

ST. HELENS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

Monday, August 12, 2024 at 7:15 PM
Virtually over Zoom

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present

Chair Aaron Martin
Member Robert Dunn
Member Ellen Jacobson
Member Jana Mann
Member Colleen Ohler
Member Lynne Pettit
Member Fatima Salas

Members Absent

Member Diana Wiener

Councilors in Attendance

Russell Hubbard

Visitors

None

Staff Present

Library Director Suzanne Bishop
Library Board Secretary Dan Dieter

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:16 pm by Chair Martin.

VISITORS COMMENTS *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.*

No visitors.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes from June 10, 2024, were reviewed.

Motion: Upon Member Mann's motion and Member Dunn's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the minutes dated June 10, 2024. [Yeas: Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Ohler, Member Pettit, Member Sturdivant; Nays: none]

OLD BUSINESS

2. BOARD VICE CHAIR ELECTION: Item tabled until after Library Director report. Motion: Upon Chair Martin's motion and Member Dunn's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the election of Member Salas as the new Vice-Chair. [Yeas: Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Ohler, Member Pettit, Member Salas; Nays: none]

3. BOARD APPLICANT INTERVIEW COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Chair Martin and Member Dunn plan to interview Mr. Echternach Wednesday August 14, 2024. They will report back to the whole board at the next regular meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

4. RECOMMEND MEMBER OHLER'S TERM RENEWAL: Motion: Upon Chair Martin's motion and Member Pettit's second, the Library Board unanimously voted to recommend Member Ohler's appointment for the next board term starting July 1, 2024 and ending June 30 2028. [Yeas: Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Ohler, Member Pettit, Member Salas; Nays: none]

5. RECOMMEND REMOVING 'OVERDUE FEES' LANGUAGE FROM CIRCULATION POLICY: Motion: Upon Member Dunn's motion and Member Mann's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the recommendation to remove the 'overdue fees' language from the current Circulation Policy. [Yeas: Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Ohler, Member Pettit, Member Salas; Nays: none]

6. CREATE A COMMITTEE TO REVIEW BYLAWS: The current bylaws which were approved in 2001 need to be reviewed and updated to align with the current municipal code. Assigned to the committee are Chair Martin, Member Ohler, and Member Pettit. Secretary Dieter will email background information to the committee members for their review.

7. APPROVE CLOSURE OF ACCOUNT AND FORGIVENESS OF UNPAID FINES AND FEES AFTER 7 YEARS: Motion: Upon Chair Martin's motion and Member Ohler's second, the Library Board unanimously approved the recommendation to allow the forgiveness of unpaid fines and fees older than 7 years and the subsequent closure of those accounts. [Yeas: Chair Martin, Member Dunn, Member Jacobson, Member Mann, Member Ohler, Member Pettit, Member Salas; Nays: none]

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Bishop stated that the new Youth Makerspace Librarian, Jana Wiersma will start August 13 at 11:00 am. Everyone is very excited. She has a great deal of experience and will be a great addition to our library staff. Director Bishop shared some of the details from the semi-annual report that was given to the City Council. The library operated as a cooling center from July 5 through July 9. We were open extra days and hours (a total of 21 extended hours) and our partner organizations Columbia County Mental Health (CCMH), Community Action Team (CAT) sent people to help. Library staff worked extra hours to keep the schedule and we also had volunteers covering 40 extra hours. This year we won't be able to be the City's warming shelter because of the overnight hours. We just started a new seed exchange program in conjunction with the local Oregon State University (OSU) Master Gardeners. They will use an old microfilm cabinet to store the seeds in the library. The program kicked off last week with a talk about seed storage by former OSU Extension Service Chip Publ. The Summer Library Challenge ended last week. The stats we have so far indicate that despite the number of registered readers being 15 percent lower than last year, our number of minutes read was up. It was a very busy program and participants enjoyed the prize wheel and all the extra performers that were paid for by the Friends of the St. Helens Public Library. So far this year we've had 41,833 visits to the building, that's almost 10,000 more than last year. Our Wi-Fi hours have been increased and are now available from 5:00 am to midnight. We own more than 42,000 items including more than 200 Library of Things items, and so far this year 65,011 items have been borrowed. The mobile hotspots continue to be the most popular. The public computers are very popular as well. We continue to have requests for the free Covid-19 tests that we used to have available. 21.35 percent of the population have a library card or are using our digital services. We have had 28,955 visits in the fiscal year 2024. We currently have 27 active volunteers right now and they logged 954 last year, and the value of that time is about

\$31,000. Our small business and entrepreneurs corner continues to be of interest. Sierra Trass from the Columbia Economic Team (CET) said that they've received several requests for where it's located. They plan on using our site as a model for future business centers in other cities like Scappoose or Clatskanie. Our Library Assistant Cameron Burkhart is leaving. They bought a house far away enough to make the commute untenable. They will continue to work remotely for the City as the part-time Communications Support Specialist. The City has placed an advertisement for that position and we have 48 applicants for far, and interviews will be scheduled soon. The library will be closed for Labor Day [September 2, 2024]

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Councilor Hubbard stated that the semi-annual report that Director Bishop gave to the City last week was great. The library is on track and the Council is excited about the direction you're going. If we could have the new Youth Makerspace Librarian come to the next council meeting to introduce herself and talk about their plans, that would be great.

OTHER BUSINESS

Not at this time.

SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS

Chair Martin stated that he and Member Dunn would interview the applicant on Wednesday. There are a number of things that will be recommended to the City at the next council meeting. The committee to review the bylaws will get started, and Secretary Dieter will email some information to the members of that committee. Director Bishop asked Secretary Dieter to send out an updated Board Member Sheet when it is available.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Dan Dieter
Library Board Secretary