

Bemidji Public Library Board Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2020

Present: Deb Graves, Deb Rossman, Stephen Pflieger, Joyce Siegert, Heidi Johnson, Lauree Bahr, Sheri Brumbach, Terry
Friends of the Bemidji Public Library: Terry Thomas
Absent: Nancy Erickson

The board meeting was held via ZOOM.

I. Approval of March minutes: Motion to accept as amended by Lauree Bahr, second by Heidi Johnson.

II. Manager's Report

A. Financial report: Usual purchases of custodial and operating expenses.

B. Usage statistics: For four weeks, patrons had no access to library materials. Electronic media exploded during the shutdown. Usage is up for eBooks and eMagazines. No checkouts in the library but patrons may request books and participate in curbside pickup using the following schedule starting April 15:

Monday: Thursday 10:00-12:00, 4:00-6:00

Friday: 10:00-12:00, 2:00-4:00

Saturday: 10:00-1:00

C. News: The library closed due to Covid-19 restrictions on Wednesday, March 18. Staff worked mostly from home but were recalled on Monday, April 13. They worked full time April 13-15, then went to half-time on-site on April 16. Staff worked half of their scheduled hours at the library and remaining half at home. They were paid for their full scheduled hours.

All staff, with the exception of Branch Manager, Sheri, and Library Assistant IV, Ara, were furloughed to half-time hours as of May 2, 2020. Staff members were encouraged to apply for unemployment for the hours that were cut. Bemidji and Brainerd were the only branches with furloughed staff.

While the library is closed to patrons, work continues in the library: cleaning, rearranging of facility, weeding, processing of new books, carpet replacement, and pulling and bagging of books requested for checkout. Overall feedback about the curbside pickup has been positive but there have been some very rude people who expressed frustration with the state of affairs.

New carpet is being provided by City of Bemidji capital improvement funds.

D. Upcoming programs and events: Sheri is not sure when the library will re-open for patrons to come inside. Major changes may be made: limited number of people, limited number of computers, limited seating, etc. There will be no programming inside the library and no meetings in the meeting room this summer.

III. Old Business

A. Book Sale—No donations from the public have been added to the book sale inventory since the shutdown, but the library has been weeding while closed so there are additional books from that source. Whether to have the book sale or not was tabled until

the June 9, 2020 meeting. Joyce will speak to the secretary of the church about our contract with them and plans for opening the church.

IV. New Business

A. Steve Pflieger arranged for a donation of 1,000 bags to use for the book sale “Bag Day” from Menards. They are a good size and strong enough to hold quite a few books. There will be enough for 2-3 years.

B. Sheri asked that the board be involved in the opening of the library when the time comes that it can open again. Guidelines from the Minnesota State Library Department and CDC will be followed. We may need to study what libraries in other cities and states are doing to come up with a local plan.

V. Kitchigami Regional Library Service Report: None.

VI. Friends of the Bemidji Public Library report: The Red Door Bookstore has been closed since mid-March. Terry Thomas reported that the Friends would be meeting on May 13 for their annual meeting and 2019 report. She is retiring from the Friends board but not from the Red Door bookstore. Co-presidents of the Friends will be Sharon Geisen and Sarah McKinney. They still have funds for a literacy grant and suggested that Steve Pflieger apply for it to purchase encyclopedias for the Middle School. This had been discussed at a previous meeting. The Friends need to pick up money for a deposit so worked out a way to do this with Sheri. We thank Terry for her years of service to the Friends board and continued work with the Red Door bookstore.

VI. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Stephen Pflieger, seconded by Lauree Bahr

Next meeting: July 7, 2020

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Siegert, Secretary