

Robeson Community Library Board Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2021 (Zoom)

Board President Mindy Cohen called the meeting to order on Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 7:04 pm. Wendy Beard, Alyssa Bushkie, Kennon Rice, Leah Ruth, Jena Sweigart, and Laura Yazemboski were present. Absent – Carol Werkheiser

The new agreement with the Berks County library system was signed and returned on time (9/30/2021). Mindy has a copy, and Leah has a copy on file at the library.

The Robeson Library is currently not meeting the 45-hour requirement stipulated in the new agreement. The library hired two aides, but only one is working at the library. The other new hire declined to work at the library before starting, citing time constraints. Leah said she can meet the seven-hour weekend requirement by working one more hour on Saturday.

Laura made a motion to approve the minutes (written by Kennon Rice at the September meeting); Jena approved the motion, and all voted aye.

The librarian's report was reviewed. The lower attendance and circulation numbers in September were attributed to the no longer having summer programs and elevated children's attendance. There were 14 in-person programs and 1 virtual program. There were no meetings for Leah, the acting director, to attend in September. Youth Services provided more craft packs and book drops. The library donated extra teen book drops to Bethany Children's Home in Womelsdorf. Jena S. held an adult craft time, which included take-home packs. Leah and the Wernersville youth librarian met with five students at Conrad Weiser High School, and are considering offering a craft program there in the future. Golden tickets were secretly included in books during September; those who found a ticket received a bag of library items in recognition of the 35th anniversary of the library system. This giveaway was the fourth of four quarterly initiatives during the year.

Jena coordinated the donation of ten computers to the library from UGI. Two PCs are currently stored in the director's office. The possibility of the value of the computers contributing to the reported income of the library was discussed, but it was determined that only monetary donations are counted as library income. However, it is hoped that the new computers may increase patron's computer use, thereby raising the money received from the System (which is based in part on computer use in each library). Nominating UGI for the 2021 award for community organizations that support local libraries was discussed along with other local businesses which have supported the library during the year. Lori's Candy Station has held fund-raisers for libraries.

Leah is currently weeding the paperback and Easy sections, and has reorganized the positions of the remaining books. The reorganized space allowed for the creation of a new display.

The possibility of increasing the library's hours with intern help from the high school was discussed. The library is open in the mornings three days per week, which may not coincide with potential interns' schedules during their school day. Kennon suggested the possibility of intern help outside normal school hours. If interns are less than eighteen years of age, clearances are not needed. The Kutztown Library has a job description that the Robeson Library could use to advertise the position. The idea of specifically searching for a library aide and a social media specialist was proposed. The help of interns may be pursued in the second semester.

The library is short three positions, and so will apply for the exemption to the open hours requirement listed in the System newsletter. Leah is meeting with Amy Resh on October 15, and will ask for guidance on how to log into the library director's portal system to request the exemption.

Stephanie Williams is leaving her position to take another one; she will no longer be able to provide support and advice to the libraries.

The financial reports were accepted.

Mindy proposed the recruitment of new board members. Jena offered to propose the idea to members of a local parent group. Laura mentioned that the "Building a Better Board" Zoom webinar encouraged using the new census results to influence recruitment focus. The difficulty of finding board members was acknowledged.

Laura will print the Personnel Handbook, Rules of Conduct, and signature page to leave in the library office on Saturday. The employees will sign the agreement in December 2021 for the new year. (Update: The reformatted pages were found to still have the notes sections included and will need have the notes removed before the final printing.)

There is a Book and Bake sale by the Friends of the Robeson Community Library on Saturday, October 23, 2021. Leah put the advertisement on FaceBook.

Laura and Mindy will meet on Saturday, October 23, 2021 for an hour to start cleaning the director's office, which has become cluttered.

The retroactive pay raise of the acting library director was discussed and approved, as well as a one-time monetary appreciation for the staff in light of their work and loyalty through difficult circumstances.

There have been no applicants for the director position. The director position, as well as the aide and bookkeeper positions continue to be advertised on Facebook and the BCPL site.

A thank you note from Abby Brunner (from a folder in the circulation desk, dated October 2020) to the Board was read aloud.

Mindy, Kennon, and Carol attended the October 4, 2021 Robeson Borough meeting to request continued funding for the library and to provide additional information on the library budget. Kennon used a PowerPoint prepared by Jena during the meeting. The council expressed a wish for a pie chart in the future, and noted that that the borough does not charge the cost of rent or utilities for the library's use of the space in the Borough Hall building. Wendy will ask Lisa at the borough hall the conditions of the borough hall lease / rental agreements.

Visits to locations such as Little People's Nursery and Little Scouts Scholars (CW West Kindergarten) were discussed. Leah will visit starting in November for two hours each month. Jena is reading for the program on October 27, 2021. Contact with St. Daniel's Preschool was suggested in the future following the hiring of additional staff to cover the time Leah is working with these programs.

The meeting was adjourned by Mindy at 8:36 pm, with the motion proposed by Laura and seconded by Wendy.

(Respectfully submitted by Laura Yazemboski on 10/22/2021)