

Exeter Library Association Board Meeting
February 12, 2024
6:30 pm – In Person

I. Meeting Called to Order at 6:40 PM

- a. Board Members in Attendance: Todd Dierksheide, Theresa Mowad, Mike Bennethum, Mariel Jordan, Laura Biancone, Chris Sperat
- B. Others in Attendance: Charlene Zawaski, Laura Carson, Jeff Carson, Susan Broome, Marissa Broome, Madelyn Watts

II. Approval of Minutes – January 8, 2023

- a. Motion to accept Laura Biancone, Mike Bennethum

III. Motion to amend the agenda to move public comment to start of the meeting Mike Bennethum, Second Chris Sperat, Motion Carries

IV. Public Comment:

Laura Carson: stated she would like the recent dismissal of 3 employees to be reviewed. She reviewed her involvement at ECL that has spanned 15 years. She spoke about recent events as an employee where she reported a toxic work environment and was dismissed one month following the event. She cited information from the employee handbook on Retaliation, Investigation, Confidentiality, Responsive Action. Her full statement has been submitted to the board.

Madelyn Watts: who has offered fiber programming at the library, spoke about how the dismissed staff brought her back to the library after years of not being a library patron.

Jeff Carson: presented documents that presented a timeline to the board based on board minutes regarding hiring and dismissal of library employees from April 2023-Feb. 2024. He asked questions and made statements regarding the hiring process of the current executive director, staff raises, the confidentiality of a meeting about the executive director's 6-month review, an employee's handling of resumes, the working hours of the executive director. He also stated that the library has not posted board minutes since August.

Chris Sperat: asked if the terminated employees had been made aware of the reasons why they were being terminated and were they aware of any problems or disciplinary actions.

Executive director Liz Stavenski-Bell: stated that she has sought guidance from Deb Franklin.

Susan Broome: questioned who can make the decision on dismissing staff and stated that the dismissed employees love the library and want to know why they have been removed from the library staff?

Marissa Broome: questioned how she can be dismissed for "unhappiness."

Jeff Carson: stated that there is no documentation for patron complaints about the dismissed staff. He stated problems with summer reading will exist without the proper staff.

a. Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters Mike Bennethum, Second Mariel Jordan Executive Session entered 7:03 PM. Motion to end Executive Session Mike Bennethum, Second Chris Sperat executive session ended 7:26 PM.

b. Theresa corrected an earlier comment during public comment. The personal committee received 6 resumes and interviewed one candidate for the position of executive director.

III. Library Director's Report

c. We transitioned to a new catalog system. The gold star renewal process was completed in January. Coats, shoes, and Teddy Bears were distributed to children with needs for the winter. The township has been contacted about outside lighting. We are looking to update to an electronic sign on 422. The library has received first quarter funds from the Exeter Township school district. Panera Bread fundraiser coming up in March.

IV. Friends' Report: Charlene Zawaski presented a report. The Friends have received membership and donations since January. The Sweetheart of a Bag Sale is next weekend. The Indoor yard sale in March. Donations can be dropped off at the library. The Friends are hosting Youth Art month at the library. The Friends will be in the Memorial Day Parade. An invitation for board members to walk in the parade has been extended.

V. Treasurer's Report: Christy was not present. All necessary financial information was shared with the board.

VI. Presentation of the Bills

a. Motion to pay the bills Todd Dierkshild, Second Laura Biancone, Motion carries

VII. County System Update: Meeting is next week.

VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Fundraising: Theresa Mowad (Chair)
 1. 5K date is confirmed for June 22, 2024. Theresa reminded board members to review sponsorship information
- b. Finance: Christy Resh (Chair)
- c. Technology: Ibrahim Bangura (Chair)

- d. Policy: Mike Bennethum (Chair)
- e. Board Recruitment: Todd Dierksheide (Chair): No update

X. Strategic Plan: No update

XI. Unfinished Business: No update

XII. New Business: No update

XIII. Training Opportunities: No update

XIV. Board Member Comment: No comment

XVI. Next Meeting March 11, 2023, 6:30 PM, In Person

XVII. Motion to adjourn Chris, Todd Second, motion carries. Meeting adjourned 7:44 PM.