

City of St. Helens
Library Board

ACTION Minutes from Monday, December 11, 2023
St. Helens Public Library via ZOOM

Members Present

Rob Dunn, Past Chair
Ellen Jacobson
Jana Mann, Chair
Aaron Martin, Vice Chair
Lynne Pettit
Diana Wiener

Members Absent

Jessica Sturdivant
Fatima Salas

Guests

Councilors in Attendance

Russell Hubbard

Staff Present

Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Dan Dieter, Library Board Secretary

☞

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:17 p.m. by Chair Mann.

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: Minutes from November 13, 2023, were reviewed, amended, and approved.

OLD BUSINESS: APPROVE MISSION STATEMENT: The group discussed the Mission and Vision statements as presented: [Mission statement: The St. Helens Public Library connects people and ideas, enriching the community by creating opportunities for literacy, lifelong learning, and development. Vision statement: The St. Helens Public Library is a multifaceted information hub that invites community members to learn, explore, create, and connect in a welcoming environment as guided by the priorities in its five-year strategic plan.] Both statements were approved by unanimous vote. DISCUSSION ABOUT COMMUNICATION PLAN: The group discussed how to proceed with the communication plan, emphasizing the use of social media posting to get the word out about library programs and activities. Director Bishop spoke about past efforts with social media

posting, and the work of Communications Director Crystal King and library staff members Burkhart, Woodruff, and former Youth Librarian Kolderup to send out postings. Member Wiener spoke about different ways the board might think about communication with the community at large going forward, i.e., the library is “a great place to start,” or “a place where dreams come true.” She also spoke about the tradition of contacting a librarian if you wanted to get information of any kind. Chair Mann asked if one of the board members would be interested in organizing a posting schedule. Member Jacobson volunteered to perform the role for a quarter and then the board could review the process and progress. Members Wiener, Martin and Dunn stated that they would contribute. The work will be coordinated with the help of Communication Director King and Library Assistant Burkhart.

NEW BUSINESS: N/A

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Director Bishop described the City’s budget woes. An email was sent out to all employees highlighting the budget impact across city government. The current library budget was discussed in terms of what might be changed to reduce the next budget by ten percent. One option using the library reserve account instead of the city general fund to fund the installation of a new security camera system. The adjustments to the city budget will likely be made in January or the beginning of February 2024. There has not been any update on the Business Oregon Rural Opportunity Initiative grant that we applied for. We will use donated funds from GRO Oregon to support the small business resource area in the library, specifically to purchase new print and digital materials. We are also looking at a business library card retool. Starting in January, the Makerspace will reopen as full-time staff spend a combined eight hours a week hosting open hours. We have volunteers to help with some of the areas that will need special attention. The City has decided not to hire a full time custodian. The current contractors are less expensive, so the services will remain as they are now, which are very satisfactory. The Book Club is doing well. Library Assistant Johnson has been running the program and it is very popular. Our free COVID test kits are still very popular. Staff will receive training on reporting child abuse in January. The World War II presentation given by City Councilor Brandon Sundeen was held on December 8 and there were 85 attendees. This month, the Adults and Crafts program will focus on cookie decorating, to be held December 12 in the Armstrong Room. Youth Librarian Keeney will host a gumdrop construction activity on December 13 in the Auditorium. The library will be closed for the holidays on December 25 and 26 as well as January 1, 2024. The board needs to decide on an alternate date for the November 2024 board meeting as the current schedule because the library will be closed on the second Monday that month.

A motion was made and seconded to move the November board meeting to the third Monday, November 18, 2024. The vote was unanimous.

CITY COUNCILOR’S REPORT: Councilor Hubbard stated that not too many details are available about the City budget, but cuts will have to happen. With the loss of Cascades income and expired grant funds, the budget will be impacted, and the focus should be on life, fire, and safety. The library would be next in line. He said it sounds like doom and gloom and we need to keep our house in order, but maintain what we can, saying “you

know that the employees are the City's greatest asset." He stated that the City Council and city administration are going to start looking at contracts and other things to get the City on a better financial footing. He noted that that is his mission. He attended the Museum event, and it was fantastic, saying he barely got a place to sit. Keep those coming.

OTHER BUSINESS: Member Pettit reported that the Friends have a new chairperson, Pam Benham. The Friends have a new little library at the Food Bank, and one is being repainted and might be placed in Broadleaf Arbor. The Friends are also looking at getting a digital device such as a Square for sales transactions. Chair Mann stated that the St. Helens National Novel Writer's Month (NaNoWriMo) writers' group were able to write 700,000 words.

SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS: Member Jacobson will start working on the communication plan by coordinating with board members for posting on social media.

NEXT MEETING: The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:15 p.m. via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Mann adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

✂

Respectfully submitted by:

Library Board Secretary, Dan Dieter

2022-2023 Library Board Attendance Record

P=Present E=Excused Absence U=Unexcused Absence

Date	Dunn	Gaelrun-Maggi	Jacobson	Mann	Martin	Pettit	Salas	Sturdivant	Wiener
07-10-2023	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	U
08-14-2023	Canceled								
09-11-2023	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
10-09-2023	P	Resigned	P	P	P	P	P	P	U
11-13-2023	P	n/a	P	P	P	P	E	P	U
12-11-2023	P	n/a	P	P	P	P	E	E	P
01-08-2024									
02-12-2024									
03-11-2024									
04-08-2024									
05-13-2024									
06-10-2024									