City of Tonawanda Public Library

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

May 12th, 2025
6:30 PM

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Ms. Mazur at 6:30pm

II. Attendance: Amy Mazur, Betsy Koch, Mario Pena, Shelley Bernosky, and John Gaff. Karen Bordonaro is excused.

III. Attendees: Ms. Elaine M. Panty, Trustee of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library and Ms. Carima El-Behairy, Chair of Trustees of the Library Board.

IV. Approval of Minutes From Last Meeting : Ms. Mazur, could I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March? Mr. Pena, I'll make a motion to accept the meeting minutes of our March meeting. Ms. Mazur, I'll second. Ms. Mazur, all those in favor. 3 Ayes. 1 abstain.

V. Finances: Mr. Gaff: Reviewing financial statements: All information is up to date and accurate as the City Treasurer printed out monthly statement for Mr. Gaff. Since the Library has taken over the sale of books, we have had to file a quarterly sales tax. In the past, quarterly sales tax statements had not been filed, I have brought all statements up to date. Nothing past due should show up on anything that was sold on the library premises. Ms. Panty: Shouldn't the Friends group been non profit? Mr.Gaff: Friends Group lost their non profit status due to a 990 form not being filed. Friends group disbanded in early 2020. Ms.Panty: And what happened to their funds? Mr Gaff: Their funds remain in their bank account. Attorneys have advised us to either A. Restart the group or B. Get a group together to adjust the language of their by laws and disband. Ms. Panty: The last time I was here, it was my understanding that you were going to get 4 or 5 people together to make a Friends group, take care of everything and then they're gone. No one wanted to do that? Mr Gaff: It's a work in progress. Ms. Mazur: I have talked to a few lawyers over the past few months, and its only recently we've gotten this final information, of the either or proposal. So where do we start looking for those folks? As it can't be anyone of us. Mr. Gaff, I think our hope was ro rejuvenate the friends group, but that has not happened. There has not been that much interest to sustain it long term. Ms El-Behairy: When did you start paying sales tax? Mr Gaff: I have been filing it quarterly for the past 3 or 4 quarters. Ms. El-Behairy: So you can file yearly now. Mr. Gaff: yes, the last time I logged in it still had me do a quarterly payment. Ms. El-Behairy: You can

apply to pay yearly. Mr Gaff: Good to know. Ms. Panty: I have one more question? The lawyers that you talked to, were they willing to do pro bono work to resolve this issue? Ms. Mazur: No, these were friends I had discussed this with, through my office. Nothing discussed was official. Mr. Gaff: There was also different names the organization was listed as, which makes it difficult to track. Ms. El-Behairy: Get 3 people together, pay 125$, to form a corporation on line, use the previous EIN, then add those people to the bank account as signers, and transfer that money out. That is the easiest way to do it. This is a banking issue. My concern is NYS may take the money as it sits to long. Mr Gaff: I am listed on the bank account and we do make at least one deposit a year, from the Community Foundation, so it doesn't sit dormant. But thank you for that information. Its very helpful.

Mr. Gaff: Aside from the sales tax report, we did have a few minor purchases. We made a deposit of 15,000.00$ from the State Assembly, also deposited was revenue from the copy machine and candy bar sales. Key Bank account, we did pay off our Return to System, which was documented in February's meeting. We also deposited our fines and fee's. The Library also did disburse, 1,370.00$ in operating aid. This is done, as once we pay the return to system, that account is zeroed out for the most part, that additional funding is provided in case it is needed. We are now into May, its likely we won't need it, and it will most likely be returned to system, later on. It is nice that , had we needed something, that money is available to us. Moving on to April's report, a purchase was made to be able to display Kenmore Art Society's art work. We also had a reptile program in the month of April and that was paid out, at the cost of 100.00$. Deposits were the revenue from the copy machine, candy bar and book sales. Key Bank account, paid the water bill and deposited fines and fee's. Any questions for finances from March or April? Trustees: None. Ms. Panty: What are fines and fee's? If we are a fine free Library. Mr.Gaff: Its almost 95% printing fee's. We do collect some money for lost items. There could be some fines for damaged or lost materials or interlibrary fee's.

Mr. Gaff: We are doing very well in monitoring our spending with the amount of money that is available to us. The serial fund is spent right at the beginning of the year, so that number is unlikely to change. Paper back orders will change as we receive those items throughout the year. Our AV budget, we typically do not spend, and that money gets transferred , but I am trying to update our TV series, so we will probably spend a good amount of the AV budget this year. For our monthly statistics, our computer usage continues to be very very high, as well as our Wi-Fi usage. Circulation and door counts were pretty much the same for March and April. We have started back up a lot of our kids programming. University Express has started back up this month, which is always a lot to fun. We did live stream a few of our sessions, and that worked out great.

Directors Report: Mr. Gaff: We as a city have our own Civil Service Commission, in trying to assess the staffing I found it best to add the job title of Library Clerk to our staff, however that title did not exist within the City of Tonawanda Civil Service, so asked the Commission to approve the addition of that title to their roles. They met in early May, and did approve the title. I then sent that along to HR, to approve that title as a budget line for us, and that was approved as well. Now I'm just waiting to get the job posted and we should have another part time library clerk. Ms. Panty: is this job just available to City of Tonawanda residents? Mr Gaff: No, this job is available to all qualified applicants. Ms. Panty: The senior program, is that well attended? Mr Gaff: Yes , University Express, is well attended.

VI. Public Comment: Ms. El-Behairy, I'd like to thank you for having us this evening. Ms. Panty, yes thank you. I enjoy coming here every year, I enjoy your presentations, and hearing of the success of University Express.

VII. Old Business: Mr. Gaff: Continued issues with the soccer club, and their participants taking over the parking lot. The city ordinance only limits the parking in our lot from 4am -6am. I mentioned to Councilman Fisher our frustration with the soccer club continually taking over the parking lot when they are in operation. What could we do to enforce or at least potentially enforce the lot to be used for Library patrons only. This lot is intended to be used for people wanting to use the library, visit the library and should be available for library business, and that is not the case. Councilman Fisher sent a note to city officials to let them know how not having this lot dedicated to library patrons only has affected the day to day operations of the library. Mayor White is open to changing the ordinance of the lot usage, and to also include potential enforcement to those taking up parking that do not have library business. Ms. El-Behairy: So you are just looking for the parking restrictions to be enforced? What about parking meters? Mr.Gaff: Yes, we are looking for parking to be enforced, on Saturday they essentially take over the lot and make it impossible for our patrons to park. Parking meters? Interesting.

VIII. New Business: State Report – Every year state report is completed on line. The board is presented with the resolution to accept the state report. It is the same report every year just updated. No physical copies presented due to its length. It

contains lots of useful information, the number of books we have, number of employees, basically all information the public may want to know about the library. How their tax dollars are being spent. The secretary was presented with a copy of the resolution to sign, which was signed and returned to Mr. Gaff. Motion was made by Mr Pena to accept the state report, seconded by Ms. Mazur. All in favor? 4 ayes. Ms Mazur: motion carries. Mr Gaff: well this next one is interesting and I wish I had more information. A month ago, I was notified of a call that came in from someone wishing to build us a new library. A representative from the Buffalo Stallions, had reached out to us, they have some big ideas of how to develop the soccer field and build a new library. They want to reconfigure this entire space. They have plans to discuss this with the city and govt officials. My concern, that as of right now, this location needs repairs that would be funded through NYS construction aid, however, if one of those projects is approved and the work is done, and a year later , the Buffalo Stallion project comes to fruition, and the building is demolished, the State could potentially come back and us for the money back. My current concern is the deterioration of the current roof and this proposed project which could take years. More to come on this project.

IX. Friends of the Library: Options to resolve , discussed previously in the meeting.

Ms. Mazur: if no one has anything else to add, could we have a motion to adjourn? M. Pena, I make a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Bernosky I second the motion .
4 ayes. The motion to adjourn passes. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Next Meeting: June 9th 2025 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Betsy Koch.

Betsy Koch