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VERMONT BOARD OF LIBRARIES
Minutes of July 11, 2023 Meeting
10:00 a.m. – 11:42 p.m.
Meeting Conducted Virtually via Microsoft Teams

Board Members in Attendance: Tom Frank (Chair), Adriene Katz (Vice Chair), Maxie Ewins, Deb Granquist, Bruce Post, Linda Saarnijoki

Others Present:

Catherine Delneo (Secretary to the Board, State Librarian, and Commissioner of Libraries), Tom McMurdo, Josh Muse, April Shaw, Janette Shaffer, Kevin Unrath, Jonathan Clark, Lauren Kelley

Call to Order: [00:00:10] Chair Tom Frank called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

Roll Call: Chair Tom Frank took roll call.

Changes to Agenda: [00:07:25]

Maxie Ewins requested to add the topic of Board member evaluation.

Linda Saarnijoki requested to add the topic of new members for the Board.

Public Comment: [00:08:09]

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting from April 11, 2023: [00:08:25]

Bruce Post shared that on page two of the minutes, paragraph four, that the word ‘asked’ needs to be added behind his name in the first sentence.

Linda Saarnijoki questioned page four, second paragraph under ‘Adjournment’; she asked about the meaning of ‘mitigate’. Secretary Delneo suggested the paragraph should be revised to say, “to mitigate the impacts of the SCC’s decision on statewide library services.”

Chair Frank called for a vote to approve the minutes; the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2023 meeting as corrected.

State Librarian’s Report: [00:12:23]

Supporting document:

https://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/AboutUs/Board/Supporting_Documents/StateLibrarianReport_BOL_071123.pdf

State Librarian Catherine Delneo provided a summary of information from the State Librarian's Report dated July 11, 2023. After sharing brief highlights from her written report, Catherine shared news that the Governor will appoint three new members to the Board of Libraries in the coming weeks.

Secretary Delneo thanked departing Board members Bruce Post, Maxie Ewins, and Deb Granquist for their hard work, energy, and service to the Board for a very extended amount of time.

The State Librarian took questions from members of the Board.

Maxie Ewins thanked Catherine Delneo for providing an excellent State Librarian's report.

**Vermont Public Library Foundation (VPLF) Annual Update and Representation:
[00:47:37]**

Catherine Delneo, who serves as the President of the VPLF, provided a brief overview of the Vermont Public Library Foundation. Per the VPLF bylaws, one seat on its board is reserved for one member from the Vermont Board of Libraries and that representative must be voted on annually by the Board of Libraries.

Catherine thanked Adriene Katz, who has served as the representative for this past year, for her efforts as a board member particularly given the time commitment associated with that commitment this year.

Adriene Katz shared that while she has enjoyed serving on the VPLF board, she would prefer not to serve on the board in the current fiscal year (2024).

Possible nominees for new VPLF representative from the Board of Libraries were discussed.

Linda Saarnijoki made a motion to nominate Tom Frank to be the Board of Libraries representative to the Vermont Public Library Foundation. Bruce Post seconded the motion. The Board voted as follows: five members voted in favor of Tom Frank's nomination as the Board of Libraries representative to the Vermont Public Library Foundation, one member abstained.

Bruce Post thanked Catherine Delneo for her valuable work with the VPLF.

Safety in Libraries: [01:05:35]

Catherine Delneo shared that the Working Group on the Status of Libraries will convene on Friday, July 26, on the topic of safety in libraries. In the past legislative year, the House and Senate both supported the inclusion of this topic in the scope of the report (bill S.133 was passed by both bodies).



Catherine shared information about the recent event on June 10th at the Cobleigh Public Library in Lyndonville which the host, attendees of the event, and members of the staff felt threatened by protesters. Board member James Saunders had asked for this topic to be added to the agenda of the July meeting.

Supporting links:

<https://vtdigger.org/2023/06/14/after-being-accosted-by-protestors-at-a-queer-poetry-reading-a-vermont-artist-fears-for-his-safety/>

https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/local/protestors-disrupt-lgbtq-event-at-library/article_10aa2fb6-19ae-517c-8800-4c480c754c24.html

Maxie Ewins shared that safety in libraries was a perennial concern and shared that during her 13 years at the Fletcher Free Library, she experienced many safety issues.

Supporting link:

<https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/initiatives-and-projects/working-group-status-libraries-vermont>

Deb Granquist asked Catherine Delneo about the breadth and scope of the word ‘security’, because it can mean many different things. Catherine replied that the language used in the legislature’s miscellaneous education bill (bill S.133) is framed in terms of safety and that during her testimony to the Legislature both public and staff safety were discussed.

Secretary Delneo stated that the Working Group welcomes statements from the Board of Libraries on the topic of safety in libraries as well as other topics addressed in the Working Group’s report. She suggested that the Board consider providing written or oral comments to the Working Group either individually or as individuals including any recommendations they would like to see incorporated into the Working Group’s report.

Additional comments: [01:29:41]

Chair Frank asked the Board members if they had any questions or concerns about any other topics. He thanked the three outgoing Board members for their service.

Chair Frank asked the Board their opinion on continuing to hold one meeting a year in-person and the other meetings held virtually.

Linda Saarnijoki said she likes a combination of in-person and virtual meetings, and likes the idea of the Board meeting in different libraries as a show of support to libraries.

Bruce Post strongly agreed that meeting at different libraries is very valuable and highly recommends it.



Adjournment: [01:41:00]

Bruce Post made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maxie Ewins seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of adjourning the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Delneo, Secretary of the Board

Time stamp to reflect [Hours: Minutes; Seconds] in the meeting recording.

