



**BALDWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY MINUTES,  
VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING  
October 27, 2020**

Call to Order and Roll Call:

The meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by President Ashley Aidenbaum at 6:05 p.m.

Library Board present: Ashley Aidenbaum, Melissa Mark, Frank Pisano, Jim Suhay, Bob Tera, and Jennifer Wheeler.

Absent and excused: None.

Library Staff present: Doug Koschik, Director; Rebekah Craft, Associate Director.

Members of the public present: 9

This meeting was held online, via Zoom software.

1. Electronic Meeting Procedures

Koschik explained that recently passed legislation in Michigan requires all public bodies to have a set of Electronic Meeting Procedures. He drafted such a document for the Baldwin Public Library Board of Directors, based on the procedures that the Birmingham City Commission recently adopted. This document can be found in the "For Information Only" section of the November 16 Board packet.

**Motion to adopt the Baldwin Public Library Electronic Meeting Procedures, dated October 27, 2020.**

**1st** Tera  
**2nd** Mark

Yeas: Aidenbaum, Mark, Pisano, Suhay, Tera, and Wheeler.

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: None.

The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Mark described the search process undertaken to fill the position of Library Director.

"On August 5, Baldwin Public Library Director Doug Koschik announced that he was going to retire on January 15, 2021. The Library Board decided that it would carry out a search, including posting the position on regional and national forums and considering internal candidates. It also reviewed the open meetings policy on hiring to ensure a highly transparent process. The Board charged its Personnel Committee—consisting of Ashley Aidenbaum, Melissa Mark, and Jennifer Wheeler—with the task of setting a salary level and developing a job description and a job posting. The Committee worked through this process with Director Doug Koschik, who—in turn—consulted with Ben Myers, Birmingham's Human Resources Manager, and Tim Currier, the Library's legal counsel. The job was posted on August 20, 2020, for an annual salary of a minimum of \$94,000, with an application deadline of September 18, 2020. It was advertised on all of the following online resources:

- The "Employment" page of the Baldwin Public Library website
- The "Job Board" of The Library Network, a library cooperative covering several counties in southeast Michigan
- The "Job Board" of the University of Michigan School of Information

- The “Job Zone” of the Library Journal, a national library periodical (premium listing)
- The “Job Board” of the American Library Association (premium listing with diversity upgrade)
- The “Jobs List” of the Michigan Nonprofit Association
- LinkedIn

The Library spent a total of \$1,274 on the postings in order to reach as wide and diverse a pool of possible applicants as possible.

The minimum requirements for the position were listed as:

- Master’s Degree in Library Science from an American Library Association-accredited school
- Permanent Professional Certificate from the Library of Michigan, as required by state law for a Class V library, or the ability to obtain such a certificate within three months of date of hire
- Five years of professional librarian experience, including administrative and supervisor responsibilities in a public library
- Completion of a successful background check

The job posting called for candidates to supply the following information:

- Baldwin Public Library’s application form
- Cover letter
- Resume
- Three professional references
- Writing sample illustrating the candidates’ analytical skills and ability to persuade an audience

By midnight of September 18, ten applications had been received. At its publicly-noticed September 29 Zoom meeting, the Committee narrowed the field to five applicants, based on the amount and nature of relevant public library each candidate had. Melissa Mark contacted two of the remaining applicants and inquired about their minimum salary requirements, which ended up being higher than the Committee was willing to meet. Both candidates voluntarily withdrew, leaving only three in contention.

At its publicly-noticed October 12 Zoom meeting, the Committee eliminated one of the remaining three candidates because that candidate’s work experience was substantially less than the experience of the other two. Director Doug Koschik invited the final two candidates to be interviewed by the Library Board on October 27 and October 28, and both accepted. On October 20, however, one candidate decided to withdraw from consideration, leaving only the other one remaining.

That candidate is Rebekah Craft, who currently serves as the Associate Director of the Baldwin Public Library. Her cover letter, resume, and writing sample are contained in the Board packet for today’s special Library Board meeting.

Since the only candidate being interviewed is an internal candidate, well-known to Baldwin Library staff and the public, the Committee sought the opinions of people acquainted with her. Melissa Mark spoke privately with the five Library Department Heads. Director Doug Koschik set up anonymous Google documents where staff members and members of the public could offer their opinions on Ms. Craft’s candidacy. Nine staff members and seven members of the public took advantage of this opportunity. The Library Board was able to view their comments.

The Personnel Committee also sought input from staff, former Library Board members, and the general public about the types of questions that should be included in the interview. Their suggestions have influenced the final set of 15 questions, which are now going to be posed to Rebekah.”

3. Aidenbaum asked Craft the following questions, with other Library Board members posing follow-up questions.

#### **EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND**

- Briefly summarize your professional background as a librarian and administrator.
- What made you decide to apply to become Director of the Baldwin Public Library and what makes you think that you would be a good fit for this position?
- After five years of working at Baldwin, what do you find to be its strengths and weaknesses, especially in services and programs?
- How do you view the role of the Board of Directors in a library? How do you propose to work with the Board successfully?

#### **FUNCTIONAL AREAS**

- Describe the experience you have had to date had with fundraising, budgeting and financial administration, human resources, IT, technical services, and all branches of public services. What innovations would you want to bring to those areas in the next few years?
- You are familiar with Baldwin's three-phase building plan. What are your thoughts on the proposed Phase 3? How would you incorporate your proposal for solar panels, which you included in your application, into Phase 3? What other building improvements would you like to tackle over the next several years?

#### **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

- What is a public library's role in promoting racial equity and inclusion in the community? How would you promote an antiracist and inclusive culture internally and externally at the Library? Please provide specific examples of policies, practices, procedures, and projects.

#### **MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

- What qualities do you think are required in a successful leader? Is there anything about Baldwin's current organization structure that you would like to change?
- How would you strive to maintain high levels of customer service and employee morale, and keep staff well trained and equipped to handle a constantly changing environment?
- Tell us about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision at a job. How did you handle it?
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, how would you continue to provide quality service while, at the same time, safeguarding the safety of the public and staff?

#### **COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

- What is the role of the Baldwin Library in this community? What is your vision for the Library in five years' time?

- How would you strengthen relationships with the Friends of the Library; public and private schools and homeschoolers; local businesses and non-profit organizations; the media; Birmingham City government; and Baldwin’s contract communities?
- What proposals do you have for persuading non-users to begin taking advantage of the Library’s services?

**FUTURE**

- If you were offered this position, what would be your top three priorities? How would you determine them, and how would you measure the extent of your success?
- Do you have any questions for us?

4. Library Board members discussed Craft’s qualifications for the position.

All Board members expressed support for Craft’s application, based on her experience and abilities. They noted that she has been an excellent Associate Director for the past five years. Mark stated that Craft had received 100% support from her references and from the Library Staff and members of the general public who had offered their opinions.

**Motion to appoint Rebekah Craft as Director of Baldwin Public Library, effective January 16, 2021, subject to a final review and signature of the employment contract.**

**1st** Mark

**2nd** Suhay

Yeas: Aidenbaum, Mark, Pisano, Suhay, Tera, and Wheeler.

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: None.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Aidenbaum raised the issue of Craft’s compensation. Mark had researched the current compensation rate for Directors of similar libraries in the metro Detroit area. She detailed her findings and concluded with a recommendation that Craft be paid an annual starting salary of \$95,000. All Board members concurred with that recommendation.

Craft expressed her thanks to Board members for the confidence they were showing her by giving her the Director’s position.

After being called on by Tera, former Library Board members Ann Conigliaro voiced her support of Craft and praised the Library Board for the transparent way in which it had conducted the search.

5. General Public Comment Period

Former Library Board member Sheila Brice thanked the current Board for soliciting public comment during the search process. She is very pleased that Craft will be the next Director.

6. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**1st** Mark

**2nd** Wheeler

Yeas: Aidenbaum, Mark, Pisano, Suhay, Tera, and Wheeler.

Nays: None.

Absent and excused: None.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

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Frank Pisano, Secretary

Date

APPROVED