

Western District Library

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

March 16, 2020, 10:00am

Minutes

Present: Jan Gustafson, Jeanine McGaughy, Rod Ward, Candace Swihart, and Julie Abbott. Also present was director Jennifer Ryder. Kathi Parrish and Maryan Wherry (deceased) were absent. Newly appointed member Sue Routt has not yet been sworn in, and was not in attendance.

1. Jan Gustafson called the meeting to order.
2. There were no public comments.
3. The board discussed Governor Pritzker's Illinois state school closures, which are in effect from Tuesday, March 17 through Monday, March 30. The board felt that it was important for the library to follow the lead of the school district, and reevaluate depending on changing circumstances. Rod W made a motion to close the library as long as the schools are closed, which at this point means until March 30. Jeanine M seconded. All were in favor, no nays.
4. The board discussed how to handle paying and scheduling the staff during the library closure. When asked about how other libraries are handling this issue, as many other libraries in Illinois are closing or have closed, the director said that she knew Robert R Jones, Colona, and Cambridge were among those closing. Many library directors on email lists have said they are continuing to pay staff for regularly scheduled hours. Some have staff working during closures, others are sending staff home to encourage social distancing. The director and board president made the recommendation that the staff should not be required to come into work at Western District Library during the closure. It was also recommended that the staff should be paid their full regular wages, so that they remain whole. The other issue that was discussed was the commitment to the taxpayers, and that the library should consider not paying staff their full wages if they are not working. The Orion school system will be paying its teachers and staff during its closure. The board discussed paying the library staff for four weeks of regular wages, until April 16, and the reevaluating if the closure needs to be extended. Rod W made a motion to pay the staff for 4 weeks, and then reevaluate if a closure needs to continue. Jeanine M seconded the motion. All were in favor, no nays.
5. The director discussed the plan for closing operations at the library. Issues to do with circulation would need to be addressed with PrairieCat and RAILS after the library board meeting concludes. The board agreed to stop all patron services at this time, including book return, holds, and programs. Cleaning services will continue, in order for the library to be in the best shape possible upon return. The cleaner can focus some attention on the basement areas. The director will work at the library while it's closed to check the mail, manage bills, and manage any other official business that needs to be done. The director will also meet with Per Mar to complete installation of the fire panel, and will coordinate with them. Otherwise, while staff are encouraged to stay home, no public service operations will occur at the library.

6. The board agreed to cancel the March 23 board meeting, which would have fallen during the closure, and tentatively agreed to meet around the middle of April to reevaluate. This would happen if the school closure extended past March 30, and if the library closing would also need to be extended. The director will contact the library board, if this is the case, the week before in order to schedule this meeting. Julie A made a motion to cancel the March 23 board meeting, with a tentative next date for April 16. Candace S seconded. All were in favor, no nays.
7. There was no need for a closed session.
8. There were no other topics or future agenda items to discuss.
9. Rod W made a motion to adjourn. Candace S seconded.