

Friends of the Joliet Public Library – Minutes November 20, 2021

1. Convene and Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.
2. Roll Call: Members Present: Dave Hlavac, Linda Aguilar, Frankie Overcash, Ted Overcash, Mallory Hewlett, Ethel Garrett, Marilyn Bohner, Colleen Robbins, John Davis, Ron Likovic, Joe Furlan, Paul Rak, Annita Dullery, Judy Sutter, Margaret Holzrichter, Dan Hopkins, Judy Hopkins
3. Agenda Additions: Paul and Dave will talk about the new management system for the membership database.
4. Treasurer's Report:
Beginning balance as of 08/31/21 = \$52,060.80
Income = \$1,660.71
Expenses = \$420.62
Ending Balance as of 05/31/21 = \$53,300.89
R. Miller special use donation -\$5,000.00
Available funds = \$48,300.89
Motion to accept the Treasure's report was made by Ethel; second by Margaret; motion approved.

Fundraising Reports:

- Income other than the book sale was only \$600 for the quarter. The relocation of the ongoing sale at Black Road Branch is the main factor. We will give a report to Mallory to show Megan how much income we have lost by moving the sale shelves at Black Road.
5. Read and Approve Minutes:
 - Correction to the September minutes: Only lifetime members received printed, laminated cards.
 - Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by John; second by Marilyn; motion approved.
 6. Library News: Mallory Hewlett, Liaison
 - Ottawa Street Branch is going into Phase 2 construction in December.
 - Jim Dieters is the new Deputy Director. He came to us from the White Oak Library in Crest Hill.
 - Staff is doing lots of weeding of adult books. There are at least 10 carts in the basement for us to sort.
 - Boxes of books can be stored in the attic. Ron has books in the attic on carts and on tables.
 - The library is participating in Light Up the Holidays on the Friday after Thanksgiving. The Ottawa Street branch will have crafts and other activities during the hours of 9 am until 5 pm. If we would like to have a small sale, the Chicago Street door will be open. Afternoon hours should have the most traffic. This will be a good opportunity to advertise the Friends to people who will be downtown to attend the parade and other events.
 - 6a. Annita gave a status update on the Little Free Libraries (LFL). She was a previous past president of the Friends of the Library about 20 years ago.
 - There are 12 LFL in Joliet, most of which are located at District 86 schools. Amanda, an outreach librarian, takes care of them (checking on them, refilling as needed). The LFL at the

Briggs Street YMCA was relocated (after it closed) to the Salvation Army. The Kiwanis Club co-sponsors it with the Salvation Army. Other LFL are sponsored by the Lions Club and the Friends. Ron assists in selecting books to stock the ones we support. One additional LFL was added at Nowell Park. The LFL at Aiken Park was taken down after several incidences of vandalism. It will be relocated in the spring, probably to Bicentennial Park. There is a concern that we don't have enough children's books to keep them stocked. The ones we support have the Friends' name on the box. Dave asked if we could put fliers in the books with Friends info. The books each have a sticker inside that says the book was donated by the Friends of the JPL.

- Annita gave a brief report on the LPLs. In Joliet, they were started by Catherine Adamowski, former JPL Deputy Director. The library received permission to put up the boxes in public locations. Little Free Libraries is a company that holds the trademark and controls the licenses. All the Joliet location licenses are still in Catherine's name. Most are running well on their own; people from the community donate books to fill them. There is more information about the Little Free Libraries on the JPL website.
- Dave asked that we be kept in the loop about changes that the JPL may make in the future. John said that the Spanish Community Center is looking for one. Annita responded that they could have one of the two that will be available in the spring.

7. Funding Requests: There are no new funding requests.

- Outstanding funding request for signage. Amount? This item was tabled at the September meeting. Dave has heard from several members since then; most do not want to spend the whole \$35,000. Mallory reported that there is no money in the remodeling budget for the new sign. If we do not fund it (or provide most of the funds), it will either go out to bid, or might not happen at all. If we want the Friends' name and logo on the sign, we will need to give at least \$30,000 toward the project. Other discussion/comments included:
 - if we spend all (or most) of the money we have in the bank on this project, there will not be money left to fund the programs we usually support. Because our ability to raise money through book sales has been limited, we need to keep some in reserve to get us through the next two years.
 - We need to know what's going on with Thrift Books to know if we will have income from them.
 - Our budget surplus (money in the bank) is because we didn't fund Star Wars Day and other programs over the past 2 years.
 - What is the priority of the library/librarians? Would they rather have a new sign or have us fund other projects throughout the year?
 - Are there other ways we can get money to increase our income (grants, etc.)?
 - We can table a vote on this one more time, but after the next meeting, it will either need to be approved or withdrawn.
- There was no motion to table this agenda item, nor was there a motion to approve.

8. Committee Reports:

- Membership: The current list we have in Google Contacts has 219 members and contacts. The database is incomplete because not all these people are current members. Some of them are on the list to be contacted for events such as book sales. Currently, the list of members does not include the lifetime members as they no longer need to pay dues. Dave said there is a separate page of lifetime members. About a dozen people renewed their membership at the book sale.

9. Old Business:

- Thrift Books Update: Dave got in touch with Jaime Hurst, our liaison. He got a 2-page report from her. See handout. Other comments/discussion included:
 - Cost of sales – this is what it costs them to sell but does not include what we spend to ship books to them. We pay half of their shipping costs. We also pay commissions to places like Amazon who sell our books online. Out of our 50% we pay the freight share up front, so we don't see any money until the books sell.
 - Thrift only keeps books for a few months (180 – 200 days). If they don't sell in that time, they get rid of them.
 - We paid a lot in shipping for all the books we sent to them that later got removed from their inventory.
 - Chicago Messenger charges a \$210 flat fee to pick up bins so the more books we can pack into each bin, the better off we are. The fee is the same no matter how many bins we send. Sending more bins at a time saves us money. Do we have room to store more bins while we are filling them? They also charge us \$210 to deliver empty bins.
 - Another option would be to take the books to Thrift's distribution center in Aurora ourselves.
 - We need to use their scanning tool to scan our books so we send them items they can sell more readily. We can throw in 'recycling' (books we don't think will sell) but we pay for it.
 - We can send them DVDs, Blue Rays, and audio books, but do not send them music CDs, play-aways, magazines, or encyclopedias (unless you call them first to see if they want them.)
- Light Up the Holidays: Do we have volunteers to work at a book sale? Do we have enough books? John volunteered to oversee the sale. There are 2 -3 carts of holiday books at Ottawa Street. The sale will be from 2 to 4:30 pm inside the Chicago Street door. Dave will send an email asking for volunteers to work.

10. New Business:

- Funding Requests: No new requests
- Officers up for election and Vote. President is a 2-year term. All other offices are for 1-year terms. Slate of officers willing to serve:
President – Dave; Vice President – John; Treasurer – Frankie; Secretary – Linda.
Motion to approve the slate of officers made by Marilyn; second by Margaret; motion approved.
- Dates for next year, including book sales: Dave will reserve dates and email them to the members.
- Discussion on logistics during construction and going forward, ongoing sales, current inventory: Dave will email updates.

11. Agenda Additions:

- There is a need for us to purchase software to handle non-profit memberships that will allow us to send renewal reminders, accept online payments, and allow multiple people to make updates. There will be a cost (~\$50 to \$80 per month). Paul has been researching options and has found one to try.
Motion to approve the Executive Board to review options and spend up to \$100/month to get new software made by John; second, Colleen; motion approved.

- Paul presented information about United for Libraries, a Friends Group and Library Foundation – see handout. It costs \$80 per year for a membership. Motion to approve a one-year trial membership made by Paul; second, John; motion approved.

12. Announcements:

- Colleen was featured at an author book signing event at the Book Market in Joliet. There was also a write up about her and the event in the Herald News.
- John was featured in the Herald News publication, *Everyday Heroes*, on October 30, 2021.

13. Adjourn time: 12:01 pm.