

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Pottawatomie Wabaunsee Regional Library was held on Tuesday, November 26, 2024 at the PWRL St. Marys Library.
- CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Alice Hinck called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Peggy Adams was Secretary. Others present were Board Members: Lela Riley, Bill Flannigan, Joan Johnson, Alicia Matson, Judith Cremer, Director, and Ashley Araiza, Assistant Director.
- Peggy Adams moved to approve the meeting agenda, Bill Flannigan; seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- PUBLIC COMMENT: None.
- APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA: Lela moved that the Board approve the consent agenda with corrections, including the adoption of the meeting agenda, approval of corrected minutes of the October 29, 2024 board meeting, correspondence and communication, report of the treasurer, approval of the October financial reports and Payment of the November bills. Alicia seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- NCKL REP. REPORT: Judith reported on a problem with the 2025 NCKL Budget. NCKL is responsible for coordinating library services in the twelve Kansas counties located in the North Central Kansas region. One newspapers in one of these counties failed to print the required public notification for the revenue neutral hearing scheduled for the NCKL 2025 Budget. This failure nullified the revenue neutral process and revoked approval for any increase in the 2025 NCKL budget beyond the set revenue neutral rate. The new NCKL Director is in the process of revising the 2025 budget to limit the budget to this set amount. A special NCKL Executive Committee Meeting will be held in early November to adopt the revised and reduced 2025 NCKL budget.
- Judith was unable to attend the NCKL Director's meeting that was held on November 5, 2024 via Zoom.
- DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Judith and Jordan Abitz, the Onaga Branch Librarian, attended the Kansas Library Association (KLA) conference held in Wichita on October 30 - November 1, 2024. There were many informative sessions including several on simplifying the annual summer reading program with suggestions on ways to keep the focus on reading and learning.
- Planning for the 2025 Summer Reading program is already beginning. The 2025 summer reading theme is Color our World. We will use that theme to generate interest and hope to increase community involvement by setting some community reading goals. As part of this process the library will also start looking at prizes and incentives for the 2025 Summer Reading Program.

- The continued viability of the summer food program needs to be evaluated for the upcoming year. Increased involvement in by the school districts, particularly at the St. Marys Headquarters Library, has left the library with a less than a substantial role in the Summer Food Program.
- The final staff meeting for 2024 was held at St. Marys on Friday, November 22. There was some discussion at this meeting about adjusting service hours, particularly at Eskridge and Alta Vista. After discussion the Board decided to re-visit the topic in the New Year.
- Judith received a request from the Alta Vista City Clerk to look at turning off the free public Wi-Fi at the Alta Vista Mini Library during evening hours. It was thought that this would detour undesirable traffic in the downtown area. Looking at the statistics though it would appear that doing this would eliminate internet access for a good number of people. It was agreed that no action would be taken yet and the situation would continue to be monitored.
- Judith reported on a successful reference interaction at the St. Mary's library. A call was received from a social services case worker who manages a crisis center assisting victims of domestic violence. They were looking for resources for a local family. After some research Judith was able to provide contact information for the several local church groups willing to offer assistance with Christmas gifts and food.
- A landscaping project has been started at the St. Marys Headquarters Library. The stones on the front bed are being reconfigured and a variety of new grasses will be planted. The city brought a load of sand to use for rebuilding the dividing wall, and they are storing the book statue while the work is in progress. Additional work needs to be done but will have to be completed now as the weather allows. Judith has asked the city for help with sealing and applying epoxy to the concrete porch steps area and refinishing the front doors. She will continue to negotiate with them on this. The city has already installed new hand rails beside the outside porch steps and the inside steps coming into the Library.
- There was a problem with the heat at the St. Marys Headquarters Library this month. The city called for repair service. The new unit was repaired, but they were not able to fix the older unit. The city is looking at options to repair or replace the unit.
- A St. Marys resident agreed to allow the Library to display his collection of nativity sets from around the world at the St. Marys Headquarters Library during the holiday season. Nativity sets have been arranged in the glass display case in the front entry way and on the top bookshelves throughout the Library. Staff hope to feature other local collections like this in the future.
- Plans are in place for staff to replace the mural in the children's section at the St. Marys Headquarters Library. This will be done as staff time becomes available.
- The network job at the St. Marys Headquarters Library is complete. 80+ network wires were run from one end of the building to the other and wall jacks were installed so that all computers can have a fiber connection to the network. Additional wireless access points were also installed to enhance public access to the internet. All the computer

network equipment was also moved from the front desk area to the electrical closet in the reference room.

- Judith is working on year end book orders from CenterPoint, Thorndike, Amazon, and Baker & Taylor. PWRL also had over 17,000 points in the Disney Rewards program. When these points were redeemed the library was able to order 14 free DVD sets of Disney classics.
- The KVC is a nonprofit group that works with families to prevent child abuse and neglect. They have recently organized a Suitcases for Kids drive to help children in Foster Care. The group will collect new or gently used suitcases, duffel bags and back packs that will go to children in the foster care system. The St. Marys Headquarters Library will act as a collection point for the suitcase drive in the upcoming months. Collected suitcases will be picked up by the KVC on January 18, 2025.
- The Kansas Rural Communities Match Event ran from November 1-16th. Only endowed funds are eligible to participate in the Match Event. PWRL's fund does not contain the required \$5,000 balance for endowed funds, but because it is the intention that it will reach this level, the library was approved to participate in the Match Event. Information on the event was posted to PWRL's Facebook page and shared with local Facebook groups. Fliers and information was also sent to all library locations for distribution and display. The library received 3 donations during the match event totaling \$200.00.
- The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) support for equipment including Internet Hotspots has ended. The subscription for the data used by the hotspots that are part of the PWRL equipment loan program will expire on December 2, 2024. The cost to renew the data plan for the hotspots is \$11,520 for 96 devices. This amount was not budgeted and there are no more grant funding available to cover this cost. The Federal E-rate program has announced that they will begin providing funding for hotspots that are loaned to the public beginning in July 2025. The application for this funding will open in January 2025. If PWRL applies and is approved it is possible that funding through e-rate for hotspots could be awarded to the Library. This funding though will likely be available only as a reimbursement so there will still be a problem with coming up with the funds to pay for equipment and services upfront. After looking at year end spending PWRL might be able to purchase data for some of the devices. However, many of the hotspots have begun to fail because they have reached their 3-year life expectancy so this may not be a good investment. After discussion the Board agreed by consensus to allow the existing hotspot data plan subscription to expire and to pursue other funding sources for this service as they become available.
- There was also discussion at the last staff meeting about some of PWRL's digital services. PWRL's annual subscription to the Flipster magazine database is up for renewal, but use of the service is very low. PWRL's subscription to the Hoopla digital platform for eBooks, digital audio books, music, and movies is more heavily used, and it too is in need of additional funding. The staff's recommendation was to drop the Flipster subscription and use the funding to support Hoopla. The Board agreed by consensus to this plan.

- Equipment was another topic of discussion at the last staff meeting. Staff at the three PWRL Branch Libraries are using copy machines that were purchased from Logan Business in 2014. PWRL has maintained a service contract with Logan on these machines, but it is becoming more difficult to service them because parts are less available. This has resulted in unacceptable periods of time waiting for service repairs at each of the branch locations. After discussion the Board agreed by consensus that new printers should be purchased for the branch locations as soon as possible.
- The replacement of computers was also a topic of discussion. Judith has had discussions with the NCKL technology consultant about the age and ability of the computers at the Library. Microsoft has announced that they will stop supporting updates for the Windows 10 operating system in the next year. PWRL currently owns and uses a total of 65 computers. 4 of those 65 machines are capable of supporting the Windows 11 operating system. This means that the majority of the computer equipment owned by the library will need to be replaced in the near future. The cost for replacing so many machines is not budgeted. Judith told the Board she is working with the company who completed the networking job at the St. Marys Headquarters on a quote to replace the 20 staff machines currently in use.
- Staff met with the Auditor to discuss options for streamlining and approving the accounting system, per the approval at the last Board meeting. The Auditor recommended that PWRL move from the Sage accounting software that we have used for many years and start using a cloud based system. He is recommending the Aplos accounting system.
- The Aplos software supports fund accounting and would eliminate some of the manual use of the excel documents we currently use for reporting. It is Cloud based with multi factor authentication and is accessible offsite. Backups are done automatically online, and the system is directly accessible by the auditor if support is needed. Promotional pricing is being offered for the first year and assistance with onboarding is available. There is a possibility we would be able to add time tracking functions to payroll as well. This would greatly ease some of the recent struggles we have had with the manual maintenance of time sheets and leave reports. We have been told that everything could be setup to make the transition at the beginning of the New Year. The Board agreed by consensus that the Library should move forward with a transition to a new accounting system.
- Judith is working hard to make sure all full time staff have used or will use their annual leave time and that service hours all locations are covered when staff is on vacation. Judith noted that she has a total of 192 unused vacation hours that she was unable to personally use due to high turnover and open positions which were vacant for extended periods of time this year. Judith also reported that she donated 161 hours of her personal sick leave during the course of the year, using PWRL's shared sick leave policy, to support two other staff members who were out of leave time. After discussion the Board stated that they would like Judith to come up with a plan to use some of her vacation hours next year.

- UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
ST. MARYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The St. Marys Advisory Committee met on November 15, 2024. Bill Flannigan delivered the monthly information packets to the city for the City Commissioners prior to the meeting. The packet included statistics, Kansas Reads to Preschools Flyer, Match Event flyer, New Book list, and a copy of the contract with Wamego Telco for the networking project completed at the St. Marys Headquarters Library. Bill attended the city commission meeting on November 5th where a discussion of the library's lease renewal took place. The St. Marys City Commission did propose a renewal on the Lease of the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library at that time. Dates for the 2025 advisory meetings were set for the Friday before the St. Marys City Commission Meeting on the third Tuesday of each month.

- POLICY UPDATES:
 - Copies of the updated policies were distributed at the staff meetings to all employees in attendance for their consideration. No concerns or issues were voiced. Reformatted copies that fit with the existing policy documents were distributed to the board at the Board Meeting for discussion.
 - Policies under consideration include the following:
 - Emergency Plan & Procedure - updated
 - Internet Access and Computer Safety Policy – under review, has not been changed
 - Conflict of Interest Policy – new, added to the personnel section
 - Firearms Policy – new, added to the personnel section
 - Whistle-Blowers Policy – new, added to the personnel section
 - After discussion Bill Flanagan moved that the Board approve all policies under consideration as presented or amended with the exception of the Internet Access and Computer Safety Policy. The Board will consider this policy at the January 29, 2025 Board meeting. Peggy Adams seconded the motion and the motion carried.

- E-RATE – NETWORKING PROJECT: The E-Rate supported networking project was completed at the St. Marys Headquarters Library. A check in the amount of \$18,033.54 was included in the November bills as payment for the work. The request for reimbursement was submitted to e-rate on November 7, 2024. An email confirming the payment had been approved and sent was received on November 11, 2024. The network tech company still needs to complete a network map, and we are also waiting on them for a quote for computers.

- HEALTH INSURANCE - UPDATES: PWRL is continuing to look for some viable option for health insurance for Library employees. Information on the Statewide Non-State Employer group health insurance plan was sent in the October Board Packet. Judith consulted with NCKL and they confirmed the pricing in the packet was consistent with

the amount they are being charged for the new plan they have with this group. The quoted rates show employees pay \$49.72-\$111.92 per month. Employers pay \$960.12-\$1029.18 per month for each participating employee. The plan would cost PWRL approximately \$92,626.20- \$123,500.16 per year. The statewide group requires that 70% of the employees that are eligible for benefits participate in the plan once it is adopted and approved. PWRL would also be required to make a 3-year commitment to remaining with the group to gain eligibility. Several Board member checked with their contacts at the school and county and shared what rates they are paying for employee insurance plans which they shared with the rest of the Board.

- LEASE AGREEMENT – ST. MARYS: The St. Marys City Commission at their November 5, 2024 meeting approved the lease agreement for the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library. The rent will increase from \$600 to \$650 per month in 2025. Bill Flannigan moved that the Board accept the proposed lease agreement for the building housing the St. Marys Headquarters Library and to allow the appropriate officers to sign. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- RESOLUTION ON GAAP WAIVER FOR THE 2024 FINANCIAL YEAR: After discussion, Peggy Adams moved that the Board approve a Resolution for a GAAP Waiver and allow the appropriate officers to sign. Joan Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried. This resolution will allow the auditor to prepare the annual audit for the 2024 financial year using a cash basis format.
- DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT AND VACATION: The Board discussed the Director's proposed contract for 2025. The salary in the proposal is equal to the amount budgeted for the Director's salary in the 2025 Library Budget. The proposal includes 24 days of earned vacation and eight hours of paid sick leave for each full month of employment. After discussion, Bill Flannigan moved that the Board offer the current director the proposed contract for 2025. Lela Riley seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- Judith Cremer, the current PWRL Director, accepted the Board's offer of the Director's Contract for 2025.
- 2025 PAYROLL: After discussion, Alicia Matson moved that the Board approve the 2025 payroll not to exceed \$556,847.00 which includes both the general and employee benefit funds. Joan Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried. This motion allows EFT transfers for payroll in 2025, even if any issues with scheduling, or the lack of a quorum, were to prevent a regular board meeting.
- STATE GRANTS-IN-AID: Peggy Adams moved that the appropriate officer be allowed to sign the 2025 grant application when it is received if a signature is required. Alicia Matson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

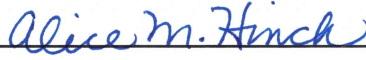
- **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND:** Bill Flannigan moved that any unexpended amounts in the 2024 General and Employee Benefit Funds be transferred into PWRL’s Capital Improvement Fund once the financial year has been closed. Lela Riley seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- **CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE FORMS:** Alicia Matson moved that the Board allow the appropriate officers to sign the Civil Rights Compliance Forms when they arrive if signatures are required. Joan Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- **HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSES AT THE LIBRARY:** Holiday Open Houses are tentatively scheduled at each PWRL location as follows:

Location	Date	Time
Onaga	Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024	11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Alma	Friday, Dec. 10, 2024	10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Eskridge	Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024	10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Harveyville	Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Harveyville	Saturday, Dec. 14, 2024	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Alta Vista	Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024	11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Olsburg	Thursday, Dec. 19, 2024	11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.; 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Westmoreland	Monday, Dec. 16, 2024	11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
St. Marys	Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024	11:00 a.m. Storytime; 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- The December Board Packet is scheduled to be emailed to the Board on Wednesday, December 13th. The plan for signing checks is as follows: The checks will be ready for signature on Thursday, December 18th. Bill Flannigan and Peggy Adams will come to the library at St. Marys and sign checks on that day if possible. If necessary, other Board members may be called on to coordinate and sign checks as needed.
- **BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2025:** The meeting held in November will be the final Board Meeting for 2024. There is no Board Meeting scheduled for December. A consent form allowing Library Staff to pay the bills will be sent with the monthly board packet.

- The January Library Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., at the PWRL St. Marys Headquarters Library. This will be the first Library Board Meeting for 2025.

ADJOURNMENT: The Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.



Chairman



Secretary