



**Executive Session Minutes of the Meeting
The Flint Public Library
Board of Trustees
Monday, December 11, 2023**

NOTE: This meeting was held in-person.

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; Justin Sultzbach, Town Administrator; Stefanie McKanas, Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE SESSION CALL TO ORDER:

Donna Bambury, Maria Paikos-Hantzis, Erin Bennett; Allison Sloan; Susan Piccole; Loretta Swift Johnson; Justin Sultzbach, and Stefanie McKanas

* Ms. Bambury announced that if any Board Member was recording the meeting on their own personal electronic device, it had to be turned off before entering into Executive Session.

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:02pm.

- Mr. Sultzbach stated he met with each Board member individually prior to this meeting to discuss any concerns and the goal of the executive session was to discuss those concerns and figure out a way to work more collaboratively as a Board.
- Mr. Sultzbach suggested working in small subcommittees of two people to “break up” the 3-2 perception.
- Ms. Bambury stated that she has a constant feeling of “being attacked” and she would like figure out a way to work together.
- Ms. Sloan questioned why they are not rotating Board positions as this is still a concern for her.
- Mr. Sultzbach stated that the Library staff do not feel supportive from Board members especially regarding Policy #44, Workplace Code of Conduct Policy. Mr. Sultzbach stated that because the Board Members are elected officials, they are not bound to that document. Mr. Sultzbach suggested that the Board review Policy #44 again to make some language changes rather than withdraw the policy completely, which would be poorly received by the Library staff. He also suggested creating a Library Board mission statement to highlight the collective values of the members and vote it in unanimously.
- Mr. Sultzbach stated that when Open Meeting Law violations are filed, it impacts the moral of the community and consumes Town staff’s time. He asked to kindly “pause” or withdraw any outstanding OML complaints in an effort to display some type of grace.
- There was a discussion about the remarks from the Carnival Night attendance at the last Board meeting and the impact those comments had on the Library staff. Ms. Paikos-Hantzis stated that she was very offended to hear that the Library staff felt uncomfortable since it clearly was not

intentional. She gave examples of how she has praised and supported the staff for their efforts this past year.

- Ms. Bennett apologized to Ms. Paikos-Hantzis for her actions during Candidates night. Ms. Bennett asked Ms. Paikos-Hantzis to work together as a subcommittee. Ms. Paikos-Hantzis stated that although she was hurt by her actions, she would consider Ms. Bennett's request.
- Ms. Piccole stated that one of the reasons she ran for a position on the Board was due to the behavior of the Board members this past year. She stated she is very supportive of Ms. Swift Johnson and the Library staff
- Mr. Sultzbach discussed how the Board can be more supportive to the Library Director rather than undermining her ability to lead the staff. Ms. Sloan stated that she felt she has no voice at times and that is why she filed the Open Meeting Law complaints with the Attorney General.
- Ms. Sloan stated that she would consider withdrawing her complaint with the State if the policy "is taken off the books". Ms. Sloan stated that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is asking her to pursue this Freedom of Speech issue and is requesting materials that support the complaint. Mr. Sultzbach suggested that Ms. Sloan hold off on responding to the ACLU.
- The Board Members were in agreement to put Policy #44 back on the agenda and create a Library Board Mission statement at the next meeting.
- Ms. Bambury stated that she would like to rethink her position as Chair of the Board and possibly have a personal discussion regarding the Chair position with Ms. Paikos-Hantzis at a later time.
- Mr. Sultzbach stated that the resident email from May 13, 2023 could not be discussed in open session and ultimately, the Chair should be addressing those emails directly.
- Mr. Sultzbach stated that he intends of coming to the Board meetings for the next six months as long as he sees progress being made.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, The Board was in agreement to leave Executive Session and return to open session. Ms. Bambury, Chair, voted yes; Ms. Bennett, Vice Chair, voted yes; Ms. Paikos-Hantzis voted yes; Ms. Sloan voted yes; and Ms. Piccole, voted yes.

The Board exited Executive Session at 8:21pm

Respectfully Submitted by Stefanie McKanas, Recording Secretary