

Algoma Public Library

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Director Cathy Kolbeck, Lila Schlorf, Midge Swedberg, Diana Vlies, Lin Sherman, Braelyn Dempsey, Nicole Meverden
Also Present: City Administrator, Matt Murphy, Mayor Steve Lautenbach, Alders Casey Buhr and Amy Johnson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Sue Haas

The October 21, 2024 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Algoma Public Library was called to order by Nicole Meverden at 4:01pm. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Midge Swedberg, seconded by Diana Vlies. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT: The following spoke under Public Comment:

- Abigail Bridges, 628 Jefferson St, Algoma. Bridges stated that she has been a library patron since 1998 and feels as though the library should be able to expand, not downsize.
- Sally Peterson, 220 E Greenfield Ave, Algoma. Peterson voiced her concerns about the location of the new proposed library because of heavy traffic and distance from the local elementary school.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2024 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Algoma Public Library was made by Midge Swedberg, seconded by Lin Sherman. Motion carried.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT: Cathy gave an update on the Library Friends and the Book Corner. The Library Friends are hosting their annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Saturday, November 2nd. Library Board members are invited.

The Denny's Supervalu Round Up program for the month of September raised just over \$800 for the Book Corner.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Cathy gave an update on previous and upcoming library programs:

- Storytimes continue on Tuesdays at 10:30am
- Book Pumpkins – Friday, October 25th from 1-3pm
- Halloween Party - Monday, October 28 from 5-6pm
- Stuffed Animal Clinic - Saturday, November 2 from 10:30am and 1:00pm. There will be activities and crafts designed to teach kids about doctor and hospital visits and to familiarize them with equipment used by medical professionals. If available, an ambulance will be parked outside and open for kids to peek in. Stuffedies in need of minor surgery can be stitched up on the spot while you participate in other activities,

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or they can stay overnight if they need more care. We thank Algoma Rescue for putting this program together.

- Bug Tussel will be here on Sat November 9, at 10:30am with a “How to Video Chat” program.
- Faith has started a Teen Art Club with her first meeting last week – this will be a monthly program and next meeting date is to be announced.
- The Library has had school visits start up again here at the library. Last week our Children’s Librarian, Stephanie, provided storytimes for St Paul’s 4k and Algoma Elementary 4k.

There will be a Great Lakes, Great Reads Author Visit on November 12th at 1pm. Author Sally Cole-Misch will be at the Kewaunee Library. She wrote “The Best Part of Us”, the Great Lakes, Great Reads adult selection for this year. We have some of the books here at the library available if anyone would like to read it and interested in attending the visit. This program was set up by NFLS.

The Library was awarded a Family Dollar Youth Literacy Award for \$2000. Stephanie will be using that towards continuing our 1000 books before kindergarten program.

The Touch2Play wall was installed thanks to Public Works and the tweens are having a great time with it.

JobPod booth was installed. The Library launched as the second JobPod pilot site earlier this year. JobPod is a groundbreaking initiative designed to provide job seekers with access to quality employment resources through public libraries and has just announced a new partnership with Microsoft. We are currently one of 3 locations in the state for the JobPod. There are plans to expand services to additional library sites throughout the state of Wisconsin.

Stephanie and Faith will be attending the Wisconsin Library Association Conference November 6-8 in Green Bay.

The Kewaunee County Services Board has had meetings throughout October to update our Library Services Plan. Public Hearings will be held on November 13th at 11am at the Kewaunee County Fairgrounds, and 4:00pm at Kewaunee County Library.

TREASURERS REPORT: Revenues and disbursements were presented to the Library Board.

LIBRARY BILLS: A motion to approve the October expenditures was made by Lin Sherman, seconded by Diana Vlies. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None

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NEW BUSINESS: Discussion of New Library Building & Move

Director Kolbeck emphasized that the purpose of this meeting is purely informational, and no decisions will be made today. She affirmed the library board's commitment to both the library and the community and acknowledged that the city administration shares these values.

City Administrator Murphy began by explaining the purchase of the bank building and highlighted issues with the current building, particularly the need for a boiler replacement. He also noted that the square footage of the new space could potentially be comparable to the existing library.

Board member Dempsey raised concerns about space and storage, inquiring if there would be opportunities for shared spaces between departments in the new building. Dempsey also expressed concern about the recent \$40,000 investment in new carpeting for the current library.

Director Kolbeck mentioned that the library would likely need to purchase new, appropriately-sized furniture for the smaller potential space, as much of the current furniture is oversized. This will be considered as the process progresses.

Board member Sherman raised concerns about parking, and board member Schlorf asked about accessibility for elderly patrons. Murphy reassured the board that the new building includes an elevator.

Board member Vlies emphasized that the Library Board should be involved in the renovation planning process. Murphy assured the library board that Director Kolbeck and the library board would be involved in the process going forward; including reviewing plans and assessing if they meet the needs of the Library.

Board members Sherman and Dempsey questioned the costs associated with moving the library and how much of that expense would be the responsibility of the library. Murphy responded that it is too early to know that information. Dempsey also asked about the timeframe for a potential move, to which Murphy responded that it could be a year.

Board President Meverden opened the floor to the approximately 30 members of the public in attendance for questions or comments directed to City Administrator Murphy or the Library Board. The public expressed concerns regarding the potential relocation of the library, including:

- Potential loss of parking and greenspace for library use.
- Potential loss of the library's connection with the local elementary school.
- Safety issues related to children walking to the new location, which would involve high-traffic areas.

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- The potential placement of the library on the top floor, despite higher foot traffic compared to other departments.
- Uncertainty about the long-term future of the current building.
- Preference to keep the library in its current location.
- Whether other options for renovations to the current space were considered.
- Whether a capital campaign had been discussed to help fund renovations to the current building.

Murphy listened to the public's concerns and assured attendees that none of their concerns were being ruled out at this time. Murphy reiterated his availability to answer questions from concerned citizens at any time. The public was encouraged to contact their alderperson and attend City meetings to voice their concerns or for further updates as information becomes available.

OWLSnet Automation Services Agreement: A motion to approve the agreement was made by Diana Vlies, seconded by Lin Sherman. Motion carried

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: Discussion of library building and move.

ADJORN: A motion to adjourn was made by Lin Sherman, seconded by Braelyn Dempsey. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:32pm. The next meeting of the Algoma Public Library Board of Trustees will be Monday, November 18, 2024 at 4:00pm.

Minutes Recorded by Lila Schlorf
Written by Cathy Kolbeck
October 21, 2024