

MINUTES OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING

December 17, 2024

Members Present: Susan Gesser, President
Rodney Ellis, Treasurer
Kathi Mattas, Secretary
Kevin Dorth
Al Mattingly

Others Present: Erin Waller, Director
Debbie Young, Business Manager
Janie Marksberry, Fiscal Court Liaison

The meeting was called to order by President Susan Gesser at 4:58 p.m.

Mrs. Gesser called for approval of the November meeting's minutes. After review and hearing no comments or corrections, Al Mattingly made a motion to approve the November minutes as presented. Rodney Ellis seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Rodney Ellis presented the Treasurer's Report, going over November's financials, including receipts and expenditures. With no questions, comments, nor corrections, Kathi Mattas made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Kevin Dorth seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Erin Waller presented the Director's Report including:

1. Santa would be at the library the next day, December 18.
2. Starting next month, the board meetings would return to the regular schedule of the third Wednesday of each month.
3. Upcoming library holiday closings would include Dec. 24 & 25 and Dec. 31 & Jan. 1.

After the director's report, Kathi Mattas thanked the library for the excellent work of Sarah Howard on the well-attended, bi-weekly "Homeschool Adventures" activities, featuring a wide-ranging variety of topics and guest speakers. Erin Waller informed the board that Mrs. Howard is also developing a training session to be used for other libraries on homeschool programming.

Rodney Ellis asked about the continued conversation with Hafer Architects on the proposed Potential Remodel, for which the bid may have to be pushed back to the spring. There is presently no updated information.

There was no Old Business.

There was no New Business.

Mrs. Gesser called for Public Comment. There were about 18 people in attendance, with some indicating they wished to speak and a few indicating “maybe.”

Prior to public comment starting, Kathi Mattas read a prepared statement asking when and how the library board goes about addressing the concerns, questions, and requests that have been repeatedly brought before the board by concerned patrons. Examples of concerns include: the restricted access card is not an adequate solution; if there is CIPA for obscene/harmful internet content protection, what protections are there for similar printed material; why can't sexually explicit books be moved to the adult section, where any parents who wish can still check them out for their own children; how are the requirements for “request for reconsideration” determined; and, referencing her own research into some of the questionable titles, Kathi Mattas stated that she did have printed copies available, but would not read aloud, excerpts that demonstrate the graphic, sexually explicit content available in the teen section. She also referenced that mental health professionals state that reading about sexual attacks or experiences does not help children (who have experienced such) process their own trauma, but rather it re-traumatizes them – instead, they are in need of counseling. The community's concerns need to be addressed.

Trey Matthews, a father, expressed concern that young children are not safe from some books in the children's department which include sexual and LGBTQ+ content – sins with real, painful consequences and damage -- promoting gender butchery and other harms.

Zachary Whear spoke of woke DEI ideology, including “fake, fruitless” gender surgeries. It is wrong to promote such to children. Adults are to protect children. It is a reasonable request for the library board to not provide poison to the minds of children.

James Kamuf requested the library purchase the Fusion 360 book, encouraging the library to have a larger technology section than it currently does. He stated that he can't get information regarding if the library decides to get a “suggested purchase” or not. He also recommended state of the art magazine subscriptions, such as “Mitchell Pro Demand” on auto repair. (Debbie Young noted that there are some on-line materials available.)

Kathy Estes expressed appreciation for the mission of the public library to represent and serve the entirety of the community and stated that she will be protecting children from some of the previous speakers.

Janie Marksberry asked if the board was going to answer Kathi Mattas' questions -- discuss or respond to addressing “the public concerns regarding the inappropriate material in the youth section.”

Following public comment, Susan Gesser stated that the board has to follow its own policies or risk being sued. She explained that to make a change, there has to be a motion made and seconded to undo

an existing policy, such as to remove books from one section of the library to move to another, and that only if a book is of no value in a department can it be moved. A board member would have to make a motion to study or reevaluate that matter, and it has to be on the agenda.

Erin Waller stated that the library policies and by-laws are on the website homepage, and further explained that, in addition to the "request for reconsideration" form concerning any book, there is an appeal process that can follow if the patron making the request is not satisfied with the library staff decision.

Al Mattingly stated that he attends church every Sunday, where he hears a sermon, and that he does not come to the library board meetings to hear another sermon.

Having no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

The next meeting of the Daviess County Public Library Board of Trustees will be on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Public Lounge.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "SMH" followed by a long horizontal stroke.