

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD**

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**THURSDAY, February 19, 2009  
Admiral Room, Blasco Memorial Library**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Susan Ottaway, Board President, called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kathy DeSante, Sr. Kathleen Blair, Helene Grande, Susan Ottaway, Mary Theiss, Barbara Wingerter.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Amos Goodwine, Jeanine McCreary, Pete Ogden

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Library: Margaret Stewart, Library Director, Joan Duke, Blasco Coordinator, Anthony Keck, District Consultant, Ann Randall-Dill, Technology Coordinator, Diane Chlebus

Friends of the Library: Bob Gallivan

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mary Theiss moved to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2009.

Sr. Kathleen Blair seconded the motion.

Approved by unanimous vote.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT (Robert Gallivan)**

Bob announced the Friends of the Library's Romance paperback sale was a huge success. The next book collection scheduled for March 28, 2009.

**REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT: (Margaret Z. Stewart)**

The unaudited year-end financial report was reviewed. Margaret noted that year end line items were for the most part within projected dollar amounts.

**REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: (Margaret Z. Stewart)**

This week, Finance Director Jim Sparber met with some of the library staff to discuss the impact of the current economic conditions and the County budget. Library staff has been asked to submit ideas to library administration for ways to increase revenue and/or reduce expenses. Some suggestions submitted include the elimination of Sunday hours during the summer months and the reduction of Bookmobile stops.

Margaret mentioned that ECPL intends to meet with a representative from a debt recovery company in hopes to increase revenue from past due library accounts. The library is not happy with its present vendor.

County Administration is investigating ways to conserve funds, and has issued a moratorium on non-essential work related travel.

County Council recently adopted a vehicle use policy for all county owned vehicles. All staff is required to document time, location, mileage, reason for travel on a vehicle log sheet, which will be reviewed by the County department head, and then forwarded to the County Finance Department.

**STATISTICAL AND OTHER REPORTS: (Joan Duke)**

Joan reported that for the month of January 2009 the circulation statistics reflect a decrease of 2%. Blasco Library is down by 11% and visitation to the Blasco Library has decreased by 12%. Both Edinboro and Millcreek branch libraries continue

to be very busy as reflected in their growing circulation numbers. Library administration will continue to monitor the statistics.

**REPORT OF DISTRICT CONSULTANT: (Anthony Keck)**

Tony reported that the Governor's proposed budget reduces funding for the State Library by 50%. This cut would have a substantial impact on their services and staffing.

Cindy Phelps is the newly appointed director for the Cochranon Area Public Library. District negotiations will begin in the near future.

**Unfinished Business**

None at this time.

**New Business**

**Strategic Plan**

Helene Grande, one of the two Library Board's representative serving on the Strategic Plan Committee, opened up the discussion on this topic.

The group discussed the challenge in implementing some of the plan with the current economic situation. With pending budget cuts, it will be difficult to maintain library services at the current level. It was suggested that the plan be revised to reflect the reality of the financial situation and that the priorities be reexamined. Helene will report at next month's meeting after the Strategic Plan Committee meets on 2/23/09.

**Miscellaneous discussion**

- Sr. Kathleen commended Margaret Stewart and her hard work in monitoring the library's spending, particularly without the assistance of an assistant library director.
- The board may plan a special meeting to meet with Library Administration to develop proactive ways to deal with the budgetary constraints.
- Susan Ottaway announced the Trustees Conference is scheduled on April 3 and April 4 in Pittsburgh.
- Ann Randall-Dill, ECPL Technology Coordinator, asked that board members complete the library use survey, which is available on the library's website at [erielibrary.org](http://erielibrary.org).

ADJOURNMENT - Adjourned at 12:57 p.m.