

Bemidji Public Library Board Meeting Minutes January, 2021

Present: Deb Rossman, Joyce Siegert, Lauree Bahr, Deb Graves, Heidi Johnson, Kath Molitor, Steve Pflieger, Sheri Brumback

City Council: Nancy Erickson

Guests: Sara McKinney

The January board meeting was held via ZOOM. Chair, Deb Rossman, called the meeting to order.

I. Approval of December minutes as corrected: Motion to accept by Heidi Johnson, seconded by Stephen Pflieger.

II. Manager's Report

A. Financial report: Expenditures for library supplies are down because fewer people use the library. Fewer paper, printer ink, and other supplies are needed. Board funds of \$1,554.64 had been used to purchase a disinfectant sprayer and supplies. There was no complete report of board fund usage and a balance. Steve Pflieger asked that a full financial report of the board's funds be available at the February meeting since we have not had one for a few months.

B. Usage Statistics: The library is running smoothly. More patrons are coming in so it is starting to get busier. The library is open full hours in comparison to others in KRLS that are open limited hours, or in the case of Brainerd, still offering only curbside service.

In December, the library was open 216 hours, had 6,599 customers, and checked out 8,293 materials. There is an increase of usage of children's online programming. Ten programs were held at about 20 minutes each.

Statistics for the year 2020 show checkouts at 75,705, which is good considering that the library was closed April, May and June, and provided limited services when opening occurred. Seating is limited to one chair at each computer, one in each of the three study rooms, and two at each table in the main library.

Internets users totaled 11,458. There are eleven computers but only 7 available. They have no video capability. Patron usage is limited to one hour/day unless taking a class. Some students come in for all day. They are doing online learning and using the conference rooms to study. One had a medical emergency so Sheri will bring that up at a manager's meeting next week.

Some patrons have to go to court on ZOOM so they come to the library but don't know how to use it or get connected. It is up to library staff to help them. Others need to apply for jobs online and need help. People are intimidated by tech issues. To accommodate expanded usage in a closed room, a room was cleaned out and repurposed for study or legal use.

C. News: The maintenance man is using the new electrostatic backpack sprayer and chemicals twice a week before patrons come in. It seems to be working out well. The phone system is on hold until Sheri has time to complete the search. There have been no major problems this month. The library will be closed for

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 18. The winter reading program (SnowTime to Read) is running again this year for two months and will end February 28. KRLS purchased a new program called Beanstack so it is being used systemwide. The address to register and participate is <https://krls.beanstack.org>.

III. Old Business:

A. Computers for the library. The board had suggested that Sheri look into the cost of purchasing new laptops for the library staff with the thought that there may be a way to buy them through board funding. Sheri will look into that and get back to us with more information.

IV. New Business:

A. Election of officers: New officers for 2021 are:

Chair—Heidi Johnson

Vice Chair—Deb Rossman

Secretary—Joyce Siegert

B. Resignation from board: Deb Graves has fulfilled a three-year term and will not be returning to the board. A new board member must be someone who resides in city limits. Steve thanked Deb for her service on the board and for all of her help with the summer library board book sale. We will miss her on the board.

V. Kitchigami Regional Library Service Report: KRLS did not meet in November or December (weather or quorum-related) but there will be a January meeting next week. Nancy Erickson thanked the Friends of the Bemidji Public Library for their steadfast support of the library and asked for a list of purchases the board has made for the library so that she can report this to the Bemidji City Council.

VI. Friends of the Bemidji Public Library report: Sara McKinney reported that the holiday gift tree had 27 donors for a total of \$1,365 to be given to the library. Since 2007, the Friends of the Bemidji Public Library organization has donated \$11,182 to the library.

The Mary Harding Literacy Grants will be opening for application. This grant is given to promote literacy among children. \$500-600 can be awarded to organizations/schools. Previous projects have included Bi-Cap, the Boys' & Girls' Club, and third grade dictionaries. Steve Pflieger received a grant for climate and earth science reference materials for the Bemidji Middle School media center last year and may want to apply for materials for the Gene Dillon Elementary School library this year. Sara will send him application information.

The February newsletter will be coming out soon. Memberships expire on December 31 each year so it is time to renew. Their next meeting will be January 13.

VII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Heidi Johnson, second by Steve Pflieger.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 9, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Siegert, Secretary