

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at the PWRL St Marys Headquarters Library.
- CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Pam Bales called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Joan Johnson was appointed as acting Secretary. Others present were Board Members: Paulette Simecka, Alice Hinck, Alicia Matson, Judith Cremer, Director, and Rain Schultz-Pruner, Assistant Director; Bill Flannigan and Dennis Miller were also present.
- PUBLIC COMMENT: None.
- APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA: Paulette Simecka moved that the Board approve the consent agenda as presented, including the adoption of the meeting agenda, approval of minutes of the September 27, 2023 meeting, correspondence and communication, report of the treasurer, and approval of the financial reports and payment of bills. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT: NCKL held a Director's Meeting on October 6th, its Executive Meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, October 19th, 2023. Judith was able to view a recording of the meeting as she was engaged in a meeting with members of the St Marys Advisory Committee that was scheduled at the same time.
- It was reported at the NCKL meeting that changes are expected in the management of the statewide Sunflower E-Library consortia that many Kansas Libraries use to offer eBooks and digital audiobooks to their patrons. Dave Fischer with the Northwest Regional Library System has been in charge of Sunflower eLibrary since its inception. He will be retiring at the end of the year. This change will require a reorganization of the management and operation of the consortia, and could well result in an additional cost to member libraries for participation.
- DIRECTOR'S REPORT:
- The Staff meeting on Friday October 27, 2023 took some effort, but staff were very excited to travel to other locations and learn about how things are set up and done outside their own walls. Ten PWRL librarians participated in the tour. A van was rented to transport the group and allow everyone to travel together. The full PWRL route measures 185 miles and the estimated drive time amounts to just over 3 ½ hours. The schedule was very tight and we had to allow no more than 15 minutes at each location in order to get back by our 3 pm deadline. 3 of the 4 branch librarians are new, and only two staff members have been with the library more than 10 years. We had to shift some part time staff around to cover all the open service hours, but it was a great day to get to know the library and each other just a little bit better.
- Staff had some trouble with the library van this month. Shelby and Rain drove to Westmoreland to staff that location with no problems. When they tried to start the van later it would not start. It is sometimes hard finding repair help in our small communities. After talking with the city clerk and working through a short list of

possibilities, they finally got help from staff at the Pottawatomie County Noxious Weed Department. We have a long standing agreement with this department and they have been excellent partners in assisting with the necessary recycling the library periodically has to do. In this case they brought one of their big maintenance trucks and were able to jump-start the van. They dropped it off at the auto shop in St Marys where it was given a new battery and an oil change.

- Our new auditor, Eric Kientz, emailed on Sept. 26th and confirmed that he had received all the documents he requested to complete the outstanding 2021 and 2022 audits. Since both of these will be prepared in a single budget year the cost will exceed the amount budgeted for this work. After discussion Pam Bales moved that should the balance in PWRL's General Fund Budget be insufficient to cover the additional cost of a second audit report in 2023 the Board will allow the transfer of the amount needed from PWRL's Capital Improvement Fund to cover the payment of the bill. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- PWRL continues to have technical problems with the Internet and telephone service provided by Mercury Broadband at both Eskridge and Harveyville. The speed fluctuated constantly at both locations. Telephone services was down for an extended time at Harveyville this month, and the Telephone connection at Eskridge consistently drops one word out of four making long distance communication very difficult. Judith spent a massive amount of time removing every piece of network equipment and replacing every internet cable that linked them at both locations. She did discover that the main cable feeding the staff machines at Eskridge was cut in numerous places, and had been repaired using what looked like book tape. Once that cable was replace there was a slight improvement, but speeds continue to range anywhere between 9 mb to 109 mb, at any given time. Staff can't count on the internet speed to be fast enough to let them get the job done. Mercury finally sent a technician to Harveyville to repair the telephone connection. He promised his supervisor would contact Dwayne Mayer at NCKL to talk about more substantial solutions, but the supervisor never followed through.
- The needed repairs at Eskridge remain unfinished. William Whitaker, the building Owner reached out on Oct. 12 to explain he was still attempting to schedule repair on the leaking roof. He also notified Judith that he had not received the Oct. rent check. Staff checked with the post office, but they said there was no way to trace the missing payment. She spoke with William today. He said the roofer had a death in the family and that has delayed the process. He said the work would be done by the end of the year. He promised to fix the nonfunctioning ceiling fixtures in the next couple of weeks, and said he would talk to Patty about the progress made on other repairs. He confirmed that he had finally received the Oct. rent check in the mail. It appeared to have been tampered with but the check was still intact.
- Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF). Judith called and asked for confirmation that the \$12,000 approved for the Library to pay for hotspot data in 2024 was still pending. PWRL does not have this cost budgeted elsewhere so it is critical that we receive it if we want to continue loaning hotspots to our patrons. EFC staff are adamant that they are not able to reimburse agencies for months of service that have not passed. PWRL paid this full cost upfront and has documentation to prove the vendor has been paid in full.

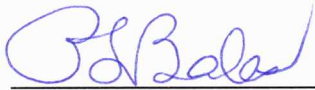
The ECF reviewers will apparently not accept this as a valid reason to make any accommodations. Judith has submitted a post commitment request to allow reimbursement on a month to month basis so that enough funding can be secured in time to renew the data subscription which expires in December. After many requests for information from reviewers communication has been received saying that the request will be approved. When the reviewer was ask when this approval might be granted, Judith was told there was no way of knowing.

- PWRL received notification on Oct. 3, 2023 that the library's application for a Kansas Digital Access to Historical records (KDAHR) Grant could not be approved. The reviewer did offer a detailed list of recommendations for revisions and invited PWRL to revise the application and resubmit it. Judith spent considerable time evaluating and describing the St. Marys College Records and revised the grant application according to the provided specifications. The KDAHR grant application was submitted in time to meet the Oct. 13, 2023 deadline.
- The maximum amount allowed for the KDAHR Grant was listed as \$3,000. The quote from Salina Blueprint to complete the proposed scanning project was \$10,100. In the process of re-evaluating the materials Judith determined that the full collection contains approximately 10,122 pages to be scanned. PWRL received notification from the Kansas State Historical Society on Oct. 2th that PWRL has been awarded a KDAHR grant of \$5,000. PWRL will be responsible for a matching amount of \$5,100 to fully complete the project. PWRL Staff will also be responsible for creating descriptive metadata for each image once the scanning has been completed.
- Salina Blueprint is scheduled to pick up the St. Mary's College records during the first week of November. They are hopeful they will be able to complete the project by the end of January 2024. The cataloging and description work will then need to be done and submitted to the Kansas State Historical Society by the April 7, 2024 deadline. The images and descriptions will then be uploaded and made available through the Kansas State Historical Society Kansas Memory Webpage. PWRL will also be able to locally upload and offer direct access to the images for the use of PWRL patrons.
- PWRL has many programing opportunities planned for the coming months. Staff attended the Harveyville Fair celebration on Oct. 14th and offered children bookmarks, candy, and free books.
- Onaga is investigating the possibility of hosting a speaker from the Humanities Kansas Speakers Bureau to discuss rural entrepreneurship.
- The Manhattan Rotary Club offered local schools and libraries the chance to receive many copies of several junior fiction books that we could pass along to our young patrons. Some locations offered these books, along with candy and bookmarks at their local Halloween parades. Other locations are waiting to offer the books to children who attend the Kansas Reads to Preschoolers events planned for next month.
- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
- ST. MARYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
- Bill Flannigan presented an update to the Board on the activities of the St. Marys Library Advisory Committee. The group has been systematically reviewing items found in the

children and young adult sections at the PWRL Headquarters Library. A keyword search was used to search the PWRL online library catalog for gender related terms. Materials with those subject descriptors were then checked out by committee members and each title was read and reviewed as is consistent with PWRL's policy for evaluating challenged materials.

- Library staff participated in the meetings with advisory committee members. After much discussion library staff also evaluated the material looking particularly at the circulation, age, and condition of the items. Decisions were then made on what to do with each item. Some titles remained unchanged. Other titles were relocated to different sections for older readers. Some titles were weeded due to low circulation, and some were reassigned to another PWRL location. The Board was reminded that PWRL's collection as a whole is very fluid. Materials are constantly moving between PWRL's eight locations. Any patron at any location can easily access any materials at any other location. Materials are routed to the patron's home location, and returned to the holding library once the patron is done with them.
- It was also noted that, as per PWRL policy, library staff will continue to respect and follow any directives given by parents or guardians in regard to the use of the Library by their minor children. This process is not difficult and the Library welcomes parents to communicate with us so that we are aware of their wishes. We will happily work with parents as much as we can so they feel comfortable with their families engagement with the library. We will be working on better ways to convey that fact to parents as we move forward.
- KLA CONFERENCE – WICHITA – NOV. 1-3, 2023: Six PWRL Staff members will be attending the annual Kansas Library Association (KLA) Conference in Wichita later this week. Those attending are Judith Cremer, Director; Rain Schultz-Pruner, Assistant Director; Melanie Smith, St. Marys Branch Librarian; Lori Beth Terrell, Alma Branch Librarian; Patty Knudson, Eskridge Branch Librarian, and Jordan Abitz, Onaga Branch Librarian. NCKL has confirmed that PWRL has been approved to receive \$500 in Continuing Education Grant Funding to help reimburse for some of the registration costs paid for staff to attend KLA. This is the maximum amount that is now allowed for contracting libraries.
- NEW BUSINESS:
- LEASE AGREEMENT – ST. MARYS: PWRL has been working hard to improve understanding over the past year in the hope that we would be able to ease the annual negotiations over the lease agreement for the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library. Members of the St. Marys Advisory Committee have been in communication with the St. Marys City Manager and the City Commissioner appointed to act as a point of contact. We have been told that the Library lease will be on the next city commission meeting agenda. The hope is that the St. Marys City Commissioners will approve the lease agreement at their Nov. 7th commission meeting. If so the agreement can be presented to the PWRL Board for action at the final 2023 Library Board Meeting scheduled for Nov. 29, 2023.

- KANSAS READS TO PRESCHOOLERS CELEBRATIONS – Nov. 2023: The annual Kansas Reads to Preschoolers will take place November 11-15. This year’s book selection for the one-book one state program is *My Heart Fills with Happiness* by Monique Gray Smith. Five sets of story walk posters have been created by PWRL which will be used to illustrate the book in each of the communities the Library serves. Special storytime programs have been planned at each PWRL location. Additional programs will be held at local preschools and daycares throughout the system to celebrate this special initiative designed to support and engage the youngest Kansas Readers.
- BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2023: The October Library Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29, at 5:30 p.m., at the PWRL St Marys Branch Library. This will be the last Library Board Meeting for 2023.
- ADJOURNMENT: Alicia Matson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Alice Hinck seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.



Chairman



Secretary