

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library
Board of Trustees**

Call to Order: A meeting of the Alpena County Library Board of Trustees was called to order on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 4:00 pm. by President Joseph Garber.

Present:

Board of Trustees: Joseph Garber, Dustin Budd, Michelle Cornish, Lauren Mantlo

Staff: Debra Greenacre, Jessica Luther, Beth DeCaire

Excused: Quintin Meek

Approval of Agenda: There were no additions to the agenda.

Review and Approval of Minutes: It was moved by Cornish with support from Mantlo to accept the minutes from the February 28, 2024, regular meeting. The motion passed.

Financial Reports: The Financial Reports were reviewed. Garber directed it to be filed as presented subject to final audit.

Review and Approval of Bills: It was moved by Budd and supported by Cornish that both sets of bills as presented be approved. The motion passed.

Director and Leadership Team Report: The written report was reviewed. Greenacre added that she has hired a Marketing and Programming Coordinator.

Friends of the Library Report: Luther reported that the Friends are working on setting up their bookstore and developing additional fundraising ideas.

Public Comment:

Traci Collins, Wilson Township, stated that she would appreciate knowing who the presiding officer of the meeting is. She shared her concerns with the draft of the collection development policy.

Diane Bauer, Alpena, stated she thinks the timeline for the reconsideration process is not long enough for the person requesting the reconsideration. She added that she could not find the form on the website and thinks the received requests should be made available to the public.

Dr. Donald Spaeth, Ossineke, asked that the library set age-appropriate standards for the circulation and location of library materials, adding that exposure to sexual content at a young age can warp a child's mind. He shared a folder of a signed petition demanding that the library board enforce age-appropriate standards in library materials, demanding community input in what those standards are, implementation of those standards, and accountability of library staff to follow those standards. Those signing the petition

state that the support of the operation of the library will be directly influenced by the Board's response to these demands.

Prezza Morrison, Alpena, expressed concerns about the age-appropriateness of books in the library collection and that adults need to be the moral guide of children to protect them while their frontal lobes are developing.

Nonnie Muller, Alpena, expressed concerns about the age-appropriateness of library materials and referenced a selection of Supreme Court cases about schools and school libraries.

Lily Marshall, Alpena, shared that the National Institute for Health advocates for comprehensive sexual education and not limiting access to this information and that it has been known to reduce teen pregnancy, increase abstinence among teens, and reduces instances of bullying and suicide. She stated that restricting teen's access to books with sexual content and LGBTQ+ characters and not books with violence or the military is insulting.

Warren Hoffman, Ossineke, spoke in support of setting community-based age-appropriate standards and book selections should be based on what is appropriate for the community.

Mark Hunter, Alpena, thinks that the responses to the material requests should be tailored to each book and longer explanations of why the book was selected should be included. He added that the American Library Association is not the only direction the library can go in.

Mark Collins, Lachine, relayed the story of a twin experiment conducted by Dr. John Money.

Michelle Smith, Ossineke, wished to remind the board that the citizens of Alpena County fund the library and that they need to listen to the voice of the community.

Adrian MacArthur, no residence given, asked if the library isn't willing to censor the books, why there are sections in the library at all. He added that the library could be defunded if the board doesn't do as this group of people ask.

Old Business:

- A. Collection Development Policy:** Budd expressed concerns about the policy and its references to the American Library Association and the Library Bill of Rights. Garber reminded the board that questions regarding the policy were to have been addressed in advance of the meeting and directed that a committee be formed to address Budd's concerns. The policy committee will include Budd, Mantlo, Greenacre, and any additional staff deemed appropriate by Greenacre.
- B. Millage:** Mantlo raised concerns about the separation of the millage requests resulting in less funding. It was moved by Budd with support from Mantlo to request a .7462 mil renewal and a .1538 mil new request. The motion passed. Greenacre will have the ballot language drawn up by the attorney for board approval at a special meeting.

New Business:

- A. Resolution for Bond Payment:** A resolution was presented authorizing the Alpena County Treasurer to transfer \$154,500 from the Library General Fund to the Building Authority for the May 1, 2024, bond payment. It was moved by Cornish with support from Mantlo to approve the resolution. The motion passed. A signed copy of the resolution is attached to the minutes.

Board Comment:

Mantlo expressed appreciation for the public attending the meeting and making their concerns known. She also expressed her appreciation for the work of the library staff. Budd echoed her appreciation for the community participation.

Cornish thanked the public for attending and let them know that the board is taking their concerns seriously. She added that it is a difficult situation and there are many factors to weigh since the library serves everyone in the community. She encouraged those in attendance to pick up a welcome packet at the main desk to acquaint themselves with all of the services the library offers.

Garber agreed with Cornish's statements and added that a decision on the appeal to move *All Boys Aren't Blue* to the Adult Collection will be made at the April meeting. He explained that if the millage does not pass in August the Library would likely close at the end of 2024 due a lack of funding and that the bond payments would still need to be made regardless of whether the library is open.

Adjournment: Garber declared the meeting adjourned at 5:13 pm. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Cornish
Secretary



Jessica Luther
Recording Secretary