

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at the PWRL St Marys Headquarters Library, immediately following the annual Board/Staff Function.
- CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chairman Alicia Matson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Others Present were Board Members: Alice Hinck, Joan Johnson, Peggy Adams, Bill Flannigan, Lela Riley, and Judith Cremer, Director. Pam Bales was also present.
- Bill Flannigan moved to approve the meeting agenda, Peggy Adams seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- PUBLIC COMMENT: Pam Bales spoke about her time on the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library Board. Judith and the Board expressed their appreciation for Pam's excellent service to the Library.
- APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA: Alice Hinck moved that the Board approve the consent agenda with corrections, including the adoption of the meeting agenda, approval of minutes of the April 24, 2024 board meeting, correspondence and communication, and report of the treasurer.
- Peggy Adams moved that the Board approve the updated financial reports and payment of the May Bills. Joan Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT: Judith reported that an NCKL Executive Committee Meeting was held as a hybrid in person / zoom meeting on May 16th. She attended the meeting via zoom. Items discussed included the NCKL 2025 Budget and System Plan. The budget included a new line for staff health benefits following NCKL's break from Manhattan Public Library; NCKL Personnel Policy updates; Bylaw changes; a plan to move NCKL staff out of Manhattan Public Library to a standalone office space; and a plan for NCKL to switch vendors for the NCKL Library Catalog Consortia. They will be moving from Auto-Graphics to the Koha system.
- DIRECTOR'S REPORT:
- One of the biggest challenges for PWRL is staffing the eight different physical library locations that make up our one library with the majority of your staff and board working together at a distance. The Board / Staff function is the one opportunity in the annual calendar when the full staff and board are physically together at the same time and place. Judith thanked the Board for their continued support of this effort that allows each individual team member the opportunity to make connections across the distance that divides us.
- An overview of the damaged caused by the straight line winds that occurred at the St. Marys Headquarters Library on April 18<sup>th</sup> was given to the Board. At that time a large section of one of the two heating and air conditioning units at that location was blown off by the high winds. Gas lines were cut in the process and we were extremely lucky that a local resident discovered the resulting gas leak and was able to turn the gas off at

the meter before this became a critical problem. Staff later discovered that a number of holes were punched in the roof as the unit traveled off the roof when water began to leak through in multiple places. When this was reported the City of St. Marys who own the building contracted with Service Pro to remove wet insulation and work to control humidity to prevent mold growth. The library has been told that the City is in the process of managing the replacement of the heating and air unit and the needed repair of the roof. They also agreed to repair or replace the broken sidewalk between the main building and the storage building at the back of the library.

- An overview of the progress to negotiate needed repairs with William Whitaker, the owner of the building housing the PWRL Eskridge Branch Library was also given to the Board. Judith met with Jim McGregor, the Wabaunsee County Commissioner serving as an ex-officio member of the PWRL Board of Trustees, and William Whitaker. A detailed list of repairs was prepared for this meeting. All of the issues identified on this list have previously been provided and discussed with both the current and previous owners of this property. The hope was that a timeline for the completing the work could be agreed upon at this meeting. The poor condition of the roof, and the resulting water damage sustained by the building, is as the top of this repairs list.
- Jim McGregor mentioned to the building owner that there might still be an opportunity to participate in a regional program that offers to provide a free structural survey of local properties. Assistance with locating grant funding to finance needed repairs identified through these surveys is also part of the program. William agreed to work on contacting roofers who are able to repair the roof. He said he would get back to Judith on his progress.
- Jim McGregor followed up by sending William the name of one roofing company who was willing to consider doing the necessary roofing work. Judith said she has not received any subsequent communication on this matter from the building owner.
- Westmoreland was hit by a tornado on Friday, May 26th. Main Street did not take a direct hit, and the building housing the Westmoreland Mini Library was not damaged. There was significant damage though in the community, including one death. Judith contacted the city the following week to see if there was anything the Library could do to help with recovery efforts. The high speed wireless internet connection was up at the Library very quickly after the storm and reminded the city clerk that is connection is open and available from some distance outside the library for anyone needing an internet connection.
- The Onaga Branch Librarian was scheduled to attend the spring fling at the school to promote the Summer Reading Program on the same day as the tornado. The event had to be cancelled. Several attempts were made to reschedule, but we were not able to get it to work out with the Library schedule.
- Onaga also reported a leak in their back room. The owner, Annette Cline, had a repairman there on Saturday, May 27th to make the necessary repairs.
- The Harveyville Mini Library had a toilet overflow problem on Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. The City of Harveyville contacted repairmen and they were able to fix the plumbing. Judith,

who has been covering the service hours each Saturday since the last Substitute Librarian left in February, cleaned the carpet the following week.

- The Air-conditioning unit at Westmoreland went down later in the month. The City of Westmoreland sent a repairman and that problem was quickly fixed.
- Judith has taken on the cataloging and processing work since the resignations of the Collection Manager and Processing Clerk at St. Marys. In mid-May there was a mix up with the cataloging records sent by PWRL's primary book vendor. The incorrect cataloging records were inadvertently added to PWRL's Online Library Catalog and it took significant time for the false records to be purged from the system.
- Near the beginning of the month Staff reported that there had been a patron complaint about a book at the St. Marys Headquarters Library. Judith spoke with the patron's husband by phone about their concerns. The Library policy and procedure for handling challenged materials was explained and Judith offered to meet with them in person to discuss the matter further. In the meantime the concern was brought to the St. Marys Advisory Committee for discussion. Judith subsequently met with the patron to discuss the situation at greater length. She told the board she would continue to monitor the situation and let them know if the patron decides to file a formal materials reconsideration form.
- Judith reported that PWRL's grant application submitted to the Jere F. Miller Trust in mid-May has been fully approved. The application requested \$6,500 to help cover the library's share of a matching grant that PWRL received last year from the Kansas State Historical Society. The KSHS Grant paid \$5,000 to help the Library fund a project to scan the contents of the St. Mary's College historical records collection. Digital copies of the images created by the project will be uploaded to the Kansas State Historical Society's Kansas Memory Web page where they will be freely available for public study and research. The decision by the Jere F. Miller Trust to fund this project was very generous, and very much appreciated. The library is still responsible for creating descriptive metadata for the 23,000 images created by this project. Judith said she is doing her best to complete this portion of the project, but it is a lot of work. She is planning to contact staff at the KSHS to see if they have any advice on ways to streamline this process.
- Judith updated the Board on the final ruling by the U.S. Department of Labor that was recently made on exempt status and overtime rules as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Several years ago when the Department of Labor first started to discuss the possibility of changes PWRL adjusted all library job descriptions so that the director was left as the only employee operating under an exempt status. All other library staff work a set work schedule. Full time staff must have the director's approval to work more than their set number of scheduled hours. Any additional time that is approved must be recorded and submitted monthly as part of the regular payroll process. Employees receive compensatory time for those hours that they can take at another agreed upon time. Time and a half is given for every hour beyond 40 hours worked in a week.
- An exempt status is applied to employees who are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act overtime regulations. To be classified as exempt employees must meet

certain standards. The new ruling specifically addresses this issue by increasing the amount that employees with an exempt status must be paid to qualify for this classification. Currently that amount is a rate that is not less than \$684 per week. The new ruling requires that employees who qualify for an exempt status must be paid at least \$1,128 per week, or an annual salary of \$58,656. In 2025 the salary budgeted for the PWRL director's' position will meet this requirement, but just barely.

- The exempt status is what allows the PWRL Director to work beyond the 40 hours stipulated by the Fair Labor Standard Act without requiring any additional compensation. PWRL's policy states that exempt employees may have to work more than 40 hours in a work week. These extra hours may be taken off when possible and do not have to be taken within the same work week, but as an exempt employee, the Library Director does not earn compensatory time as defined by the Fair Labor Standards act.
- Judith reported that due to the number of open positions and the resulting volume of work it has not been possible for her to take off any time from the library, including earned vacation hours, for some time. At the end of 2023 she lost all of the 176 hours of annual vacation time that had been credited to her leave balance because there was not a way to effectively schedule this time away from the library. In 2024 she has to date worked the regular 867 hours scheduled for her position, plus an additional 982 extra hours. Staffing shortages and schedule changes have exacerbated this problem, but it has long been an issue of concern. She did not know a solution, beyond recruiting and hiring more qualified and dedicated staff members, particularly ones to fill the 120 hours of open admin staffing that the library is currently lacking.
- Currently PWRL has of three open administrative positions include the PWRL Assistant Director, Collection Manager, and Processing Clerk. The PWRL Bookkeeper/Secretary will be remaining with the Library, but she will be working primarily from home over the Summer School Vacation. The open Assistant Branch Librarian position at Onaga was filled this month. Andrea McNieve will be stepping into this job, though she will likely return to her teaching position in the fall.
- There was some discussion at the Wabaunsee County Commission budget meeting about adding the option for full time PWRL employees to join the Wabaunsee County health Insurance policy. There seemed to be a good chance that this might be possible. That change would help PWRL tremendously with requiring qualified employees to work at the Library. Judith said she would continue to follow up the Wabaunsee County clerk over the coming year so that the Board can consider this option as part to the 2026 budget process.
- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:  
ST. MARYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The St. Marys Advisory Committee met on Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion about the proposed grandparents read to me program. Melanie Smith, the St. Marys Branch Librarian, will be following up with Dorie Simecka about the possibility of partnering with the school on this project.

- The Advisory Committee discussed the recent concern over the book “A Kid of their Own” by Megan Dowd Lambert. This book is a sequel to another book titled “A crow of his own” that is now located at PWRL’s Eskridge Branch Library. The consensus of the Advisory Committee was that it would make sense to move the questioned book to that location, which would keep the series together. Any PWRL patron can still easily request and receive books from any other PWRL location through our regularly weekly internal routing system. This method of resource sharing offers increased access to material at every PWRL location while still allowing some room for customization at the individual community level.
- The group agreed by consensus to shift the chairmanship of the St. Marys Advisory Committee from Bill Flannigan to Maria Drippe since Bill has now been appointed by the Pottawatomie County Commission to serve as a Trustee on the PWRL Library Board.
  
- 2025 LIBRARY BUDGET: Judith reported on the submission of the 2025 Library Budget approved by the Library Board at their April 24, 2024 meeting to the two counties. The Wabaunsee County budget presentation was held on Monday, May 6th. Peggy Adams accompanied Judith to this Meeting. The Pottawatomie County budget presentation was held Monday, May 20th. Bill Flannigan accompanied Judith to this meeting.
- Following the PWRL Budget meeting the Library received notification from KPERS that due to a legislative change they would need to increase the certified employer KPERS rates for the 2025 calendar year. The approved PWRL’s budget used a rate of .9026. The newly certified employer rate for 2025 will be .0971. This difference will amount to an additional \$442.23 above the approved budget amount.
- After discussion Peggy Adams moved that the Board approved the transfer of \$442.23 from the Capital Improvement Fund to the General Fund in 2025 if it is needed to cover the change in the certified KPERS employers’ rate. Alice Hinck seconded the motion and the motion carried.
  
- NEW BUSINESS
- BANK SIGNATURE CARDS: Bill Flannigan moved that the Board approve the resolutions required to update the bank signature cards for the PWRL’s Farmer State Bank and Bank of the Flint Hills Bank accounts. The new cards remove previous Library Board Pam Bales and Paulette Simecka and add new Library Board Members Bill Flannigan and Lela Riley. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried. Current Board Members signed multiple copies of the updated signature cards for both banks.
  
- BOARD MEMBER POSITIONS-ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Peggy Adams moved that the Board approve the following slate of officers for 2024-2025: Chair – Alice Hinck; Vice-Chair – Alicia Matson; Secretary – Peggy Adams; and Treasurer – Joan Johnson. Joan Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

- **ADVENTURE BEGINS @ THE LIBRARY SUMMER READING / SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM:** Library Staff members have visited schools at each location to promote the upcoming Summer Reading / Summer Food Program.
- Catholic Charities have delivered the first shipments of shelf stable food and milk to be distributed to children 0-18 at each PWRL location allowed to participate in the Summer Food Program this year. Alma, Eskridge, Harveyville, Olsburg, and Westmoreland will be able to offer each child five shelf stable meals and five cartons of milks, in a single weekly grab & go pickup. Onaga will be able to offer children three grab & go meals with milk each Friday. They are being limited because the local school district is also offering meals to children in that community which reduces the amount that the library is allowed to offer. Alta Vista will be able to offer five grab and go meals and milk to children in July, once the local school district ceases their food distributions in that community.
- The first special Summer Reading program featuring the Director of the Shawnee County Noxious Weed Department will be held at St. Marys on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. They will be bringing a large and a small drone from their office to share with Summer Reading participants. Additional drone programs will be hosted throughout June at Alma, Eskridge, Onaga, and Harveyville.
- Signup sheets for the annual Summer Reading Program are available now at each PWRL location. Both Children and Adults are welcome to participate. Everyone should have fun, and keep reading, over the summer and the Library will be there to help!
- **BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2024:**
- The June Library Board Meeting is scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m. at the St Marys Headquarters Library on Wednesday, June 26, 2024.
- **ADJOURNMENT:** Alicia Matson moved that the Board Meeting be adjourned. Joan Johnson seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

  
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Chairman

  
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Secretary