

## **Bemidji Public Library Board Minutes**

**June 17, 2025**

**Present:** Ken Hansen, Sandi Marshall, Heidi Johnson, Nancy Erickson, Megan Lysford, Lynn Eaton, Deb Rossman, Sheri Warren, Sara McKinney

**Guests Present:** Lyndi Odegaard, Emily M., Jessica

The June board meeting, chaired by Ken Hansen, was held in the library meeting room at 5:00 pm.

**Approval of agenda and meeting minutes:** Nancy requested two changes to the agenda, to add a presentation from our guests and to move Lynn's report up. Nancy moved to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Megan. Motion passed. Sandi made a motion to approve the May minutes, seconded by Heidi. Motion passed.

1. **KRLS Report:** Lynn reported that the city and county have begun the budgeting process for 2026 and provided a preliminary proposed budget for the library. It includes a proposed 3% increase for both, requesting \$154,250 from the city and \$450,760 from the county. KRLS covers some expenses as well, including part of the branch regional manager's salary.
2. **Guest Presentation:** Lynn introduced Lyndi Odegaard, a community member who recently presented similar concerns to the City Council, along with Emily and Jessica. They are very concerned about the safety and comfort of patrons, particularly families with children, due to the large number of homeless individuals gathering outside the library entrance. Lengthy conversation ensued regarding the steps the library and board are taking to address the concerns, especially in regard to smoking marijuana in the parking lot, gathering near the doors, broken glass and vandalism, personal belongings, needles in the bathrooms, and some harassment of other patrons.

Sheri explained steps the staff regularly take and the addition of offering movies in the meeting room to help keep people occupied and noted that this is a community problem not created or encouraged by the library. The staff do not currently have the authority to address loitering outside the actual building, as the city owns the lot, and police are reluctant to address concerns that do not involve criminal activity. It was concluded that a collaborative community solution is required, involving the library and city leadership, the local police department, and programs serving the homeless. Ken suggested that a meeting be scheduled to include representatives of each to clarify roles and responsibilities.

3. **Manager's Report:** Branch Regional Manager Sheri Warren provided written and verbal reports.
  - a. **Usage Statistics:** The activity report for May shows good utilization with 10,466 customers and an increase in checkouts to 7,531.
  - b. **Financial and Budget Report:** The financial report for May shows typical expenditures.
  - c. **Misc. News:** Sheri will be presenting a session at the national ALA conference in late June in collaboration with State Library Services. This is a real honor. Sheri requested funding for the annual subscription to our SenSource People Counter, which the board paid for last year. Sandi moved to approve the \$300 expense from board funds,

seconded by Deb. All approved. Sheri noted the dates the library will be closed for holidays through July 4<sup>th</sup>.

- d. **Upcoming Programs/Events:** A program with author Ken Smith is set for June 28<sup>th</sup>. The children's Summer Reading Program for youth up to age 18 involves 7 programs from June 2 to July 23. There will be a wrap-up party on July 25 at 2 pm.

#### 4. **Old Business:**

- a. **2025 Book Sale:** Sheri reported that library staff have sent press releases out and has sent out flyers, with Nancy's help, to area resorts. All are asked to post flyers in businesses around town. Sandi and Deb did an interview with an intern from the Pioneer for a short article to be printed prior to the sale. Sandi has tried to contact the ChatAbout contact, and Heidi will contact radio station 107.

Sandi and Deb will meet with the church secretary, Jessica, on Friday to obtain the key for the week of the sale and finalize table arrangements. The books will be picked up on Saturday at 9am by Deb and the Bearded Hauler people and will be unloaded along the far wall of the gym. Heidi reported that Joyce has scheduled all needed volunteers. Deb has arranged for the books to be moved by the Bearded Hauler. The stipend amount for them was discussed, and Sandi moved to increase it to \$500 this year, seconded by Nancy. Motion passed. There are additional books at the library to be hauled to the sale, which Ken and Deb's husband can help move. The banners will go up on Monday morning on the church grounds. Two still need grommets to be added. Members will bring various items like walkers and dollies. Sheri will obtain the petty cash from the city for the cash boxes and bring it to Sandi on Monday morning.

- b. **Board Minutes posted on KRLS Website:** Sandi has sent our 2025 board minutes to the KRLS office after they are approved. They have not yet been posted, and our local staff do not have access to post them ourselves. It was suggested that we post a print copy in the library lobby.

- 5. **New Business:** All agreed that the board needs to develop a policy on smoking on library grounds, to be discussed further at the next meeting.

- 6. **Friends of the Library Report:** Sara shared copies of the 2024 Friends of the Library annual report and the Spring 2025 Newsletter. The Friends donated a total of \$11,769.73 to the library in 2024, plus many donations within the community. She noted an ad produced by Pinnacle Publications that is being run on multiple stations for 210 spots starting June 16. It only cost \$200. She noted a recent rare book sold on eBay for \$880, and a large donation of books recently from an estate, including some rare or old books of value.

- 7. **Adjourn:** Sandi moved to adjourn around 7 pm, seconded by Nancy.

- 8. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be July 15, 2025.

Respectfully submitted, Sandi Marshall, Secretary