

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at the PWRL St. Marys Headquarters Library.
- CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Pam Bales called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Peggy Adams was Secretary and Paulette Simecka was treasurer. Others present were Board members; Sandie Jensen, and Alicia Matson; Judith Cremer, Director and Rain Schultz-Pruner, Assistant Director.
- ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA: Pam Bales moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Sandie Jensen seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- APPROVAL OR CORRECTIONS OF MINUTES OF THE February 23, 2022 MEETING: Pam Bales moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Peggy Adams seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION: None
- REPORT OF TREASURER: Paulette Simecka, Board Treasurer, reported the Library received ad valorem funds amounting to \$2,810.87 from Wabaunsee County. Of that amount, \$2,514.98 was allocated to the General Fund and \$295.89 was allocated to the Employee Benefits Fund.
- APPROVAL OF BILLS: After discussion, Sandie Jensen moved that the Board approve and pay the bills as presented. Alicia Matson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT - DIRECTOR: Judith attended an NCKL Executive Committee Meeting held via Zoom on March 24, 2022. During this meeting the new NCKL / MPL Director, Eric Norris, presented the NCKL 2023 service plan.
- The Kansas State Department of Wildlife and Parks has announced a new partnership with Kansas Public Libraries in 2022. Kansas State Parks will provide free, daily vehicle permits that are good at any of the 28 Kansas State Parks. Libraries will be able to distribute these passes to their patrons. The permits are printed in books of 25, and cost \$125 per book. NCKL has agreed to purchase four books of permits for PWRL to share at our eight locations.

- DIRECTOR'S REPORT:
- After further negotiations, Judith reported that Simplisafe had agreed to apply previous credits to bring the library account up to date. The amount for service in 2022 was waived. Payment will not be due again until March 2023.
- PWRL has been notified that there will be an increase in the cost for the Kansas Interlibrary Loan Courier Service in 2023. The cost for the Courier Service at the four PWRL Branch Locations was set for \$6,600 in both 2021 and 2022. Covid relief funding allowed for a significant discount to this amount. PWRL paid \$4,315 for the courier in 2021. In 2022 PWRL was charged \$5,220 for the courier service. In 2021 PWRL shipped 3,188 items via the courier. The cost to ship this number of items via the USPS would have been \$11,668, amounting to a savings of \$2,703 for the Library. The estimated cost for shipping an estimated 3,408 items in in 2022 by USPS would be around \$12,473. In this case the courier service will save the library around \$3,508 in the cost of postage.
- The cost for the Courier Service at PWRL's four branch locations will be \$8,965. Even at this rate the savings in the cost of postage will clearly make this service the least expensive option. The speed and reliability of the courier make this service a critical component of PWRL's basic tools for getting the materials that patrons request in the least amount of time.
- Judith reported that she has hired Shelby Curry of Onaga to fill the open Mini Librarian / Route Driver Position. She began training with Judith on March 7th at Westmoreland. Judith has subsequently worked with Shelby at all the Mini Locations. Along with training the pair also completed installing and setting up the Equipment Loan Program at these locations. Several other staff members have also worked with Shelby as they worked together to complete the painting projects at Alta Vista and Harveyville. That activity was immediately followed by the regular mini rotation which moved two complete sections from each mini library and brought in all new books from a partnering branch location. All in all Shelby has had a fairly labor intensive introduction to the Library, and she has done a great job.
- Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas has notified the Library that the USDA has chosen not to renew the waivers that allow a grab & go Summer Food Program. This model has been very popular with both patrons and library staff. Without these waivers PWRL will be forced to return to onsite feeding for the Summer Food Program. This will mean a lot more effort and time will be needed to carry out the 2022 Summer Food Program. It also means a return to the more stringent rules that come with on-site food service.

- Calendars and supply lists are in the process of being finalized for the annual Summer Reading. Library Staff is in the process of exploring the options for the 2022 Oceans of Possibilities Theme.
- Summer Reading flyers and other advertising pieces are being designed. Staff will be contacting personnel at all our local school and cites for help in distributing flyers and calendars to kids and their families. Library staff is also working on a more structured and targeted approach to social media.
- Staff is looking for opportunities to provide more patron education classes. Lori Beth Terrell, the PWRL Alma Branch Librarian, is interested in providing patrons with access and lessons on the use of PWRL's Cricut Cutting machines.
- Library Staff at many PWRL location will be reaching out to staff at the local pool to see if they would be willing to partner with the Library for the 2022 Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading Program
- Several locations are planning water games for the kids to coincide with the Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading Theme.
- The Love Your Library Contest held in February generated a collection of great responses from patrons. A news release was printed in the Wabaunsee County Signal Enterprise summarizing entries submitted and announcing the drawings at each location.
- PWRL will put our popcorn machine, cotton candy machine, and snow cone machine all to use during the upcoming Summer Reading Program. The most challenging part will be keeping track of the logistics so each piece of equipment can be transported to each location in time for their planned events.
- PWRL had the opportunity recently to purchase a collection of 40 matching stackable burgundy chairs. The cost for the chairs was \$120 for the lot. St. Marys, Alma, and Westmoreland have now replaced various miss matched pieces of furniture with chairs from this set.
- The Collection Management team has continued to work on weeding projects at all PWRL locations. PWRL has begun working with Baker & Taylor as a new outlet for withdrawn materials. Baker & Taylors Sustainable Shelves Program offers to provide the library credit toward future purchase of new books in exchange for weeded titles. The program will also accept other materials that have no value. They pay for the packing materials and shipping costs, relieving the library of the need to haul unwanted items away for recycling.

- National Library Week will be held during the first week of April. Everyone is encouraged to celebrate and remember the hard work our librarians do to help keep their communities reading.
- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
- ARPA & OTHER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES:
- PWRL has been reimbursed by the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) for the purchase of the Chromebooks amounting to \$37,011.60. The ECF has reimbursed \$8,000 for the equipment portion of the hotspots purchased from Mobile Citizen. Judith is still working to secure the remaining \$12,000 the ECF has approved, but not reimbursed, for the purchase of the data portion of the 100 Internet hotspots purchased through this program in 2021.
- The ECF has announced that they will be opening a third application process for the purpose of distributing funding to schools and libraries to use for the purchase of internet connected devices that can be loaned to residents who would otherwise not have access to this equipment. The equipment is intended to be used outside the confines of the loaning institution. The application window opens on April 28, 2022, and closes on May 13, 2022. The time frame then for submitting an application is very short. Judith told the Board that the experience the Library has had with the ECF to date has been very difficult. Still, PWRL will need ongoing support for the equipment already purchased under the program. The Internet hotspots in particular will need an annual renewal of the data contract to keep operational. For this reason PWRL will continue to apply for additional funding as long as there is any opportunity to do so, despite the fact that the ECF has been slow in making the promised payments on the first round of funding applications.
- The St. Marys City Council has approved and contracted for a 12 x 12 section of concrete to create the base for the planned pocket parks at the St. Marys Headquarters. The discussion had initially been to lay concrete over the full area, so it may prove a challenge to work with the smaller concrete sections. The city also asked the Library to contribute toward the cost of the concrete work. It was agreed that the Library would pay \$700, which is half the cost of the project. There is an upcoming grant application, and some new memorial funds, that can go toward this purpose. Judith told the City that she would like the work to be completed prior to the Board / Staff Function scheduled for May 25, 2022.

- **INTERNET CONNECTED EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM:**
- Judith worked with Shelby Curry, the new Mini Librarian / Route Driver to install and setup the four Tech Tub Trolleys purchased for the Mini Locations. All the pieces for the internet connected equipment loan program are now in place and ready to be used.
- There was a problem with the setup on the Kindle Kids Plus Fire Tablets. The devices had originally been configured to block the Internet in the interest of protecting younger users. Unfortunately most of the installed apps are dependent on an internet connection to operate. A new account was setup and the devices have been reconfigured so that an adult can login and set up the Wi-Fi connection for their child. Parents will be provided with the necessary pin numbers and login information needed to manage the devices for the use of their children.
- Marketing the new Internet Connected Equipment Loan Program is the next item on our agenda. User guides and training opportunities are also high on our to-do list.

- **HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LIBRARY EMPLOYEES:** The board had a lengthy discussion regarding health insurance for Library Employees. It has become very difficult to attract qualified employees to open positions at the Library when Health Insurance is not offered as part of the benefit package. Judith has talked with the NCKL Human Resources Consultant and the Insurance Broker used by Pottawatomie County to gather some proposals for health insurance options. For budget planning purposes the Board agreed that Judith should start with \$500 per employee for the upcoming 2023 Library Budget Proposal, but it was understood that the matter will need a good deal more deliberation before the process is complete.

- **E-RATE APPLICATION:** The deadline for filing the E-Rate 471 form signaling an organization's intention to participate in the upcoming fiscal year was on March 22. PWRL's application for both category 1 and category 2 funding was submitted one day prior to the deadline. Some increases in speed were requested where they were available for a reasonable price. There are still no really good options for internet service at Eskridge and Harveyville. Mercury Broadband continues to be spotty at best. The application for category 2 request asked for support of the purchase of some additional internal WI-FI access point, and one external WI-FI access point for each PWRL Location. Cabling and installation of the external access points were included in the application. This new equipment will allow PWRL to better share our high speed internet connections both inside and outside our buildings.

- **BOARD MEMBER POSITIONS:** Two new PWRL Board Members have been formally approved. The Pottawatomie County Commission appointed Joan Johnson for position 1

(Olsburg) to the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library Board of Trustees. The Wabaunsee County Commission appointed Alice Hinck for position 2 (Eskridge / Harveyville) to the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library Board of Trustees. Both appointments are effective May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2026.

- Pam Bales moved to recognize these new Board Members, and to allow new signature cards be created for each of PWRL's bank accounts, including those at the Bank of the Flint Hills in St. Marys, and the Farmers State Bank in Westmoreland, which will be signed by all new and current Library Board Members. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

- NEW BUSINESS
- 2021 ANNUAL REPORT: The 2021 Annual Report reflects gradual recovery as we move along the spectrum of our long Covid-19 journey. 2021 held a tremendous amount of opportunities for growth through one time recovery grants. PWRL did everything possible to take advantage, and those funds are clearly reported in the annual report. If the funds have not yet been received they are not counted in the financial report totals, but they are listed as notes to this report.
- Patron counts increased in 2021. Patron computer sessions almost doubled. NCKL has commented that the Internet hits to PWRL's St. Marys Headquarters wireless network is the second highest in the NCKL system, with only Abilene recording higher numbers.
- PWRL, with the help of local volunteers, served a total of 20,414 meals to children in Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee Counties in 2021. This response to the program can only mean that the need continued to be great during another difficult year. After discussion, Paulette Simecka moved that the Board accept the 2021 Annual Report. Sandie Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried. Judith told the Board that she would get the annual report posted on the Library website and sent to the locations for distribution.

- 2021 LIBRARY AUDIT: Judith reported on options for firms willing to complete the required audit of PWRL's 2021 financial accounts. Summer, Spencer & Company who came highly recommended gave an initial quote of \$7,000 to complete the audit. Initially Varney and Associates who has completed PWRL's audit for many years declined to complete the 2021 Audit. However, after some consideration they did offer PWRL a one-year letter of engagement for completing the 2021 Audit for \$4,000. Varney's was paid \$2,700 for the 2020 audit, but they made it clear this was well below the standard cost, and they could not continue doing the audit at this rate. After discussion Pam Bales moved that the Board accept the letter of Engagement from

Varney's and Associates to complete the 2021 Audit for a maximum cost of \$4,000. Alicia Matsen seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

- **CIF TRANSFER:** After discussion, Pam Bales moved that the Board allow the transfer \$30,000 from the CIF to the General Fund for the purchase of library materials as was agreed as part of the 2022 budget process. Peggy Adams seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- **BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2022:** The April Library Budget Board Meeting will take place Wednesday, April 27, 2022. The meeting will begin at 4:30 p.m. at the St Marys Headquarters Library.
- The Board / Staff Function will be held prior to the May Library Board Meeting and is scheduled to start at 5:00 p.m. at the St Marys Headquarters Library on Wednesday, May 25, 2022. The Board Meeting will be held immediately following the Board / Staff Function.
- **ADJOURNMENT:** Sandie Jensen moved that the meeting be adjourned. Pam Bales seconded the motion and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.



Chairman



Secretary