

LA PORTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES June 18, 2020  
Virtual Meeting conducted via Zoom

**ATTENDEES**

Karen Ellison – President  
Michelle Shirk – Vice President  
Gregg Fuhlenbrock - Secretary  
Scott Siefker

**ABSENT**

Corey Campbell  
Dave Decker  
Marie Gilliland

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Fonda Owens – Director  
Mark Phillips - Legal Counsel  
Zack Benedict – MKM  
Andrew Hesterman - MKM  
Cindy Lane, Treasurer  
Ann Shaffer

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Ellison called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the public. There were none.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

President Ellison called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Minutes of the May 21, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting  
Minutes of the June 16, 2020 Public Meeting for the Bid Opening for 807 Indiana  
Avenue  
Department Reports  
Financial Report  
Approval and Payment of Claims ---per APV Batch June 18, 2020

Scott Siefker moved and Michelle Shirk seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

President Ellison asked Ann Shaffer to call for the vote by roll call.

Vote taken by roll call:

Scott Siefker	Yes
Gregg Fuhlenbrock	Yes
Karen Ellison	Yes
Michelle Shirk	Yes

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Motion carried.

**REPORTS**

**Director**

Director Owens reported that the representatives from CardinalPoint are working with IT Professional, Dale Boyan, to begin the IT audit. They will visit branches to review the set-up of IT equipment at the other locations.

The Administrative Team discussed how to fill the open manager position to best meet the needs of the Library organization as well as address the Board's concerns of successfully marketing library services to the community. The decision was made to create a Communications Manager position that would focus on communications and marketing for the Library. The current IT staff can handle the day to day IT issues and concerns. Any major IT updates or changes can be outsourced.

Director Owens initiated a discussion with the Board to think about whether they wanted to make an official statement other than the Library's mission statement in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. She reported that libraries across the nation are doing so in response to BLM. Ms. Owens has directed staff to make more and stronger efforts to let people know what resources the Library has in regard to social justice issues and that these resources are accessible, approachable, meaningful, and current. As the Library is more visibly sharing resources that address social justice issues, she let the Board know that they might receive phone calls from community members who may disagree with the Library having certain materials in the collection and that discussing this, as a Board will prepare them for such response. Ms. Owens also reported that Library staff have been approached by the City of La Porte about collaborating on equity and diversity in La Porte. City officials are not sure what that looks like at this time. They are working on a plan.

**Legal Counsel**

Mark Phillips reported that his primary focus over the last month was reviewing and editing the contract documents for bids, land acquisition, and addressing a couple of personnel issues.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Epidemic Response Policy**

Director Owens reported that as the Indiana Back on Track Plan moved forward, she, in consultation with the Board President, directed Library staff to move from Level III to a Level II status of the Library's Epidemic Response Policy as of June 1st. Therefore, she is asking at this time for the Board to ratify this action.

Scott Siefker moved to approve the action taken by the Director to move from Level III to Level II of the Epidemic Response Policy in conjunction with the Indiana Back on Track Plan. Gregg Fuhlenbrock seconded the motion.

President Karen Ellison asked Ann Shaffer to call for the vote by roll call.

Vote taken by roll call:

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Scott Siefker                      Yes  
Gregg Fuhlenbrock              Yes  
Karen Ellison                     Yes  
Michelle Shirk                    Yes  
Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Recommendation for Bid Acceptance for 807 Indiana Avenue**

Zach Benedict from MKM summarized the results of the bid opening on June 16, 2020. He reported that a total of 5 bids were received. All bids met the compliance requirements and were complete. The low bid was Larson Danielson in the amount of \$2,480,470, with a completion timeline of 245 days, and starting construction on July 14<sup>th</sup>.

Michelle Shirk moved and Scott Siefker seconded to accept the bid from Larson Danielson in the amount of \$2,480,470, with 245 days completion time from start of project on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Scott Siefker asked if there would be a construction manager other than Larson Danielson. Mr. Benedict explained that it is unusual to have a construction manager other than the general contractor for a project of this size. MKM will be monitoring the progress of the project, and Dan Hunter, Head of Buildings and Grounds will be involved day to day with the progress of the project.

Scott Siefker asked why the cost increased from the original estimated cost back in January. Mr. Benedict explained the scope of the project changed to include full renovation of the lower level and costs have increased due to COVID-19. He also thinks it is possible that the uncertainty of availability of materials in a timely manner are impacting costs. Once general contractor is on board they can negotiate some ways to cut costs if needed.

Scott Siefker asked if we had a cost for furniture and equipment for the project. Ms. Owens responded that a lot of the furniture from current locations will be used in the building. The goal is to keep the cost below \$150,000.

President Karen Ellison asked Ann Shaffer to call for the vote by roll call.

Vote taken by roll call:

Scott Siefker                      Yes  
Gregg Fuhlenbrock              Yes  
Karen Ellison                     Yes  
Michelle Shirk                    Yes

Motion carried.

**Recommendation to Eliminate Cash Base on Mobile Library**

Scott Siefker moved and Gregg Fuhlenbrock seconded to approve the recommendation to remove the cash base on the Mobile Library.

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President Karen Ellison asked Ann Shaffer to call for the vote by roll call.

Vote taken by roll call:

Scott Siefker	Yes
Gregg Fuhlenbrock	Yes
Karen Ellison	Yes
Michelle Shirk	Yes

Motion carried.

### **Telecommuting Policy**

Ms. Owens explained that during the Pandemic Response, many staff worked from home doing a variety of tasks including training, review of the website, writing blog articles, etc. The results showed that staff can benefit from telecommuting for completing certain tasks that focus on the need for uninterrupted work time. Therefore, the decision was made to recommend a Telecommuting Policy that would allow staff the opportunity to telecommute for certain tasks and project work. Michelle Shirk moved and Scott Siefker seconded to approve the Telecommuting Policy as presented.

Scott Siefker expressed concern over Workman's Comp issues resulting from an employee who is injured while working from home. Attorney Phillips responded that Workman's Comp applies if an employee is injured at home while doing library work. Ms. Owens explained the policy has a safety provision and the employee must adhere to the same work policies and rules while working from home. She also explained the intent of the policy is not to have library staff work from home on a permanent basis. The purpose is to allow employees to telecommute when they have a project or task that needs uninterrupted time to concentrate. The arrangement would have definite start and end times and days established.

Board member Michelle Shirk spoke in favor of the policy speaking from personal experience of working from home and how it can benefit both the employee and organization. Attorney Phillips informed the Board that he is in support of the policy.

President Karen Ellison asked Ann Shaffer to call for the vote by roll call.

Vote taken by roll call:

Scott Siefker	Yes
Gregg Fuhlenbrock	Yes
Karen Ellison	Yes
Michelle Shirk	Yes

Motion carried.

### **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the public. There were none.

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**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

President Ellison called for questions or comments from the Board. Scott Siefker complimented Karen Ellison on her abilities to lead the Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm by President Karen Ellison.