director Osuch and the Board congratulated her.

**AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

Alice McBride addressed the Board about the security plan and asked several questions regarding the need for security and the cost for services. President Merchant thanked her for her comments and stated that security would be discussed later.

Phil Schmehl commented on the Great Books program. He had copies of the Dartmouth magazine for the Library's use.

Glenna Hennessy introduced herself as the new Trustee Liaison from the Park Forest Village Board.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Library Director Osuch stated that each Board member has a copy of the official audit report.

### **REPORT OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT**

President Merchant stated that the agenda is full of financial information as the Board prepares to approve the next budget.

### **REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN**

Library Director Osuch and Brittany Coleman met with the Village Sustainability Coordinator Carrie Malfeo to discuss a tool lending library. The Library would make the tools accessible. Tools would be available to check out to Park Forest and Olympia Fields patrons. The first tools would be gardening tools.

Trustee Pressler asked whether the tools would be mechanical, sharp, or valuable. Library Director Osuch stated that there would be a waiver and instructions. The Village would be responsible for the tools. The Library would be housing the tools.

The Board asked for more information on the program.

Library Director Osuch noted that the additional signage on Orchard Drive has been added. Katherine Goosby and Library Director Osuch visited Elmhurst Library for ideas.

### **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Olympia Fields: Library Director Osuch stated that Olympia Fields Library President Robinson was in earlier but had a conflict for the meeting tonight.

Finance: President Merchant stated that the Board would have a meeting later to discuss the budget. Trustee Marron will schedule a meeting.

### **LIBRARY SECURITY**

President Merchant stated that there are three proposals from security agencies in the Board packet. She stated that the Board is looking at private security firms because of the expense for the Park Forest Police Department. The Library has had no problems with the police, but the Board is looking for a more affordable option. The reason for the security services was not one incident but an accumulation of problems. Library Director Osuch stated that it was noisy, and

some patrons felt unsafe. She stated that the police have done a great job, and she would like the police to continue their services.

Trustee Marron asked why Library Director Osuch was in favor of keeping the Park Forest Police Department. Library Director Osuch answered that the police are professional and have a vested interest in our community. The private security firms are an unknown quantity. Trustee Marron asked who is liable if the police officer got hurt or was sued. Library Director Osuch stated that the police officers were the responsibility of the Police Department.

Trustee Marron stated that she prefers to use police officers for security. The Library gets a police car, uniform, and trained officer. Trustee Elmore asked about negotiating with the Police Department. President Merchant answered that the Board cannot negotiate with them because of payroll laws. Trustee Elmore stated that a security officer would have to call the police if they have a problem with a patron.

President Merchant stated that the Library is paying overtime for the police officers who volunteer for shifts at the Library. The Library problems are not sufficient to pay for the rates from the police department.

President Merchant asked about liability for the security guards and their actions.

Mohammed Yasin stated that the Park Forest crime rate is low, and the security problem is not significant enough to pay the police to work at the Library. The Police Department is close by, and they would be here quickly if they were needed. He talked about hiring a private security firm and training staff on techniques to reduce patron problems.

Trustee Marron stated that having the police officers at the Library is a deterrent.

President Merchant stated that the Library is interested in maintaining security.

Library Director Osuch stated that the Library has had no major incidents while the police are here. Patrons have told her they feel safe at the Library now. Library Director Osuch talked about vetting the security firms who submitted proposals.

Staff member Millie Robles stated that the Library staff or patrons had to call the police upwards of 80 times in one year before the police started providing security.

Trustee Pressler talked about establishing the value of having the police here verses another security presence.

President Merchant asked for more information about these security firms and other security firms that serve libraries.

Trustee Marron asked about the hours that the security firms would provide officers. She also wanted to know about liability.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

President Merchant thanked the staff for the update. Trustee Marron asked about the cardholders report. Library Director Osuch stated that the number of cardholders is going down. Not everyone who uses the Library needs a library card. President Merchant stated that this problem is not unique to Park Forest. Library Director Osuch stated that being fine free removes another barrier to getting a library card. She also stated that the population may be in decline.

Trustee Marron asked about programs that are bringing patrons into the Library. Library Director Osuch said that Chair Yoga has brought in a lot of people. President Merchant stated that some of the people who come to programs are not from Park Forest or Olympia Fields.

Alice McBride asked about the update and whether that was in the Board packet. Library Director Osuch gave her a copy.

The Board reviewed the report.

President Merchant asked about the teen section. Staff member Katherine Goosby said that she continues to work on ideas for keeping the teens' interest. They like programs about food.

President Merchant asked about providing programs and services for men. Brittany Coleman stated that she has some men who come to her exercise programs. There will be a baseball program in April. Vanessa Cameron has a Guys Read display next to the new book section. Trustee Pressler said that in his writers' group, most of the members are men.

President Merchant said that the Board is ready for Bring a Trustee to Work Day.

## **PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

President Merchant noted that vaping was added as a prohibited behavior. She asked about the Rules of Conduct. She asked about adding a point about prohibiting the possession of weapons. She also suggested prohibiting materials of any kind that would be offensive to others. She asked about using headphones and whether that should be specified in this policy.

Trustee Rangel asked about the inclusion of cannabis as a prohibited substance.

Trustee Garçon asked about animals in the Library.

President Merchant stated that she wanted to change one phrase to polite *quiet* conversations on your phone are allowed.

## **HARASSMENT RESOLUTION 2020**

President Merchant stated that the passing of this resolution is the law, and the Library's attorney wrote the resolution for the Board to approve.

Trustee Marron moved that the Board approve the Harassment Resolution as presented.  
Trustee Garçon seconded.  
The motion passed.

### **LIBRARY BUDGET FY2020-2021 - 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

President Merchant stated that the entire Board will be involved in discussing this budget at a separate meeting. Trustee Marron asked for hard copies of the budget.

Trustee Pressler talked about the interest income and suggested investing reserves. He asked whether he could get a proposal from an institution that handles investments.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.