

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at the PWRL St. Marys Headquarters Library.
- CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Pam Bales called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Peggy Adams was Secretary. Others present were Board members: Paulette Simecka; Judith Cremer, Director and Rain Schultz-Pruner, Assistant Director; and Pat Weixelman Pottawatomie County Commissioner. Board members Sandie Jensen and Alicia Matson were present remotely via telephone.
- ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA: Pam Bales moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Paulette Simecka seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- APPROVAL OR CORRECTIONS OF MINUTES OF THE January 26, 2022 MEETING: Pam Bales moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Paulette Simecka seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION: None
- REPORT OF TREASURER: None.
- Judith noted that the 2021 fiscal year was closed as of the financial report dated as of February 28, 2022.
- APPROVAL OF BILLS: Peggy Adams moved that the Board approve and pay the bills as presented. Sandie Jensen seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT: The next NCKL Executive Committee Meeting was held January 27, 2022, via Zoom. This will be the first meeting for new MPL / NCKL Director, Eric Norris, who replaced Linda Knupp following her retirement last month.
- An NCKL Directors meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2022, via Zoom.
- Judith is working with Baker & Taylor to update the PWRL's processing profile. The goal is to update the processing instructions so that a smaller percentage of items purchased from this vendor arrive with incorrect labels. When this happens additional staff time is needed to correct the errors which significantly slows down the process. PWRL works with Baker & Taylor under an NCKL consortia account to maximize the discounts available to the Library. Kirk Hargett, the NCKL Cataloging and Acquisitions Consultant, has been assisting with this process.
- DIRECTOR'S REPORT: PWRL had a billing problem with our Simplisafe Security System in 2021 which was finally resolved late last year. Unfortunately the resolution was only temporary, and due to a reversed charge made by our credit card company we are now

forced to again revisit this issue. After some discussion the board encouraged pursuing other payment options for Simplisafe in order to avoid the ongoing confusion that occurs when the credit card is used.

- It was recently brought to Judith's attention that Varney and associates, who have completed PWRL's required annual financial audit for many years, has declined to offer a letter of engagement for the 2021 Audit. Judith will follow up with Varney's and consult other parties to find another firm capable of handling the PWRL's account.
- The Library has been busy rolling out the new equipment loan program.
- Staff has begun work to prepare for the upcoming 2022 Summer Reading / Summer Food Program. The theme for the 2022 Summer Reading Program is Oceans of Possibilities @ the Library.
- Catholic Charities of North East Kansas, PWRL's partner in the summer food program has indicated that there is a good chance that the USDA will require Summer Food Sites to return to the onsite feeding model this year. Staff and volunteers have adapted very well to the Grab & Go model which has been allowed for the past two years due to the Pandemic. Grab & Go meal delivery allows a convenient and efficient process, and it has proved to be very popular among both Staff and Patrons. A return to the onsite model will increase the burden on Library Staff as there are considerably more cleanup and enforcement duties involved with that process. A final decision has not yet been made, but PWRL is very much in favor of continuing Grab & Go as we slowly recover from the toll taken by the Pandemic.
- National Read across America day is celebrated each year on March 2. This is also Dr. Seuss's Birthday. Lori Beth Terrell, the Alma Branch Librarian, will again dress as the Cat in the Hat, and visit the schools for Storytime.
- Judith interviewed a candidate for the open Eskridge Substitute position at the end of January and has hired Annie Compton to fill that position. Judith trained with Annie at Eskridge on February 7th, and reported that Annie is an excellent addition to the Library Staff.
- An interview for the open Alma Assistant Branch Librarian position was held on February 14th. Kate Nolan has been hired to fill this position. Judith trained with Kate at Alma on February 18th and she is confident that she will be a great help to the Library as she grows into her new position.
- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
- ARPA & OTHER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES: Judith reported that she had consulted with the State Library about difficulties that PWRL is having with getting the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) to process the Library's application for reimbursement. PWRL received a funding commitment in Oct. 2021 totaling \$57,000.60 from the ECF. PWRL ordered the 100 Chromebooks and 100 Internet Hotspots based on that commitment. The Library was forced to prepay the provider for the hotspots. The provider for the Chromebooks delivered the devices and agreed to wait for the ECF to release the funding, which was clearly allowed according to ECF Guidelines. Over three months have passed, and the provider has become anxious about its payment. For this reason local funds have been shifted and there was a check for \$37,011.60 to Network Computer Solutions with the February Bill to resolve this situation.

- Close to 200 pages of documentation was sent to the State Library to illustrate our dilemma with the ECF on February 11th. On February 14th PWRL received a Funding Decision Letter from the ECF confirming the reimbursement of the \$37,011.60 PWRL paid for the Chromebooks. The \$20,000 paid for the Internet Hotspots, including \$8,000 for equipment and \$12,000 for data, is still outstanding.
- PWRL received notification from the Kansas State Library on February 18, 2022 that the Library will be receiving \$7,704.83 in State Grants-in-Aid this year. This amount is \$150.18 or 1.98791% more than PWRL received in 2021. The plan for these funds includes \$3,000 for Sunflower eLibrary digital eBooks and audiobooks, \$4,400 for the annual NCKL Contract, leaving only \$304.83 for the purchase of children's books.
- INTERNET CONNECTED EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM:
- Equipment for the new Internet Connected Equipment Loan program began going out to the different locations during the last week of January. Devices that staff has sent out include the Chromebooks, hotspots, charging boxes, Kids Plus Kindle Tablets, and Roku Streaming Sticks. All setup on the equipment has been completed, or is underway.
- Some instructions for staff were sent out last week. A Patron Equipment Loan Agreement has been developed. This form will be required, in addition to the certification page required by the ECF. The loan agreement will clarify rights and responsibilities, and allow the Library to gather unique patron identification, including a State Id Number.
- The agreement stipulates that the patron must be 18+ to borrow the equipment. Parents will be responsible for borrowing equipment needed for their children. The loan period will be two weeks, as are all other items circulated by the Library. Patrons may request to renew their checkout on equipment, but they must bring the devices to the Library to make that request. If there is not a waiting list to borrow the equipment, and it remains in good working order, the items can be checked out again.
- Each device has an item label that lists the price. The loan agreement specifies that if a device is lost or damaged the patron will be charged the listed price. Prices for the loss or damage of cords, adaptors, and cases are also listed on the loan agreement.
- The Chromebooks and Hotspots can be remotely wiped and deactivated if a patron does not return them. We will attempt to contact and work with patrons in this situation, but hopefully it won't happen too often.
- The (4) Copernicus Tech Tubs Carts ordered for the Branches, and the (4) Copernicus Tech Tub Trolleys ordered for the Mini's have all been received. This equipment will allow staff to load each tub with our new Internet connected equipment. The tubs can then be locked, and staff have permanently anchored the carts and trolleys with cable locks for extra security. The tubs are portable and they have the ability to charge the equipment that is stored inside them. There is also a UV Tech Tub for each location that can be used to sanitize equipment as it is returned to get it ready to circulate again. PWRL was approved for a Wabaunsee County ARPA Grant to help fund the purchase of the Tech Tubs. The required documentation has been submitted to Wabaunsee County to request reimbursement of the \$11,150 awarded under this grant. The

funds will be added to the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) under Previous FY Grant Expense when they are received.

- Alicia Matson left the meeting at 6:30 p.m.
  
- HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LIBRARY EMPLOYEES:
  - The Board discussed the possibility of adding health insurance as a benefit for full time Library Staff. Health Insurance is not available for PWRL employees, and this continues to be a major obstacle in the effort to hire and retain qualified Staff Members for the Library. A number of talented people have been lost because we do not provide Health Insurance. There are also a number of current staff members who are paying extremely high rates for health insurance, and this becomes more and more of a burden as time passes and rates increase.
  - Judith consulted with the NCKL Human Resources Consultant and was directed to an Insurance Broker. He requested an Employee Census to gauge interest and measure costs. All PWRL full time staff have been surveyed on their interest in Health Insurance. PWRL has 12 Staff Members who would be eligible for this benefit. All but one of these is interested in obtaining coverage.
  - The Insurance Broker that was consulted offered a sample plan, but because coverage would not begin until the 2023 budget year he can't provide any solid pricing information. The Board asked that Judith explore other Insurance options that might be available to the Library. She will also follow up with the Pottawatomie County Administrator for more guidance.
  - Pat Weixelman left the meeting at 6:40 p.m.
  
- E-RATE APPLICATIONS: The 470 E-Rate application signaling PWRL's intention to participate in the Federal E-Rate Internet Reimbursement Program for the period of July 2022 – June 2023 was submitted online on February 17, 2022. Participants are required to wait 28 days after the 470 form is posted on the USAC (Universal Service Administrative Co.) website before they can select their vendors and file the E-Rate 471 application, setting the amounts that will be charged and reimbursed through the E-Rate program. Judith has been working with Internet vendors to determine costs for Internet service at each of PWRL's eight locations. She has also submitted a 470 for category two E-Rate funding that will help fund the purchase of replacement wireless access points, an outdoor wireless access point for each location, and cabling and installation for those devices. The deadline to file the 471 E-Rate Applications outlining the services and equipment ordered, and requesting reimbursement for a portion of those costs, is Tuesday, March 22, 2022.
  
- PUBLIC LIBRARY REPORT: The Kansas State Library now requires that the Public Library Reports be completed in order for a Library to retain eligibility to receive State-Aid funding. The deadline this year for submitting this report was Sunday, February 6, 2022. It was submitted on that date with a few hours to spare. The 2021 PWRL Annual Report will be built using some of the same

data required in this report. A draft copy of the Annual Report was completed yesterday. It will hopefully be ready for the Board to review at the March Board Meeting.

- EVALUATION OF THE DIRECTOR: Copies of the Director's Annual Evaluation form were distributed. Pam Bales moved that the Board go into Executive Session for up to 15 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel, in regard to the Director's evaluation, with only the Board present. Paulette Simecka seconded the motion and the motion carried. The Board went into executive session at 6:50 p.m. and came out at 7:05 p.m.
- When the Board reconvened, Judith was presented with a copy of the evaluation with the Board's combined comments. She was asked to review the document and will have the opportunity to ask any questions she may have at the meeting next month.
- NEW BUSINESS
- BOARD MEMBER POSITIONS: Sue Jenkins has completed her first full term on the Library Board. She will be going off the Library Board following the April Board Meeting. Joan Johnson has been appointed by the Wabaunsee County Commission to fill Library Board Member Position 1 for the Olsburg area. Joan's term on the Board will begin on May 1, 2022 with an expiration date of April 30, 2026.
- Sandie Jenson filled an un-expired term, and is now completing her first full term on the Library Board. She will also be going off the Library Board following the April Board Meeting. The Board expressed their gratitude to Sandie for the excellent service she gave during her time on the Board. Alice Hinck has been appointed by the Wabaunsee County Commission to fill Library Board Member Position 2 for the Eskridge area. Alice's term on the Board will begin on May 1, 2022 with an expiration date of April 30, 2026.
- VEHICLE REPLACEMENT CD:
- The CD intended for replacement of PWRL's 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan will mature on March 22, 2022. The Library depends on the van for transportation during the weekly route that picks up and delivers materials to each location, as well as transporting staff to the mini libraries. The balance of the current CD at the St. Marys Bank of the Flint Hills is \$22,732.71.
- Last year, at this time, the total balance of the vehicle replacement CD was \$22,103.75 (\$500 general fund = \$128.96 Interest). The current mileage on the van is 174,421 miles. Last year the mileage on the van was 156,641 (+17,780 miles in 2021-2022, despite the disruption due to Covid-19). New tires were purchased for the van in December 2021.
- \$500 has been budgeted for vehicle replacement in 2022. This is the same amount that has been budgeted for this purpose for a number of years. The interest rate on the current CD is .50% for a term of 12 months. The Interest rate in 2020 was 1.85%. In 2022 the offered Interest rate is .37 for 12 months.
- After discussion, Pam Bales moved that the Board approve a new CD for vehicle replacement with a new interest rate of .37% APY for a term of 12 months. Peggy Adams seconded the motion and the motion carried. Judith noted that bank staff have

indicated that if vehicle replacement needed to be done earlier than anticipated the penalty for early withdrawal of the funds from the CD would mean the loss of 6 months interest.

- BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2022: The next Library Board Meeting will take place Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at 5:30 at the St Marys Headquarters Library.
- ADJOURNMENT: Pam Bales moved that the meeting be adjourned. Paulette Simecka seconded the motion and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.



Chairman



Secretary