

## MUSKEGON AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

A **virtual** meeting of the Muskegon Area District Library Board was held on Monday, February 15, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. at the Muskegon Area District Library Administration Building, 4845 Airline Road, Muskegon. Staff present: B. Hall, M. Higginbottom-Johnson, K. Richards, N. Schaner, A. Susalla, A. Varela, K. Wisniewski and J. Wonders. Also present, M. Anderson, Legal Counsel. Members of the public in attendance: Greg VanWoerkom, State Representative.

D. Hughes called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

Present: Barnes, Hodges, Hughes, Taylor, Arter, Scolnik, Mansfield, Aerts  
Excused: None

### Approval of Agenda

**Motion by Barnes, Second by Hodges**

**That the agenda be approved as presented.**

**Motion Carried**

### Public Comment

State Representative Greg VanWoerkom introduced himself as he visited the Norton Shores Branch Library earlier today and is currently at the Egelston Branch. He will be visiting the Holton and Montague Branches next week.

### Board Development

M. Anderson described the director evaluation process. The evaluation is an annual performance review. The documents include the Board questionnaire summary, Management/Branch Leader questionnaire summary and the Director's self-appraisal. The process begins in October with the board questionnaire, each board member completes a questionnaire and returns it to Human Resources (HR) in November, then HR completes a summary of the questionnaire responses which is discussed at the December board meeting in a closed session if the Director chooses this option. Thereafter, the Chair meets with the Director to present the public director evaluation document. This document is retained by the Board Chair as well as the HR personnel file.

### Consent Agenda

**Motion by Barnes, Second by Taylor**

**That the MADL Board approves the Consent Agenda Items 5.a. through 5.d.**

**Motion Carried**

### Vouchers

**Motion by Hodges, Second by Barnes**

**That the MADL Board approves the vouchers for January 2021.**

### ROLL CALL

**AYES: Hodges, Aerts, Hughes, Mansfield, Taylor, Arter, Scolnik, Barnes**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion Carried**

### Committee Reports

Finance Committee Minutes from February 5, 2021 were reviewed by the Board. The key point of the meeting was to discuss MADL going fines free for materials that are returned after their due date. Please refer to New Business for further information regarding fines free.

### Reports/Questions

K. Wisniewski reported that IT has been researching secondary fail over internet solutions in case of an emergency outage. MADL has implemented LTE cellular backup internet at all ten branches. There was no approval required because of how cost effective the solution was at \$10/month per branch. If there were an outage and MADL needed to enable the unlimited backup internet, it would temporarily cost \$40/month until the fiber optic lines are back up and running at which point we could switch back to the \$10/month plan. T. Barnes questioned why MADL didn't choose backup fiber optic lines instead of the cellular solution. K. Wisniewski responded that the cost would be astronomical because there isn't currently any infrastructure available and we would have to pay for the buildout costs associated with a project like that.

D. Hughes complimented A. Varela on how the billboards are strategically placed around the surrounding communities.

D. Hughes questioned what TumbleBooks is about. A. Susalla described it as a student focused resource for streaming e-audio books for children grades K-6. There's no limit on how many books can be checked out and there's no limit on how many patrons can use the book at a time.

### Old Business

New Muskegon Township Branch – K. Richards reported that the branch is open to the public at 25% capacity and there's been lots of publicity with local newspapers and television stations. The signage for the front of the new location has been approved and that part of the project is underway. The shelving at the old township location has been taken down and will be stored at Administration in preparation for the Laketon Township Satellite location.

Branch Improvements – K. Richards informed the Board that he is working on putting together a report on all of the branch improvements beginning with the Library for the Visually and Physically Disabled (LVPD). The report will include information on what was completed at each location.

Bookmobile – K. Richards explained that there are issues with the production timeline. The company producing the Bookmobile has repeatedly told MADL that the Bookmobile isn't complete yet due to "COVID-19" reasons. MADL has done some investigating on why the Bookmobile project is so far behind schedule. We found that the company that is producing the Bookmobile has also been contracted to produce COVID Testing/Vaccination Vehicles. It seems that their COVID related reasons for being so far behind schedule are not because of COVID shut downs or being short staffed, but because they have pushed MADL's project aside so they can produce COVID Testing/Vaccination Vehicles instead. The matter is being discussed with MADL's attorney to figure out how to make sure the Bookmobile is a priority for the production company. B. Scolnik suggested that MADL receive a concession from the production company since we've surpassed the expected delivery date. K. Richards is concerned because they are very vague with their responses and they won't give us a timeframe for the projected completion. D. Hughes mentioned that their reasoning is very convenient. J. Mansfield is not pleased with the timeline as it's been delay after delay. B. Scolnik is also concerned that MADL has already paid for 50% of the project and this situation is not fair to MADL. MADL will continue towards a resolution to the matter.

T. Barnes mentioned that Michael McGahan, President of the Village of Lakewood Club, is interested in having the Bookmobile as a scheduled stop in Lakewood Club.

MADL Laketon Library Satellite – K. Richards informed the Board that he will be attending the Laketon Township Board Meeting this Thursday, to give them an update on the project. Draft agreements between MADL and Laketon Township and Laketon Township and Reeths-Puffer Schools will hopefully be available in time for the meeting for informational purposes. K. Arter reported that the project has been presented at a work session and there is much excitement about the possible new library.

D. Hughes stated that he and K. Richards met last week with the possible donor regarding a new Storyville at the Ravenna Branch Library. They showed the donor a video from the Muskegon Channel about what Storyville could look like. The donor is very excited and shows a lot of support for the project. D. Hughes mentioned that Ravenna Township completed their own addition on the building and that the Storyville would be designed by them to focus on the needs of that area. He and K. Richards will be meeting with Ravenna Township officials to discuss the possible Storyville project.

#### New Business

Fines Free – K. Richards explained that library fines are a long-established punitive practice to get patrons to return library items. The idea was to change the behavior of the patron to return the item back on time. Items were also purchased in such a small supply based on the population and libraries wanted to get them back out to the public. The practice led to libraries depending on those fines to supplement their budget. The communities that were most impacted by the negative ramifications of fines were poor communities and communities of color. MADL found out in its research that for juvenile fines that the vast majority of youth who could not use the library were in our minority and poor communities. The Board removed that impediment to access for Juveniles in 2019. That same issue impacts the adult population in the same communities. In this pandemic when our poor and minority patrons are suffering more than anyone ever anticipated library fines are impeding access to MADL services.

Patrons will still be responsible for the replacement costs of materials if they are not returned to the library. They will no longer be charged if they are late returning items.

D. Hughes advised the Board the Finance Committee recommends and supports the decision to go fines free.

T. Barnes, L. Taylor and L. Aerts expressed their support to go fines free as well.

#### **Motion by Barnes, Second by Taylor**

**That the MADL Board approves that MADL no longer charges overdue fines. This will remove barriers for taxpayers' access to library services.**

#### **ROLL CALL**

**AYES: Aerts, Hughes, Mansfield, Taylor, Arter, Scolnik, Barnes, Hodges**

**NAYS: None**

#### **Motion Carried**

MADL Board Committee Appointments – Chair D. Hughes called for volunteers to serve on the MADL Board Committees.

Finance Committee volunteers are as follows: D. Hughes, B. Scolnik, J. Hodges

Personnel Committee volunteers are as follows: J. Mansfield, T. Barnes, L. Taylor

Director Evaluation –

**Motion by Barnes, Second by Taylor**

**That the Board will refer to the Finance and Personnel Committees regarding a performance enhancement for the Library Director.**

**ROLL CALL**

**AYES: Hughes, Mansfield, Taylor, Arter, Scolnik, Barnes, Hodges, Aerts**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion Carried**

**Motion by Hodges, Second by Aerts**

**That the Board approves a 3% salary increase retroactive back to January 1, 2021 for the Library Director.**

**ROLL CALL**

**AYES: Mansfield, Taylor, Arter, Scolnik, Barnes, Hodges, Aerts, Hughes**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion Carried**

**Public Comment**

None.

**Board Comment**

T. Barnes questioned what the status of purchasing cell phones for department managers. K. Richards responded that the discussion is planned to take place at a Personnel Committee Meeting.

**Adjournment**

**Motion by Hughes, Second by Barnes**

**That the MADL Board meeting adjourns at 5:08 p.m.**

**Motion Carried**

**Reviewed and Approved by Kim Arter, Secretary**