

**QUINCY PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT
November 12, 2021**

The first Quincy Public Library Board Retreat was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by President Kathy Ridder. Roll call: Kathy Ridder, Harry Ruth, Cheryl Predmore, Dean LaVelle, and Angela Kettelman. Ben Uzelac arrived to the meeting at 10:30 a.m., and Megan Duesterhaus-AuBuchon arrived at 10:35 a.m. Clairice Hetzler arrived at the meeting at 12:00 p.m. Kathy Ridder thanked everyone for attending. She then announced that as of November 11, 2021, Chris Pratt had resigned his seat on the Board. She asked Harry Ruth to work with her and Kathleen Helsabeck to find a suitable replacement.

There were no public in attendance. Ms. Ridder encouraged participation in the agenda for the day and asked for positive, helpful comments.

Kathleen Helsabeck distributed a spreadsheet detailing the core standards and chapter standards for *Serving Our Public 4.0*. She reviewed each chapter noting items that the Library is currently performing, items that need evaluation, and items that the Library is not currently accomplishing but needs to. These deficient standards include Board participation in local and regional conferences, addressing the Library's long-term spatial needs, a documented building safety checklist, and discussing staff salary levels.

Mike Elbe, President of the John Wood Community College Board of Trustees, presented a session on best board practices and shared a document outlining the top ten best practices. Mr. Elbe discussed the difference between an institution's vision statement and mission statement. He suggested that the mission statement should be listed first as it describes the organization's main purpose and values. The vision statement is secondary as it describes the organization's aspirations. He noted that you can't have one statement without the other. Members in attendance then broke into two groups to discuss board protocol and working effectively with library administrators. Ideas suggested included detailing board member expectations, defining the working relationship between the Executive Director and the Board as a whole, defining the relationship between the Library Board, TQ, and the Foundation Board as well as the Friends of the Library, understanding each of the roles within those organizations, defining the relationship between the Board and the staff, advocacy, and communication between the Boards and the Executive Director. Mr. Elbe shared the JWCC Board Protocol and Expectations document and the JWCC Board/President Relations Policy. It was agreed that the QPL Board would develop a protocol document at the December meeting, finalize it over the next few meetings, and create a final document for Board signatures. The members in attendance agreed that it is the responsibility of the Executive Director to inform the Board President of significant issues or situations as soon as possible. It is the Board President's responsibility to inform other members of the Board if deemed necessary. Likewise, if the Board becomes aware of a "red flag," they should contact the Board President or the Executive Director. Mr. Elbe recommended notifying by telephone rather than email or text to insure the message is not misunderstood.

The Board then reviewed funding sources for the Library and discussed the current state of the Library. Ms. Helsabeck reminded the Board that the City cut the Library's budget in

FY20/21 by \$100,000 in anticipation of sales tax decreases due to Covid. However, when other City departments' budgets were reinstated, the Library's was not. At the end of FY20/21 and in FY21/22, increased PPRT revenues offset some of the decreases, but direct funding from the City is still at a decline. Ms. Helsabeck stated that the Library needs a 6% increase each year through 2025 to address fixed budget needs such as contracts, health insurance, and the minimum wage increases. The role of the Mary Weems Barton/Quincy Public Library Foundation was discussed with regards to financial support of and advocacy for the Library. It was agreed that the Foundation needs to be more active in advocating for the Library, and needs to increase its fundraising and donor development to be a more supportive partner for the Library. The Board agreed to begin talks with the Foundation Board about these needs. Kathy Ridder will contact Foundation President Gerry Korb to begin the discussion. Ms. Helsabeck then stated that the Friends of the Library are another support organization that she would like to see become more active in advocating for the Library. The Board agreed that the Foundation needs to be used for donor development and requests for larger gifts from potential donors, while utilizing the Friends for event-based and visible fund-raising opportunities. Both organizations should be encouraged to create long-range goals and integrate those goals into the Library's strategic plan. It was suggested that the Board create a policy defining these roles for both organizations, and a policy for communication with the Friends as it has its own board.

Kathleen Helsabeck directed the discussion to the recent issues with the fire alarm system and overall alarm system. She presented a quote from Alarm Systems, Inc. to replace the entire system and update the panel at a cost of \$31,791.83. She also presented a quote from Seico to only replace the alarm panel at a cost of \$2,512.38. Ms. Helsabeck stated that the system was originally installed by Seico and contains proprietary equipment that ASI is not able to repair. She would like to see the Library move to ASI as it is a local company and they monitor the alarms for Seico. After a discussion, Harry Ruth moved to go with the Seico quote and only replace the panel at this time. Clairice Hetzler seconded and the motion carried. The Board asked that the total alarm system replacement to be added to the long-term plan.

Ms. Helsabeck also reported that she and Burgundy Hill recently met with representatives from Adams Networks about not only contracting with the Library to assist with the migration to Windows 10, but also replace the current analog telephone system with a digital system. She noted that the project with an estimated cost of \$23,000, would not begin until after the move to Windows 10 was complete and the Library solved its network and server problems. The project will be added to the ongoing building / equipment repair list.

The Board then began initial discussions on strategic planning. Ms. Helsabeck stated that the current plan will expire in 2022, and asked the Board to begin thinking about objectives in the areas of funding, capacity, advocacy, accessibility, board development, and staff development. In discussing advocacy, the Board agreed that the Library needs to do a better job of telling its story to the public and involving city leaders by using their priorities such as educational, entertainment, and economic development needs. It was pointed out that the current Library website is ten years old and should be updated. The Board also discussed board and staff development using standards and protocols as outlined in *Serving Our Public*. They agreed that bridging the communications gap between staff and Board is vital to the continued health of the Library.

The Board agreed that it needs to work toward goals for not just the Library, but also support organizations. Goals for the Foundation include identifying their role as it pertains to the Library, ensuring that both Boards are on the same page, and starting discussions to address funding needs and future funding opportunities. Goals for the Friends include defining the role of the Friends in advocacy and fund-raising needs, creating a procedure for communications between staff and the Friends, and developing a policy for expectations of behavior for the Friends. Goals for the building include identifying major building issues, hiring a non-local consultant to work with the Library on the HVAC issues, and hiring an IT consultant. Board goals include creating a protocol letter for the Board and working with staff to solicit input on issues and rebuild trust.

Kathy Ridder thanked the Board for attending the retreat and participating in the discussions. The retreat was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Akers