



BALDWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
April 20, 2011

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Michael Earl at 7:29 p.m.

Library Board present: Sheila Brice, Ann Conigliaro, Michael Earl, Andrew Harris, Frank Pisano, David Underdown

Absent and excused: None.

Library Staff present: Doug Koschik, Library Director; Josh Rouan

2. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda.

1st Brice

2nd Conigliaro

Yeas: Brice, Conigliaro, Earl, Harris, Pisano, Underdown

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: None.

The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Board Reports

President's Report:

Bob Bruner introduced himself. He noted that while the Library Board's relationship with the City has had issues in the past, he believes that both are on the same side and should continue to work together. He stated that the desire of both the Library Board and the City Commission to work together was evidenced at the City's April budget hearing.

4. Board Committee Reports

Earl reported that the Birmingham City Commission asked the Board to consider reducing its millage request to 1.21mills for FY 2011-12 and holding it there for FY 2012-13. The Board has targeted a fund balance that is 15% of the Library's operating budget. Harris stated that it was important to keep the fund balance at 15% in order to cover the insurance deductible, to cover any equipment maintenance, to act as a reserve in case either contract community were to cancel its contract with Baldwin or the City chose to lower the millage rate levied for the Library, and to provide a designated reserve for specified capital projects, such as carpeting or new shelving. Harris also noted that as property values continue to decline, it is possible that the same millage rate will bring in less revenue in future years. The finance committee does not want to reduce the proposed millage rate. Earl noted that the Library budget would be drawing down on the fund balance over the next two fiscal years.

Koschik said that he has been in touch with Sharon Ostin and worked out how much revenue the Library would lose if the millage was set to 1.21 over the next two years. The Library would receive \$195,000 in revenue at the 1.21 rate during the 2011-12 fiscal year. The following year the Library would receive \$191,000. This would result in a net loss of \$4,000 to the Library over two years.

Since taxable valuations for the coming year are higher than originally anticipated, the Library will receive, in FY 2011-12, an additional \$25,000 from a Birmingham millage of 1.32, as well as an additional \$11,000 from Beverly Hills. Koschik stated that the Library could use this money to reduce the number of unpaid staff furlough days (and thus the number of specially closed days) from nine to four. He noted that the Library's approved budget is based on reducing one shift each week for the next year, and that reinstating this shift would be more expensive than removing some unpaid furlough days. By lowering the number of furlough days, the Library would go part way to allaying the City Commission's concern about the decline in library services.

Board members agreed that the Finance Committee should meet to discuss the furlough issue before the City Commission's May 9 budget vote. Pisano expressed an interest in following through with the technological capital projects and asking for 1.32 mills. Underdown asked if capital projects could still be pursued if the millage were reduced to 1.21 for the next two years. Koschik said that some commissioners suggested using money from the fund balance for capital projects, and then replacing that money during the next fiscal year. Harris noted that it wasn't guaranteed that the City would give the library the 1.21 mills in 2012-13, and that property values might also negatively affect the amount of revenue brought in.

Member of the public Bob Kelly asked how much it would cost to maintain the same level of service that the Library currently provides. Koschik reported that the 1.1 mill that the Library is currently receiving would cost each household in Birmingham approximately \$192 next fiscal year. The additional .22 millage requested for capital projects would bring in an additional \$38 per household. In order to maintain the same level of staff and keep the Library open for the same number of hours, an additional \$25 per household would be required. Thus the total per-household cost for next fiscal year would come to \$255 for library services if the Library did not reduce staff and hours, and pursue capital improvement projects. Member of the Public Bob Kelly stated that Birmingham citizens have never passed on an opportunity to provide funding to the Library and that the Board should not decrease the level of service.

Member of the public Hermann Fleischer stated that the Board should seek the maximum millage possible. He stated that the City Commission has the responsibility to properly fund the Library. Member of the public Dorothy Conrad expressed the opinion that the Board is doing its best to support the Library, and that the City Commission is controlling the millage rate for the Library. She stated that concerned members of the public should express their opinions directly to the City Commission. Member of the public Joan Heinicke stated that the Library Board has done a great job.

The Board decided to let stand the budget it approved on March 21, which called for a 1.32 millage rate.

Finance Committee: Harris reported that the current fiscal year budget is in good shape. He reported that the high water bill the Library received earlier in the year would be investigated in the spring. The committee also discussed the closing of the Troy library, which may be delayed. Harris noted that there may be an influx of Troy residents at Baldwin. The committee recommended that the Board wait to see

how many Troy residents the closing might bring to Baldwin before proposing charging non-residents for computer use or wireless access. At the finance meeting Koschik presented a proposal from Foundation Search, a group that assists non-profits in finding grant money.

Bloomfield Hills Subcommittee:

Conigliaro reported that the subcommittee met on April 11. The discussion centered on the current status of negotiations. Bloomfield Hills rejected the Library's initial offer for a contract price based on the per-household amount that Birmingham residents pay. Bloomfield Hills would like to pay the same per-household rate residents of Beverly Hills pay. The difference between these two rates is significant. The counter-offer made by Bloomfield Hills was \$166,103, compared to the original Baldwin offer of \$380,549. The subcommittee agreed that using the blended average per-household rate (i.e., the rate for Birmingham, Beverly Hills, and Bingham Farms combined) is a possible solution going forward. The subcommittee also discussed whether to base the figure proposed to Bloomfield Hills on the current 1.1 millage rate or the proposed 1.32 millage rate. The former calculation would result in a payment of \$273,946. The latter calculation would result in a payment of \$317,266. Board members discussed which millage rate to base an offer on.

Underdown asked about Bloomfield Hill's budget issues. Koschik stated that Bloomfield Hills has not had to pay much money for library service from Troy, and finding a large sum of money for library services in the current budget would be difficult for them. Koschik stated that Baldwin must respect the situations of the communities that it currently contracts with and also the views of Birmingham residents, who have voiced opposition to any contract with Bloomfield Hills that does not require Bloomfield Hills to pay its fair share. Koschik also noted that Bloomfield Hills wanted a one-year contract, and the subcommittee prefers a three-year contract.

Member of the public Hermann Fleischer suggested that if Bloomfield Hills has rejected Baldwin's initial offer, then negotiations should end in order to avoid wasting time. Member of the public Jan Hepburn stated that in the past, when Bloomfield Hills voted on Library millage issues, residents had use of the Troy Library, which will likely not be the case in the near future. Member of the public Dorothy Conrad asked about the .3 millage rate necessary to receive state aid. Board members agreed to ask Bloomfield Hills for a contract based on the blended average per-household cost, with the Birmingham millage rate at 1.32 mills. The Board agreed that Koschik should send a letter to Bloomfield Hills, proposing a three-year contract at \$317,266 annually, plus an inflation factor.

5. Library Report

Koschik reported that Michael Connelly was in Birmingham last week for two events at The Community House, a fundraising luncheon and a discussion. Feedback was largely positive.

Koschik reported that the proposed state budget would result in reduced state aid for public libraries. Koschik distributed drafts of two letters for the Board to authorize and send to Representative Chuck Moss and Senator John Pappageorge expressing concern about the level of funding for public libraries. The letters specifically mention the impact cuts would have on MeL interlibrary loan and state funded databases. Board members approved of sending the letters.

Koschik stated that Baldwin has applied for an NEH/ALA grant to support a series of programs on the Civil War. The Birmingham Optimist Club has agreed to co-sponsor a fundraiser to benefit the Library's

youth room, a venture the Friends will also support. The fundraiser would involve distributing coupons for the California Pizza Kitchen at Somerset, where proceeds from each purchase would be used to purchase an early childhood literacy computer for the youth room. Koschik reported that alcohol use at Library functions is covered by the City of Birmingham's host liquor liability policy as long as money does not change hands for the event. If the Library wanted to serve alcohol at a fundraiser, however, it would have to pay for a special events liquor license, or have a local restaurant with a liquor license hold the event at the Library and then piggyback off of the restaurant's liquor license.

Koschik reported that the Troy Public Library had been scheduled to close May 1, but that the Troy City Commission has delayed the closing. Koschik recommended sending a letter to the director of the Troy Library stating that Troy residents would not be able to use the Baldwin Library after May 1, unless a permanent decision was made about keeping the Troy Library open at a level that would meet minimum state aid guidelines. The Board agreed.

Koschik stated that the City of Birmingham will soon go out for bids for a new HVAC system for the Library. By June the City will make a decision on which company to contract with and work will commence in July. Jeff Van Dorn and architect Victor Saroki toured the Library with Koschik to look at ways to improve the building.

Koschik mentioned that the Library budget calls for reducing service hours one shift per week. Koschik intends to close the Library on Sundays between Memorial Day and on Labor Day, and reduce Thursday hours to 11:00 pm – 8:00 pm between Labor Day and Memorial Day. Some staff would be in the building on Thursday mornings to allow outside groups to meet at the Library. Koschik asked for Board feedback. Board members stated they would defer to Koschik's judgment.

Koschik reported that there is a movement in Bloomfield Township among citizens and some Bloomfield Township Library Board members to remove reciprocal borrowing privileges for communities that contract with libraries. As a result, Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms would be excluded from checking out materials at the Bloomfield Township Public Library. Koschik will attend the April 26 Bloomfield Township Library Board meeting and urge the BTPL Board not to exclude Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms. Earl asked what had motivated this proposal. Koschik reported that the Township was concerned about the number of non-taxpaying patrons using their library. It is also possible that Bloomfield Township is considering this as a response to the Troy Library closing, such as Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms, or in reaction to Baldwin's negotiations with Bloomfield Hills. However, Baldwin has made it clear to Bloomfield Hills that a potential contract would not lead to privileges for their residents at the Bloomfield Township Library. Koschik reported that legal counsel has given the opinion that there is nothing that would prevent Bloomfield Township from granting reciprocal privileges to existing contract communities, such as Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms, while excluding others, such as Bloomfield Hills.

6. Liaisons

Friends of the Baldwin Library: Jan Hepburn thanked Birmingham Historical Museum Director Leslie Pielack for hosting the Friends' March board meeting at the museum. The Friends have received 520 membership renewals, which has brought in \$22,000. She also stated that the semi-annual book sale will run from Friday, May 6, until Monday, May 9. The Friends' Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 1 at 2:00 p.m. in the lower level of the Library.

7. Information Only

Koschik reviewed upcoming events of interest.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting

1st Harris

2nd Pisano

Yeas: Brice, Conigliaro, Earl, Harris, Pisano, Underdown

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: None.

The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

David Underdown, Secretary

Date