

**The Grosse Pointe Public Library**  
**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**September 14, 2017**

There was a planned meeting of the Grosse Pointe Public Library Board of Trustees at the Woods Library, 20680 Mack Ave., Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan on September 14, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Elizabeth Vogel, President. Present were Trustees Elizabeth Vogel, Sandy MacMechan, Paul Rentenbach, Kim Valice and Gregory Ulrich. George Lapastora was excused. Robert Klacza arrived at 6:45 P.M. Jessica Keyser, Library Director, was present.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Sandy MacMechan moved to approve the agenda as amended and Paul Rentenbach supported. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

### **Approval of the August 24, 2017 Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

Paul Rentenbach made a motion to approve the August 24, 2017 Regular Board Meeting Minutes and Sandy MacMechan supported. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

### **Update on Labor Negotiations**

Library attorney, Steve Schwartz, updated the Board on labor negotiations. Mr. Schwartz has been working with the Library on labor issues since 1997. Negotiations have stabilized in the past 20 years. Mr. Schwartz has never heard a negative word from any administration regarding staff; there have been no layoffs, suspensions or firings. In 2012 the government mandated public institutions adopt a hard-cap health care plan or an 80-20 plan. The Library Board chose to adopt an 80/20 plan (Library contributes 80% and Library staff contributes 20%) as it is more beneficial for employees. The Library also established a Health Savings Account (HSA) for each employee enrolled in medical and elected to fund 80% of the deductible. Labor negotiations started in spring of 2017 and a tentative agreement was reached on a number of items excluding health care. The Union requested mediation and there were two meetings with no progress.

In 1999, the Library contracted with a third party insurance broker, Messa, to provide medical insurance. The Library has retained Messa since. Currently the Messa plan is a high deductible plan with an HSA. This year Messa decided to switch to a calendar year plan and Library administration began hearing complaints about the Messa plan and service. At that time the Library decided to shop for a new plan. The first quote the Library received was comparable to the Messa plan and showed a cost savings of \$46,000. The Library then decided to look for a lower deductible plan. It received quotes for three plans from Blue Cross. The Blue Cross Platinum plan was \$16,000 less than the Messa policy and included \$0 deductible. The savings on the Platinum plan was reduced from the original \$16,000 to \$4,000 because the plan wasn't adopted in July. The Union expressed no interest in the Platinum plan; they would like to continue with third party broker, Messa.

Prior to the start of negotiations the Library looks at info for comparable libraries. The Library found GPPL librarians are paid at one of the highest levels. Steve Schwartz said "the Library has offered two additional paid holidays and a health care plan superior to the Messa plan in the new contract."

### **Update on Digital Media Lab**

John Clextan updated the Board on the progress of the Digital Media Lab at Ewald. John brought along some toys he recently made using the 3D printer. The Digital Media Lab includes a 3D printer, VCR-Camcorder convertor, slide convertor and a cassette convertor. An 8mm and 16mm film convertor will be added soon. As new things become available the Library will try to keep up and become a media lab leader. The Lab will be promoted to the community over the next few weeks and patrons can make an appointment to come in for tutorials on the equipment. Jessica Keyser thanked John for getting this project off the ground, adding he's done a great job and it seems this has been a passion project for John.

### **Library Director's Report**

Library Director Jessica Keyser announced Library drop boxes have been received and will soon be in place in the community. The first drop box will be placed in the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores with another soon to follow at the Grosse Pointe Park municipal building. Once those are in place the Library plans to order

one for Central library. Bike repair stations are installed at each of the Libraries and are already being used. Library Director Jessica Keyser and Woods branch coordinator Pat McClary were honored at the recent Grosse Pointe Public School board meeting. The Board thanked Mrs. McClary for all her hard work with the Parcels students and thanked Ms. Keyser for her support of the programs and plans. 12th and Clairmont will be shown in collaboration with the GP War Memorial to a sold out crowd and Central Library will reopen September 19, 2017.

Elizabeth Vogel added that Grosse Pointe Shores manager Mark Wollenweber is a huge supporter of the Library. Mr. Wollenweber serves on the board of The Library Network.

### **Action Items**

**Approval of Monthly Check Register.** The Director reviewed the check register. Sandy MacMechan moved to approve the monthly check register and Paul Rentenbach supported. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

**Approval to Cancel September 28, 2017 Board Meeting.** Sandy MacMechan moved to approve the cancellation of the September 28, 2017 Board meeting and Paul Rentenbach supported. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

### **Information and Discussion**

**Finance Report:** Library Director, Jessica Keyser, presented the financial statements to the Board for discussion. The statements reflect the combined fund balances.

### **Friends of the Library Report**

The Friends of the GP Library will be putting Banned Book displays at each of the Libraries for National Banned Book Week. The Friends book sale will take place at Ewald 9/28-9/30 and on 10/7 will be the Halloween costume sale at Woods. Barnes and Noble dropped off 7 boxes of new books for the Friends book store.

### **Grosse Pointe Library Foundation Report**

Gary Colett says the Foundation Board will be meeting to finalize goals and objectives. Also continuing work on the union of the Friends and the Foundation.

### **Old Business**

Elizabeth Vogel reminded the Board that Board Committee assignments were announced at the August board meeting. All Board members were placed on their desired committee.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Public Comments**

Freya Weberman of the MEA spoke about her appointment to represent the Librarian and Support Staff Unions. Ms. Weberman stated "before bargaining began Union members decided they wanted to keep current health insurance." Library Administration proposed a meeting with representatives from Compass Benefits Group to ensure the staff understood differences between the plans. After the meeting Union members preferred the Messa plan. The Library Union leaders take their jobs seriously and are looking out for the best interest of their members. Ms. Weberman doesn't feel the Platinum plan is inferior, but it is inadequate. The sole saving to the Library between the plans is the HSA, eliminating it would save the Library about \$17,000. The maximum out of pocket expenses under the Messa plan are much less than the Platinum plan. A number of health items are not covered by the Platinum plan including hearing aids. There are also many services covered with less visits such as speech and occupational therapy as well as chiropractic services. Ms. Weberman stated she "doesn't gain anything personally by having the Library take Messa insurance. The Michigan Education Association and its members are fighting for fair wages, fair working conditions and fair and affordable comprehensive insurance coverage. The ongoing negotiations are creating turmoil and unrest and are a waste of time. I am willing to submit facts to back up everything I've said to you."

Danis Houser, is both a long time employee and negotiator. "Health insurance is just one thing holding

up ratification of the contract since other factors could be contingent on health care. My current out of pocket expenses are about \$800. With the proposed Blue Cross plan my out of pocket expenses would be about \$3,240 which is over 5% of my salary. The Compass representative was glib about hearing aids which are a concern for several employees. \$0 deductible sounds pretty but it's not the truth."

John Clexton wears two hats-Ewald Branch coordinator and community member. John stated "members would like to meet as often as it takes to settle the negotiations. Staff is integral to the millage and the strategic plan. The Library needs to meet with the Union as often and for as long as needed to get this done."

Gary Colett had a question about the MI Library card. Mr. Colett wanted to know the parameters of what is offered with the card. Library Director Jessica Keyser responded MI Library card is a statewide program for reciprocal borrowing. A patron in good standing gets a sticker on their library card which allows access to print materials with participating libraries. Danis Houser added a MI Library card holder cannot place holds on materials or borrow new materials, tools, etc. Sue Steiger asked if books borrowed with MI Library card can be returned at any library but they must be returned to the original Library. A concerned patron wanted to know if the Library will tally losses and the Director responded the Library will tally losses and revisit the policy if needed. The patron also asked how this was approved and the Director responded it was on the Library website and the agenda for this meeting.

Kristy Cooper of the Library Defense Network came to support the Union members. The Library Defense Network can bring a lot of people to the Library to protest the issue. Ms. Cooper added, health insurance is vital and the Library can afford it.

Dick Olson a Grosse Point Park resident added his support for the librarians. Mr. Olson added the bike stations are great.

James Moffett, former assistant director, would like Administration to settle the contract. The staff of the GP Library makes administration look good.

Rachel Charette is a new youth librarian at GPPL and she's very excited to be back in her home town. Rachel is, unfortunately, one of the families with numerous appointments, prescriptions, procedures, etc. Health care is very important to my family and my colleagues.

Jean Weston has been employed at the Library for 16 years as a member of the support staff. She stated "I love this job and feel like we're family. The health coverage we've had has offered immeasurable benefits to my family." Jean recently needed stitches on a Sunday and felt assured there would be no problem getting care. Yesterday Jean's husband needed emergency eye surgery. They are traveling to Italy in a few days and have been assured by Messa that coverage in Italy will not be a problem.

A community member wants to take care of the staff saying the Library staff makes our community great.

### **Comments by Trustees**

Board President, Elizabeth Vogel is excited to bring join forces with Walk, Bike, Drive Safe to bring 300 glow in the dark devices to the GPPL community and Clinton Macomb Library. Ms. Vogel would like to have Halloween safety programs at each of the Libraries. This is an example of collaboration and bringing together municipalities, police departments and libraries.

Board Secretary, Sandy MacMechan announced assistant library director Peggy Kitchel will be in every issue of Grosse Pointe magazine with her book reviews. There was good coverage of *Blues in the Stacks* by both the Grosse Pointe News and Grosse Pointe magazine.

Trustee Gregory Ulrich asked if there was information available on the Messa coverage and a comparison of the Messa plan and the Platinum plan. Freya Weberman said she has that information and will supply it to Jessica.

### **Enter Closed Session to Discuss Labor Negotiations**

Greg Ulrich moved to enter closed session to discuss labor negotiations and Paul Rentenbach supported. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

### **Adjourn Closed Session and Return to Public Meeting**

### **Announcements of Future Meetings of the Board**

Elizabeth Vogel announced the next regular meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday October 26, 2017 at the Central Library at 6:30 P.M.

Upon motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Sandy MacMechan