



**Minutes of the Meeting
The Flint Public Library
Board of Trustees
Monday, November 13, 2023**

NOTE: This meeting was hybrid; it was held both in-person and via Zoom. Meeting minutes are on the library and town websites.

Board of Trustees Present: Donna Bambury, Chairperson; Erin Bennett, Vice Chair/Secretary; Maria Paikos-Hantzis; Allison Sloan; and Susan Piccole

Others Present: Loretta Swift Johnson, Library Director; Annie Wilton, Friends of the Flint; Stefanie McKanas, Recording Secretary

A. CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Bambury called the Library Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 7:01pm.

* Ms. Sloan announced that she is recording the meeting on her own personal electronic device

B. SIGNING OF BILLS:

Ms. Bambury confirmed the bills were signed.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **Ms. Paikos-Hantzis motioned to accept the minutes as amended from September 11, 2023. Ms. Piccole seconded the motion, all were in favor.**

D. FRIENDS OF THE FLINT (Annie Wilton, Liaison):

- Ms. Wilton stated that the “Join Us” reminder postcards (104 postcards) were mailed out to donors from the past three years. Ms. Wilton stated that a total of \$555 was received as of 11/13/23. The postcard mailing usually raises between \$800-1200.
- Ms. Wilton is working on the annual campaign form that goes into the census. It is being reviewed by Ms. Swift Johnson and Michelle Deschene-Warren, and once it is complete it will be sent over to the Town Clerk.
- On December 5th from 9:00-10:30 AM is Senator Tarr's Toy Drive. Donations of new, unwrapped toys are encouraged, but the charities will accept cash and gift card donations too.
- Turkey Trot & Curvey: Ms. Wilton stated that she sent a letter to the Curvey Family outlining all of the programming that was possible from their donations. Ms. Wilton stated that between the Curvey Foundation and the Turkey Trot, \$6,000 was given to the Friend’s last year.
- Ms. Wilton stated that the Friends provided glow sticks for Ms. Swift Johnson to hand out at the Pumpkin Festival Parade.
- Ms. Wilton stated that the check in the amount of \$7,296.43 was mailed out to help fund the technology upgrades.

E. TRUSTEES’ REPORT:

1. Attorney General Response to May 1, 2023 OML Complaint Filed by Allison Sloan

- Ms. Bambury reviewed the two violations from the Attorney Generals response, one violation against Ms. Bambury and one violation against Mr. Timothy Houten. The

Attorney General did find that the Open Meeting Law was violated by Ms. Bambury because she did not disseminate the OML complaint to all Board members. The Attorney General did not find evidence of OML violations against Mr. Timothy Houten.

- Ms. Bambury read a personal statement to the Board addressing the complaints filed against her.
- 2. Review Policy #25: Wireless Hotspot Policy:**
 - Ms. Swift Johnson stated the Library currently has five Hotspot in circulation (originally had nine, but four are no longer in service).
 - **Ms. Piccole motioned to accept Policy #25, Wireless Hotspot Policy. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion, all were in favor.**
 - 3. Performance Evaluation of Library Director- Goals: Postponed until the next meeting on December 11, 2023**
 - 4. Email from Resident to Trustees:**
 - Ms. Swift Johnson and the Board agreed upon a response; Ms. Swift Johnson will send the response email to the resident on behalf of the Board
 - The Board will review how to respond (or not respond) to anonymous emails at the next meeting. Ms. Bennett stated she was directed by Town Hall not to respond to anonymous emails. Ms. Swift Johnson stated that at the Director's Summit Conference, they also advised not to respond to those types of emails. Ms. Sloan stated she would call Massachusetts Library System to see if she could get any insight on anonymous emails.
 - 5. Trustee of the Year Nomination:**
 - Ms. Bambury stated that Ms. Paikos-Hantzis was nominated for Trustee of the Year. The Massachusetts Library Trustees Association received fifteen nominees. The winner has been posted on the MLTA website (Mary Johnston of Westborough).

F. TREASURER'S REPORT:

- Ms. Bambury stated that for the month of September, there was a loss of \$3,900 and for the month of October, a loss of \$2,300 from the Fidelity account. At the beginning of 2023, the Fidelity account balance was \$128,215.58 and currently the total assets are \$120,865.99.

G. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Presentation of Circulation and Budget Reports:

- Circulation for September FY24 was 6,540 (+305 overall YTD in circulation from last year)
- Attendance for September FY24 was 3,650 (+830 overall YTD in attendance from last year)
- Circulation for October FY24 was 6,495 (+1,757 overall YTD in circulation from last year)
- Attendance for October FY24 was 3,926 (+2267 overall YTD in attendance from last year) Ms. Swift Johnson stated that they did not report the out-of-building attendance numbers which did affect the total attendance for this fiscal year.
- Budget: Ms. Swift Johnson reviewed the Budget report. There were no questions from the Board regarding the Budget.

2. Program Statistics:

- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the September and October reports now show programs with zero attendance.
- The Library is still running some passive programs for children.

- In September, Carnival Night was a well-attended, fun outdoor program that brought in 163 people.
- Ms. Sloan questioned Tween attendance and wants to see more educational programming.
- Ms. Paikos-Hantzis requested that reports be emailed earlier to Board members for review rather than in the late afternoon the day of meeting.

3. Staffing and Training Updates:

- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the new Circulation Assistant, Jeff, is a wonderful addition to the Library staff. The second candidate did not work out; therefore, Ms. Swift Johnson will be extending a conditional job offer to another candidate.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that she will conduct interviews later this week for the Page job.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the new hire, AJ, for the Custodian part-time job has started, and he is working out well in the new position.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that she attended the Director's Summit last week in Texas as it was a great opportunity to network with other Public Library Directors. The PLA conference is in April 2024 in Ohio, and Ms. Swift Johnson would like to attend. She applied for a scholarship through MLS, and the recipients will be announced later this month.
- Ms. Swift Johnson requested to discontinue the monthly spreadsheet reports of staff training and workshops to save time. Several members of the Board stated that the reports were valuable and informative and felt the need to continue the reports (even if it is quarterly).

4. Building Updates:

- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the upgrades/repairs to the Meeting Room's technology have been complete. The Meeting Room heat is also in working order after a malfunction.
- ENE performed the system change from AC to heat last month.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the entry lights are filling up with water again. The electrician is working on fixing it with a more permanent solution.

5. Library Programs and Services:

- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that the Library participated in the Pumpkin Festival hosted by the Middleton PTO on Saturday October 21st and Sunday October 22nd. Ms. Swift Johnson and Ms. Wilton were in attendance at the day festivities and at night Ms. Swift Johnson passed out glow necklaces that were provided by the Friends.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that on December 5th from 9:00-10:30 AM is Bruce Tarr's Toy Drive. The Toy Drive has partnered with Power 800AM/102.9FM to broadcast the event.
- "Neighbors in Need": Gift cards are greatly appreciated.
- Ms. Swift Johnson stated that on Thursday, November 23rd is the Turkey Trot. The race begins at 8am at the Library and ends at 10am at the Library.
- The Library will close at 4pm on Wednesday, November 22nd. The Library will be closed on Thursday, November 23rd and Friday, November 24th in observance of Thanksgiving.

6. Career Coaching: Possibility of Working with a Coach:

- In alignment with her assigned, annual professional goal of mentorship, Ms. Swift Johnson provided the Board with a proposal from Steve Butzel, Certified Professional Career Coach. She selected Mr. Butzel for his decades of experience in public libraries and for his passion of working with Public Library directors to build their professional skills such as improving engagement with the community and building political capital.
- Ms. Swift Johnson and Mr. Butzel would meet for 60-minute sessions no less than 3 and no more than 5 times each month. In addition to having a certain number of monthly Zoom (or phone)

calls with Mr. Butzel, Ms. Swift Johnson would have access to communicate with Mr. Butzel through email in between sessions, using a client portal. In addition, she would be invited to attend monthly group coaching calls with Mr. Butzel's other library director clients. The cost for the proposal: 6-month package for \$4,800 and a 12-month package for \$9,000

- Ms. Bambury stated that the 6-month package would make the most sense with the use of State aid money. Ms. Piccole stated that having a career coach helps Ms. Swift Johnson work to continue to develop mentorship. Ms. Paikos-Hantzis stated that \$4,800 is a significant amount of money for a "life coach" [sic]; she would like more information since she felt his proposal was too generic and vague. Ms. Sloan requested to review his website and previous clients before making a decision.
- Ms. Bennett asked Ms. Swift Johnson what three goals she would like to work on with the career coach. Ms. Swift Johnson stated that she would like to work on her political skills, the strategic planning process, and for personal reasons.
- **Ms. Sloan motioned to meet in a weeks' time (Tuesday, November 21st at 6pm) in order for the Board to do some research on the Career Coach and come back with some logical answers to make a financial decision. Ms. Paikos-Hantzis seconded the motion.**
- **After the motion was made, Ms. Sloan stated that she withdrew her motion after having a chance to think it through and she did not want to drag it on with a special meeting. Ms. Sloan also stated she will abstain from voting on this motion.**
- **Ms. Bambury called for a motion. No motion was made; therefore, this matter will be continued until next meeting on December 11th.**

7. Strategic Planning: Possibility of Working with a Consultant:

- Two proposals were sent to Board members via email in July for review.
- Ms. Swift Johnson asked the Board members to discuss the two consultant's proposals in order for a decision to be made at the meeting. Ms. Swift Johnson stated she spoke to both companies and felt that she could work with either one as they both were incredibly intelligent and personable. Ms. Swift Johnson stated that having a neutral third-party consultant with non-biased opinions is going to give the Library the best possible strategic plan.
- Ms. Sloan stated that she did not review the proposals thoroughly; therefore, she does not feel comfortable making a decision at tonight's meeting. Ms. Sloan stated she would like to see a more formal presentation on both proposals from Ms. Swift Johnson.
- Ms. Bennett and Ms. Piccole both expressed that the need to make a decision at the meeting in order to start the strategic process. Both members stated that they felt comfortable making a decision based on the proposals and the questions answered by Ms. Swift Johnson.
- **Ms. Bennett motioned to accept the Strategic Planning Proposal from Greg Pronevitz. Ms. Piccole seconded the motion. With a vote of 3-2 (Ms. Sloan and Ms. Paikos-Hantzis voted "no"), the motion carried.**

H. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 7:00pm.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, Ms. Piccole made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Paikos-Hantzis seconded the motion, all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:31pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Stefanie McKanas, Recording Secretary