

**LIBRARY BOARD**  
**Special Meeting**  
**Tuesday, August 28, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Miller Library**

**Minutes**

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**Commissioners in Attendance:** Jan Glover, Evelyn Hatkin, Theresa Marchand-Shapiro, Christine Esposito, Irene Fiss

**Others in Attendance:** Interim Library Director Nancy McNicol,  
Acting Clerk Gerry Tobin

**CALL TO ORDER**

Miss Glover called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**1. REVIEW THE LIBRARY HOURS OF OPERATION**

Ms. McNicol distributed a chart showing that as a result of the pending retirements, the Library is losing a total of 150 hours of work. Ms. Fiss asked can we justify the need for the missing positions. She suggested we log how some of the hours are used by staff now. We need something to show how the hours are used. Ms. McNicol said we are losing 50 public service hours and 100 hours behind the scenes. She can assure the Town of the need for the business manager.

Ms. Marchand Shapiro said the work has to get done and the only way to get the behind the scenes work done is to bring the staff off of the floor to do it. The Library hours would have to be reduced. Ms. McNicol explained her chart to the Board. Once the new director is on board, it will improve.

Other columns show public service and the behind the scenes. Reference people used to rotate, but now they stay on the desk. If the Library is closed, they can get some of the other work done. Ms. Glover asked if there are union problems asking people to do things that are not in their job descriptions. Ms. Glover responded that when they spoke to the union representative, the union asked for a time limit and she asked for 90 days. At the end of 90 days, the new director will be on board and there will be a chance to examine tasks, positions and people to figure out what is really needed, what we need to ask for, and perhaps people can be reassigned, etc. There will be a period of adjustment. Within the 90 days, the business manager part will be easier because we will know what we are doing based on the training that is going on, and some of the duties might disappear. The potential director will be invited to the 9/5 board meeting either as a

director or as a member of the public. Ms. Esposito feels we should wait until the regular board meeting to make the decision to close the libraries for a day. The new director didn't want her hiring to be announced until she was officially appointed. Mayor Jackson announced this appointment at the department head meeting. The new director will be at the Legislative Council meeting on September 4th. Ms. Glover met with Curt Leng, who was taken aback by the fact that the Board was considering closing all three libraries for a day. He wasn't upset about closing the branches one day a week. He asked if overtime money would help keep Thornton Wilder open. Ms. Glover doesn't think overtime will help. Ms. Esposito asked if we shouldn't make an effort to offer overtime. Ms. Fiss said the new director is savvy and will know how to deal with this. Do we close branches, do we include Miller, how long will this be in effect?

One association member would rather have Whitneyville close on a weekday and be open on Saturdays. Ms. McNicol said there is enough money in the budget to have each branch open 20 Saturdays. Saturday hours are overtime and voluntary.

Ms. Glover asked Board members how they feel about closing the branches one day a week. The original plan was to have the branches stagger the days they would be open. Now branches would be closed on Friday and Miller would be closed on Thursday. The plan is that some library should be open every day. If Miller is closed on Thursday, both branches should be open, and if the branches are closed on Friday, Miller should be open. Branch staff can help cover the staff situation at Miller, etc. Ms. McNicol said there is training going on by the business manager, Ms. Michelson.

Ms. Fiss said we can reach out to various council people explaining that this is a temporary fix until new director can get this sorted out. One commissioner suggested we close the reference desk. Another objected saying that clients might approach someone else on the floor who would say sorry, that desk is closed, write up your question and someone will call you with a response. Would we rather close the library for a day than close the reference desk? Ms. McNicol doesn't feel there is another alternative than to shut the door. The consensus is that three closures have to happen to keep the Library running efficiently. The Library is not just about checking out books.

Ms. Glover suggested a motion stating as a temporary measure, due to the loss of several employees, we are closing Miller on Thursday and the branches on Friday, for approximately 6 weeks. Ms. Esposito suggested that new director be in on this decision.

Ms. Glover suggested we make sure the new director can be at our September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting or Ms. Glover and Ms. McNicol meet with her to get all of these issues out, and then we make a decision united, and it will probably be for closures. How will it look if the new director comes and closes the doors.

Ms. Glover asked what if she calls the new director tomorrow and gets her sense on this subject, and we make our decision on September 5th. Ms. McNicol said business must be done.

Most members would rather not do anything without consulting the new director first. We should let her know what we are intending to do, but for this first week it is going to be closed September 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. McNicol suggested we close for one day for staff training. Ms. Fiss suggested that board members come in during that day to lend moral support, etc.

Ms. Glover said the motion will probably be that we will close all libraries on 9/6 for staff training day. Meanwhile we will invite the new director to our September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. We won't say anything at the council meeting, but Ms. Glover might attend to support the new director. We will meet here on September 5th to continue this discussion.

Ms. McNicol asked if we could purchase lunch – pizzas - on the training day. Board members agreed.

**Ms. Marchand Shapiro made a motion that the library system close to the public on Thursday 9/6 for an all day staff training day. Ms. Fiss seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

**Ms. Marchand Shapiro made a motion that the Board approve up to \$200 to provide lunch for staff on staff training day, with the money to be taken from unrestricted funds. Ms. Fiss seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

Staff training day will take place on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. To 5:30 p.m.

There was discussion on what happened the day of the bed bug issue.

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**3. OLD BUSINESS – if needed.**

**4. NEW BUSINESS – if needed.**

Ms. Fiss feels that the office should be cleaned up before the new director starts. Ms. McNicol has cleaned out the closet. Ms. Glover doesn't feel the staff should do the cleanup. Perhaps the Board could make plan to tidy up. Ms. Glover will send an email for a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday evening when the library is open.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Fiss made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Marchand Shapiro seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Acting Clerk

