

Friends of the Paonia Library Board

Annual Meeting Minutes June 15, 2023

I. Call Meeting to Order

Major called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.

Present: Laura Major, Lesandre Holiday, Dave Weber, Marjorie True, Larry Beezley, Janice Thorup

Guests: LaDonna Gunn, Sarah Smith

II. Cherry Days Book Sale

True brought up a lack of advertising. Stu at High Country Shopper can put information in the “Spotlight” section. He can also do an article on our Friends of the Library, library services, and the mill levy. Major volunteers to be interviewed for the article.

Holiday spoke with Cherry Days organizers, and they said they could still include the book sale in its schedule and print materials.

Thorup found a “book sale” vinyl banner. Approval is needed by the Town or DMEA to hang from poles. Major suggests hanging it from the poles in the outdoor amphitheater. Beezley will look at hanging the banner on the outside of a book barn on the street side.

Setup will be on Friday afternoon, June 30 at 4 pm. True will call volunteers to help setup.

There is no question in continuing with the donation-based model, which generated double the revenue!

III. District Manager’s Report

Gunn gave an update from the Library District Board. The Board completed their 2023 Strategic Plan in January and identified critical success factors, particularly decreases expenses (at physical locations) and increasing revenue as part of their fiscal responsibility (mill levy).

The District owns the Crawford and Paonia libraries, and is asking to return ownership of the buildings to the communities in order to decrease expenses. The District already has two working models with lower expenses:

- Cedaredge Library (owned by the Foundation; the District is a tenant and responsible only for routine maintenance);
- Delta Library (City of Delta owns the new building that is a shared space that co-houses the Delta Library with a similar arrangement to Cedaredge).

Hotchkiss is a different model (\$2400/year rent paid to Memorial Hall plus all maintenance costs).

Are there other creative ideas for models?

The District will offer seed money to the entity (Town or Foundation) and hopes a plan will be in place in approximately a year.

Crawford began the transition process late last year. They have formed a Crawford Community Task Force with reps from town government, businesses, education, and other interested community members to devise a solution. It began as a larger group, and a smaller one seems to be working better. Crawford is meeting with Cedaredge Foundation to see how it was created, how it operates, what it does, etc. Crawford is considering both multiple use and single use in order to fund the long-term maintenance. The District Board has asked Crawford to have a plan in place by end of 2023.

Library staffing is the greatest expense, which is another reason to consider multi-use. If fully staffed in Crawford and Hotchkiss, Crawford could be open 3 days a week. The plan for Paonia is to be fully staffed and open Tuesdays-Saturdays, but the District cannot guarantee this in the long run.

Weber served on the Paonia Town Council for many years and helped select the library location. The Friends built the building. A lot of the funding came from DOLA (Department of Local Affairs). A condition of the funding for both Crawford and Paonia was that the District own the building for at least ten years. Gunn assured the Friends that the District can legally transfer the properties.

Major wrote all the grants and will check about any restrictions from original funders.

Major and Weber both request an expense sheet for the Paonia building and list of deferred maintenance. Gunn, off the top of her head, said deferred maintenance included the roof, painting, and the landscaping / drainage fix.

Major asked how Delta selected co-tenants for Delta Library. Gunn explained that the City of Delta, the County, the School District, the Library District, Region 10 and OneDelta County (economic development) shared a vision of a Makers' Space / Co-working Space for many years. The City will be generating revenue from the Makers' Space. Delta Chamber apparently going to move in there. It's membership driven (pay to use the space) with no long-term contract. A firm manages the membership for Grand Junction, Montrose and will for Delta.

As far as increasing revenue, the District is planning for another mill levy increase in 2025 or 2026. The District needs community members to participate in a grassroots campaign to ensure its success. The District, of course, will do its part to fund the election.

$\frac{3}{4}$ of the population of Delta County resides in the west end (Delta). The NFV cannot carry a yes vote on the mill levy. But it could kill the yes vote. Timing of building transition and mill levy is delicate.

There will be a state ballot measure this autumn (prop HH generated from Senate Bill 23-303) to reduce property taxes, and this will hurt special districts (fire, ambulance, water, rec,

library). Many special districts and County Commissioners have filed formal protests with the State. Delta County Commissioners have not.

Gunn said the decision is up to the community. The District has not yet discussed the worst possible scenario (community cannot assume the expenses, and libraries close). The Friends will meet Thursday, July 13 at noon to discuss this matter before another meeting with Gunn on Thursday, July 27, also at noon.

Thorup suggests and Major volunteers to attend the Cedaredge Foundation meeting next Wednesday, June 21.

Major suggests the District's Strategic Plan information on the website include more than what appears on the flyer.

IV. Library Manager's Report

Smith is looking to split staff, so there's a Paonia team and a Crawford-Hotchkiss team. Smith will manage Crawford and Hotchkiss, and so they are seeking a manager for Paonia. Fifteen open positions throughout the District, including library assistants with focus for children, teen, and circulation. Many applicants are younger. The circulation aid position is part time and great for a high school student. There haven't been as many applicants for kids and teens programming.

Summer Reading kickoff party at Town Park was a huge hit. 125 people attended.

The Eagle Rock Family Hike for this coming Saturday is filled up. Might do another in the fall.

Staff worked really hard on take-home kits (because there is no programming staff). The take-home kits have been flying off the shelves and will probably run out before month's end.

The Writing Contest is experiencing lower than normal participation.

Book clubs, Fiber Friends, story times are still going strong.

Since January, book sales in foyer have generated \$136. Puzzles have been a hit.

Even though circulation of print materials (as opposed to digital materials) is in decline, "circulation of things" (tools, lawn mowers, baking pans, backpacks, snowshoes) is on the rise and in demand.

V. Landscaping

Beezley spoke with S&E Ward, but they haven't sent anybody to look at the drainage issue. Smith said she is still waiting on a bid for Crawford that is 18 months old. Possible solutions include a French drain or auto-shut-off device, but S&E Ward are confident that it won't require a total excavation and re-leveling of the area.

Brian & Jen Lee did a good job of the weed abatement.

VI. Approval of Minutes

We no longer have a quorum (Thorup and True had another meeting and departed after Smiths report). Weber offers to post the minutes and bylaws on the website. Major agrees.

VII. Treasurer's Report

Weber reports current cash assets around \$22,500. Money has been sitting stagnant in the account. First Colorado National Bank has 5% CDs. Weber suggests staggering two CDs six months apart and negotiating a higher rate for half our balance.

VIII. Adjourn at 1:48.

Respectfully submitted,
Lesandre Holiday, Secretary