

Bemidji Public Library Board Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2020

Present: Deb Rossman, Steve Pflieger, Lauree Bahr, Heidi Johnson, Kath Molitor, Deb Graves, Joyce Siegert, Sheri Brumback, Sara McKinney, Sharon Geisen
Absent: Nancy Erickson

The board meeting was held via ZOOM.

I. Approval of minutes:

Approval of June minutes: One correction noted: Sara McKinney's first name needs to be corrected in latter part of report. Heidi Johnson made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction. Seconded by Steve Pflieger.

Approval of July minutes: One correction noted: Sara McKinney's first name needs to be corrected in latter part of report. Lauree Bahr made a motion to accept the minutes the correction. Seconded by Heidi Johnson.

II. Manager's Report

A. Financial report: Expenditures for the library were presented but there was no report on the funds of the library board.

B. Usage statistics: The library has been open 31 hours each week for the last three weeks of July. Usage increases with each week that it is open. There were 223 customers in July with a checkout total of 2,975 materials. There were no events, meetings, or activities for children.

C. News

1. Opening of the library is now in phase 4. A staff member sits at the door to explain rules and make sure masks are worn. That will be discontinued so that more staff can be in the library at circulation, reference, and roving. Masks are available for people who don't have them. KRLS is paying for masks for staff to use. New materials are on the tables and patrons can only look at those books. Twenty users are allowed in the library at one time; that does not include staff. Six computers were to be in use by appointment, however, that has not been necessary because numbers were manageable. Computer users get a small buzzer that alerts them to leave after 45 minutes. When they leave, the computer and buzzer are sanitized. The meeting room is being used for book quarantine so no meetings may be held there. Returned books go into big bins for 72 hours. No furniture is out so people cannot sit down except for at computer stations. Bathrooms are open to the public and cleaned frequently.

Phase 5, with the opening of stacks to browsing, will be implemented slowly. There still is no date for when in-person programming or meetings will be held. More and more services will be offered as allowed by the state. Patrons have been cooperative and thankful for the services. There is no pushback about restrictions and masks. Curbside service continues and is well-utilized. Hours will increase and staffing needs will change. Road construction on city streets near the library inhibits use and has helped in making a slow transition.

2. Mural. A painted mural by local artist, Wesley May, has been added to the wall of the children's section. The purpose of this project is, "The mural will engage the community, bring awareness of the history and culture of northern Minnesota, provide connections to our indigenous heritage, and bring the work of a local First Nations artist to library patrons and the community." The mural cost was \$8,000 and was paid for with a Minnesota Legacy Grant. The library partnered with the City of Bemidji Public Arts Commission and was approved by Nate Mathews of the City of Bemidji. Silvia Wildgen will help with publicity. The staff is working on bookmarks and a display that explains the mural and its components. The mural uses four colors that Indians use and they represent the four types of humans. Handprints on the mural are those of Bemidji Public Library staff. Sheri explained that the Kitchigami Regional Library System gets a

sum every year. Marion, the previous director, set aside \$10,000 for art projects for libraries. Shari sent in a grant proposal to request money for a project. It met the guidelines and the mural became a reality. This is a taxpayer-funded project.

3. Staffing. Robbyn Younggren resigned, effective August 7 due to Covid-19 because of a family member at high risk. After an internal advertisement, Michael Schumacher, a current substitute, was hired for the part-time, 30-hour position. His start date is August 17.

III. Old business

A. Publicity on opening of the library. An ad on the radio has not been done. Sheri will have Amy write a press release. Lauree and Steve thought we should not since Covid numbers may go up again. Sheri feels that the Bemidji Public Library is doing better than most of the other libraries in the system. The state government will determine drastic changes or mandates. There will also be recommendations from the Kitchigami Regional Library System.

B. Automatic toilets. The City of Bemidji declined so they will not be installed.

IV. New business

A. Bins for quarantine. Sheri requested funds to purchase two more bins on wheels to use for quarantining books when they are returned. They are 4' x 2' in size, 8-bushel capacity. The purchase price is \$555.88 which includes shipping. She had asked KRLS to buy them but they declined. After the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, the bins can be used for other purposes. Lauree Bahr made a motion to buy the bins, seconded by Steve Pflieger. Approved unanimously by board.

B. Thank you notes. There are some donations and/or memorials for which thank you notes will be written. Sheri will prepare the information for Joyce to pick up.

V. Kitchigami Regional Library Service Report: No report.

VI. Friends of the Bemidji Public Library Report: Sara McKinney and Sharon Geisen attended as representatives of the Friends. They will not be opening the Red Door store for a while yet. Most of their volunteers are older people so they want to wait until it is safe to operate. Their September 1 newsletter will explain reasons for closure and no donations. They have enough funds to meet their expenses. Steve Pflieger thanked the Friends for the grant he received to purchase books for one of his schools. He asked when he can apply for a grant to get books for his other school.

VII. Adjournment: Heidi Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Deb Graves.

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 8, 2020.

Respectfully submitted by
Joyce Siegert, Secretary