

Malvern Public Library (MPL)  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
July 26, 2023

**Attendance by Zoom: Russell Robinson (President, Malvern Borough Appointee), Rebecca Faulk (Treasurer, Willistown Township Appointee), Vicki Damiani (Secretary, East Whiteland Township Appointee), Kathy Kavanaugh (East Goshen Township Appointee), Carol Guest (Willistown Township Appointee), Barbara Ann Thav (East Whiteland Township Appointee), Helise Bichevsky (Malvern Borough Appointee), Maggie Stanton (MPL Director).**

**Also attending: Danielle Kennedy (MPL Staff Member/Lead for Friends of the Malvern Public Library), Emily Quillen (MPL Children's Librarian), Joe Sherwood (Executive Director, Chester County Library System)**

**Not attending: Rebecca Dinucci, (Vice-President, East Goshen Township Appointee)**

Call to Order: Russ Robinson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:02 PM

See Board Packet of this meeting date for accompanying documents.

Welcome to Joe Sherwood.

The president offered a brief history of at-large-membership in the MPL Board of Trustees. Motion made to approve at-large membership for Ann DiMedio of Willistown. The secretary, director, president, and Friends lead have all had contact with Ann. At-large membership allows for meeting attendance, but not a vote. Motion unanimously approved.

Motion made and unanimously approved by those who attended the June meeting to accept June minutes.

**Comments regarding reports and the consent agenda:**

On the book sale:

We are still exploring ways to get rid of our excess books. There is some question whether Theresa Gallo, our book sale lead, will be continuing in her role. She has done a stellar job. Should we do a sale in the fall, given the current issues facing the sale and the fact that we made as much on the spring sale this year as we usually make in both sales? Several ideas on how to address storage issues for the sale were discussed, especially setting specific parameters on what to take for sale, setting a donation day with the Friends group, reducing the amount of young adult fiction we take, and delaying sales until we have adequate storage on-site. Decision made to not have a sale this fall. Finding a way to get rid of the books we have is a priority action item.

On the Keystone Grant:

We have had to request an extension on getting our bid plan to the state. A lack of communication between the Borough, MPL, and a new solicitor who is involved caused a delay in submitting the necessary paperwork.

Regarding the Building Improvement Report:

A question regarding the status of the flooring work will be addressed in Old Business. The Building Improvement Report is no longer current due to events of this date.

Consent agenda approved with the exception of the Building Report.

### **Old Business**

#### **Building Improvement**

All of the decisions regarding the entryway and community room had been made by the BIC and we were just awaiting start dates and coordination from the Borough, the floor installer, and the company doing all of the other work. This progress was called into question this date when the director requested a new circulation desk that had not been part of the project up to this time. The director made her case stating that a new desk had been recommended by the design consultants and could be obtained for \$7800. A picture was presented. An extensive discussion followed addressing the following issues:

Why is this desk so much less expensive than what the BIC explored before? This may relate to the use of laminate. Is laminate adequate for our needs? This desk reportedly was used in Atglen's improvement work. How will a new circulation desk affect the chronology of work that was all set to go? How will this change affect cost, not just for the desk itself, but for demolition of the old desk? Past exploration of circulation desks suggested that we would have to measure and install ourselves. Who would do that for this new desk? Is this desk really better than what we have? The prior plan for a circulation desk was reviewed again to remind everyone of what had been approved before.

The director will take responsibility for developing a proposal on the new desk that will address complete costs, including any demolition or preparation work, a specific chronology of what work will be done when, who is responsible for measuring and installing, and any approval by the borough that might be required. She will also address the number of days of library closure that would be involved. **The director will prepare the proposal and send the proposal by email to board members by August 11. Board members are to respond with questions and issues by August 18 and to vote by August 23.**

The plan for new storage work was also discussed. Specifics on the flooring that has been selected were reviewed and a picture presented. The planks are available in the library for any board member who wants to see them.

#### **Investment Recommendations**

Our investment policy is overdue for review. Doing that now is timely since the investment environment has changed considerably since the policy was developed. An extensive review of our current investments by the treasurer and president suggested a need for a change in proportions of equity and fixed income, both as outlined in the policy, and in our current investment strategy. Documentation presented clearly pointed to an advantage in moving more assets into the fixed income area, including the purchase of CDs. Working with local financial institutions is preferred since we already have some history with them and that is most beneficial to MPL and the community. There are no penalties to be incurred from moving our current investments.

Another suggested change in the policy related to procedures to be utilized when a donation involves a stock, something that was not anticipated in the old policy. This change ensures that a stock would be quickly changed to a cash asset. Also, addressed was the question of whether the yearly review outlined in the current policy is realistic. Will we do that? It was agreed that a yearly review is in order and that we should put the review on the board calendar to ensure it takes place.

Motion made and unanimously approved to accept the July 26<sup>th</sup> proposal for changes in the Investment Policy (see the Board Packet) which allow a change in proposed investment allotments when fixed rate options provide a greater return at reduced risk, and that stock donations be changed to cash assets.

### **New Business**

Joe Sherwood presented some issues related to current functioning and procedures of the CCLS including their search for a financial manager, the status of the state budget, which CCLS libraries are currently seeking directors, and Kennett's new building. Some of the questions from the board related to how assets are divided among the libraries, whether we can get assistance from the county regarding human resource matters, how cataloguing is handled, what concerns him most, recent trends, how new employees are mentored, and ways to address long waiting periods for most sought-after materials.

Of specific relevance to MPL was Joe's review of the importance of community outreach, circulation, programming attendance, and door count in the assessment of library performance. Whether the collection is meeting the needs of patrons is of overriding concern in a time when libraries are community centers.

### **Other Comments**

Can we make the Board Packet smaller and get it out in a more timely fashion? Board members need to get their reports to the director more quickly. Is there redundancy in the packet? Does all of the data presented need to be reported on every month? Is it necessary to include activities that are a regular part of job responsibility? CCLS may have software that will make board packet preparation easier. Agreed that board members should get reports to the director the **Thursday before the meeting**.

### **Action Items**

The director will continue to explore ways to rid ourselves of books unlikely to sell.

The director will develop a full proposal plan for including a new circulation desk in the MPL building improvement project.

MPL board members will adhere to the dates listed above for responding to the proposal.

The president and treasurer will incorporate the approved changes to the investment policy and provide a copy to the director.

The treasurer will carry out the approved policy changes as they relate to current investments, increasing the amount of fixed income, insured assets and reducing equity assets.

Board members will get board packet reports to the director the Thursday before the monthly meeting.

The director will explore possibilities regarding software that might facilitate board packet preparation.

Meeting adjourned 9:14 PM

There is no board meeting in August. The next MPL board meeting will be Wednesday September 27<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM

Victoria B. Damiani  
Secretary  
Malvern Public Library Board of Trustees

Addendum August 10, 2023

The Board agrees that Russ Robinson, as MPL Board President, and Rebecca Faulk, as MPL Board Treasurer, will act as signatories on the Citadel Credit Union fund accounts as well as the additional investment accounts with National Bank of Malvern.