



BALDWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
May 16, 2011

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Andrew Harris at 7:30 p.m.

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

Absent and excused: Michael Earl

Library Staff present: Doug Koschik, Library Director; Matt Church, Associate Director; Josh Rouan

2. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda.

1st Brice

2nd Pisano

Yeas: Brice, Conigliaro, Harris, Pisano, Underdown

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: Earl.

The motion was approved.

3. Board Reports

Vice President Harris reminded the audience of the California Pizza Kitchen fundraiser taking place on May 17 and 18.

4. Board Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Pisano reported that the library is 83% through the fiscal year with only 75% of its funds spent. The City Commission budget vote will take place on May 23. The Committee recommended severance packages for each of the three full time employees to be laid off. The City determined that the higher than usual October 2010 water bill was due to an unusually hot and dry summer.

Policy Committee: The Committee met and discussed how Library Board and Committee meetings could be scheduled to avoid conflict with holidays. Koschik and Church will review the City's policy and other libraries' policies on scheduling. The Committee recommended adding fees to non-residents for checking out video games and lowering the number of items non-residents can check out. The Committee also discussed the recent decision of the Bloomfield Township Public Library (BTPL) board to cut off service to contract communities, such as Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms. Harris reviewed the history of the relationship between the two libraries. The Committee decided that it was prudent to send a letter to the BTPL Board President asking the Board to reconsider. The proposed letter asks BTPL to reconsider before the Baldwin June 20 Board Meeting, and also lets BTPL know that the special

relationship between the two libraries will not continue if it fails to cancel or suspend its decision.

Brice reported attending the BTPL Board meeting and stated that she was disappointed to see that the BTPL Board had already made up its mind and was not interested in a dialog on the issue. She noted that the Homebound service is listed on the BTPL website without mention of Baldwin. Brice stated that she was in favor of sending the letter the Policy Committee recommended. Harris added that Baldwin has been able to accomplish a reduction in non-resident usage while maintaining the relationship between the two libraries.

Koschik stated that there is concern at BTPL about unequal contributions to library service. He stated that while this is a valid concern, cutting off all service to contract communities does not make sense, noting that some contract communities pay rates for library service equal to the rates of the communities they contract with. He stated that he would attend a meeting of The Library Network (TLN) steering committee on May 23 to discuss reciprocal borrowing privileges among member libraries. Koschik will report back at the June Baldwin Board meeting.

Village of Beverly Hills Councilman Walter Briggs thanked Koschik for putting together a comprehensive history of the relationship between the two libraries. He opined that the BTPL policy was misguided and displayed a lack of information and research. He urged the Library Board to send a letter to the BTPL Board and follow up should the policy not be rescinded.

Member of the public Bob Deneweth noted that there are many Beverly Hills residents who use BTPL as their main library. He stated he was very disappointed with the BTPL decision, and said that the money Beverly Hills residents pay for library service allows Baldwin to provide service to Bloomfield Township residents. He asked if the Board had considered stronger measures in response to the BTPL decision. Harris reported that the Board had considered stronger measures, but noted that Birmingham residents check out many items from BTPL, which had to be factored into any decision.

Koschik noted that the two communities that use Baldwin the most are BTPL and Royal Oak Public Library, and that those two libraries refuse to check out items to communities that contract with other TLN libraries.

Village of Bingham Farms Clerk Kathy Hagaman thanked Koschik for his measured response to the BTPL policy decision and bringing forth concerns of Bingham Farms and Beverly Hills. She opined that Beverly Hills and Bingham farms are not putting a heavy financial strain on BTPL.

Harris asked whether there was any data submitted or provided by the BTPL Board in support of their policy decision. Koschik responded that there were no financial figures presented at the April 26 BTPL Board meeting. He has an outstanding request for information from BTPL on their circulation policies and statistics.

Member of the public Frank Harold introduced himself as a Bloomfield Township resident, and stated that he uses Baldwin frequently despite living in the Township. He expressed support for Baldwin and thanked the Board for their measured response to the BTPL board decision.

Member of the public Marcia Robovitsky introduced herself as a resident of Bloomfield Township. She gave an overview of the difficulties between the Bloomfield Township Public Library and the City of Bloomfield Hills. She stated that the BTPL Board does not need to prove that the policy is an economic

issue and stated that she supported the BTPL Board's policy.

Member of the public Dorothy Conrad offered support for the Baldwin Library Board proposal to send a letter to the BTPL Board. She voiced support of sharing services and stated that as a Birmingham resident she does not feel used by communities that contract with Baldwin.

Koschik stated that Baldwin has an obligation to be good stewards of public funds, and it was for that reason that the Baldwin Board did not approve of the BTPL Board decision to end the shared director position in the late 1990s, which also led to the end of other shared positions and shared systems. If BTPL had taken a different path, both Bloomfield Township and Birmingham could be experiencing greater services and reduced costs.

Motion to increase non-resident fees for video games to \$2 and reduce the number of items non-residents can check out from 10 to 8, effective July 1, 2011.

1st Pisano

2nd Conigliaro

Yeas: Brice, Conigliaro, Harris, Pisano, Underdown

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: Earl.

The motion was approved.

Bloomfield Hills Subcommittee: Conigliaro gave an overview of negotiations with the City of Bloomfield Hills and the various proposals and counterproposals made by both communities. The proposal resubmitted to Bloomfield Hills was \$317,000 for three years with an annual increase based on the inflation rate. On May 12, Bloomfield Hills responded with a \$222,781 counterproposal, equivalent to 0.3 mills in Bloomfield Hills. The Board has to decide whether or not to continue negotiating with Bloomfield Hills. She noted that there was some sentiment in Birmingham that Bloomfield Hills should pay a rate identical to what Birmingham residents pays. She noted that Bloomfield Hills came up 25% from their initial offer, while Baldwin has come down 16% from its initial offer. If Baldwin agreed to the counter proposal, it would be a 41% reduction of its initial offer.

Harris opined that the Board should continue to negotiate. Pisano recommended basing any calculation for a rate offered to Bloomfield Hills on the 1.32 Library millage rate in Birmingham. Koschik clarified that his contract calculations are based on housing units, not households. Harris noted that the last counter offer from Bloomfield Hills is contingent upon voter approval in Bloomfield Hills. He stated that a significant reduction of Baldwin's \$317,000 offer would not be in the best interest of Baldwin's service communities. Koschik stated that any November ballot issue in Bloomfield Hills must be approved by the Bloomfield City commission by mid August; thus an agreement between the two negotiating bodies would need to be reached by July or August.

Member of the public William Duffy asked about costs of providing library service to Bloomfield Hills residents would be. Koschik stated that some of the money from a potential contract with Bloomfield Hills would go toward purchasing additional materials and hiring part-time staff, but that some of it would also go towards covering costs that are currently paid for by Birmingham and contract community residents. If the \$317,000 figure was agreed upon, the Library would not need to close the hours that it is currently planning to. Pisano noted that this money would allow the Library to maintain a larger fund balance instead of adjusting the millage rate to pay for capital projects.

Member of the public Dorothy Conrad asked the Board to continue negotiating with the City of Bloomfield Hills. Harris stated that there was a consensus to continue negotiating, but that the Library could not use the \$317,000 figure since it has been rejected. Harris suggested meeting again as a Subcommittee and reporting back in June.

Member of the public Marty Harold asked if the Board was aware of the amount that BTPL had asked from Bloomfield Hills during their contract negotiations. Conigliaro noted that the last failed millage for library service in Bloomfield Hills included the establishment of a library board. Member of the public Marcia Robovitsky asked if a contract with Bloomfield Hills would include language stating that they would not be allowed to borrow from BTPL. Harris stated that the negotiations envisioned a contract that would not allow Bloomfield Hills to use BTPL, as requested by the Bloomfield Hills representatives.

Member of the public Bob Deneweth opined that it is important that any contract with Bloomfield Hills must respect the sensitivities of Baldwin's current contract communities. Koschik stated that he specified to Bloomfield Hills that the Baldwin Board must take into consideration the view of the Birmingham Commission, BTPL, and the Baldwin service communities. He stated that BTPL never gave any indication that negotiations with Bloomfield Hills would impact Baldwin's service communities.

Village of Beverly Hills Councilman Walter Briggs stated that Baldwin has kept Beverly Hills in mind during negotiations. He also suggested that the Board use the 1.1 millage figure as a basis to calculate an offer to Bloomfield Hills. Member of the public Marcia Robovitsky stated that she would attend the May 17 BTPL Board meeting, and would recommend that the "five Bs" go back to a shared director and form a regional library. She stated that the operating costs for both libraries should be divided by the number of households in all five communities, with each household paying the same amount for library service, instead of a millage rate. Pisano stated that he was willing to continue negotiations with Bloomfield Hills, but that he doesn't want to give library service at too low a price.

Koschik stated that the Subcommittee does need direction on how to proceed. If the Subcommittee brings back a proposal in June, then the potential counter offer could not go to Bloomfield Hills until the end of June, and the Bloomfield Hills City Commission could discuss it only in July. If the Subcommittee is given the authority to issue a counter-offer, then that could get to Bloomfield Hills before their June meeting. Harris asked if calling a special meeting of the Board was an option. Board members agreed that a special meeting of the Board would be held to discuss a counter-offer to Bloomfield Hills.

5. Library Report

Church reported that the Library is on target for most areas of its strategic plan. The Library's Build a Better Baldwin survey is in homes and available online as well as at the Library. Brice noted that gate count numbers were negatively affected by furlough days. She also asked if the YMCA survey that the Library is promoting on its website might confuse some people. Koschik stated that the YMCA will be linked on the main website until the end of May.

Church announced that Youth Librarian Laurie Walters is resigning effective June 1 to take a new position. Church reported attending the Community Education through Collaboration And Communication (CECAC) board retreat. Koschik stated that the Troy Library remains open, and its fate will be decided in part at a Troy City Council meeting being held tonight. Baldwin has cut off access to Troy patrons but will consider reestablishing a reciprocal arrangement if the Troy Library remains open for enough hours to meet minimum state aid requirements. The Library and City of Birmingham hosted

the pre-bid meeting for the new HVAC system with 25 people in attendance.

6. Liaisons

Friends of the Baldwin Library: Jan Hepburn announced that the Friends' 2010-11 fiscal year closed with 531 members, and \$22,959 received from membership renewals. The Friends received several large donations this year. Hepburn announced that she resigned from the Friends Board. Board members thanked Hepburn for her work with the Friends. Koschik noted that the Friends of the Library book sale in early May had netted approximately \$11,700.

Village of Beverly Hills: Walter Briggs reiterated his support for continued negotiations with Bloomfield Hills.

7. Information Only

Church reviewed upcoming programs. Brice added that the California Pizza Kitchen fundraiser was in memory of long time Baldwin Library patron and Birmingham resident Katherine Halbert.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

1st Brice

2nd Conigliaro

Yeas: Brice, Conigliaro, Harris, Pisano, Underdown

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: Earl.

The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.