

Black River Falls Public Library

Special Meeting of the Library Board June 1, 2015

Members Present: Jay Eddy, Karen Thayer, Carol Olson, Rhoda Gulso, Chuck Nibbe, Amanda Gunn and Nicole Schweitzer. Tracy Gilbertson and Shelly Severson were absent. Director Tammy Peasley, Historian Mary Woods and community member Mary Van Gorden were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m. by Board President, Jay Eddy. The purpose of the meeting was to address Jackson County History Room funding. No personnel matters were discussed.

Mary Van Gorden addressed those in attendance. Review of History room establishment and guidelines relative to the endowment were discussed. The current balance of the endowment fund is \$210,000. The intent of the endowment was not to fund the history room solely. Other funding sources are options to offset operations costs.

The BRF Area Foundation is responsible for managing endowment funds. The History Room has considerable value to citizens of Jackson County, is a department of the library and owned by the city and people of the area. Fundraising approaches used in the past were reviewed, and potential for future fundraising and cost reduction considerations were discussed (volunteers; consolidation of history fund – remove “Mary Van Gorden” title and move into overall library fund; consider a one-time library fund drive to donate to the library; enlist help of Friends of the Library).

Funding and operation options were discussed. Generality of name of fund may support more donations. Input needed regarding the organizational structure and functionality of history room within library operations. The History room has operated as a unit within the library but has not necessarily been integrated into operations. From a budgetary perspective, with downward trend, the best approach needs to be determined. There are many benefits of continuing operations of the History room. Per Mary Woods, 22 staff hours per week are needed to maintain the History room. Mary is currently working 22 hours per week in the History room and 7 hours in the main library (shelving). The hours worked in the History room are dedicated to: 1) customer service; 2) projects; 3) answering phone calls.

It is difficult to interpret City/Library Human Resources policy for full-time status. Based on input from Jackson County Human Resources, 30 hours per week is threshold for eligibility of full-time benefits. The City’s current health insurance provider regards employees working 24 or more hours per week as eligible for health insurance benefits. Affordable Care Act language is also complicating interpretation. City Administrator Brad Chown is exploring the requirements. Health Insurance criteria and Medicare eligibility limits hours worked to 24 per week.

The next Library Board Meeting agenda will include discussion of:

- 1) Endowment change/consolidation of History Room Endowment with Library fund
- 2) Definition of Historian position and benefits
- 3) Recommendation to have Gil Homstad review specifics of endowment management
- 4) Friends of the Library fundraising group – need to define fund raising approaches and income allocation

Minutes taken by Nicole Schweitzer

