

Friends of the Paonia Library Board

Meeting Minutes October 6, 2023

I. Call Meeting to Order

Major called the meeting to order at 12:05.

Present: Laura Major, Lesandre Holiday, Judy Livingston, Jane Schulz, Larry Beezley, Dave Weber
Pamela Stephens

Guests: Carl Smith, LaDonna Gunn, Kevin Bound

II. Minutes from September 1 Meeting

Weber motioned, Livingston seconded, and the minutes were approved.

III. Landscaping

Steve Jones is the contractor who has performed maintenance and capital projects for the District for many years. A month ago, Gunn asked Jones to provide a scope of the work needed to repair the irrigation and landscaping on the south side of the building. Jones said it would be a couple weeks, but Gunn has yet to hear back. When Jones first assessed the issue, he brought in an excavation guy who said all the landscaping needed to be torn out and drainage corrected. Major pointed out that landscaping was done after the sidewalk was installed. The issue is that the sidewalk is too high for the building. Fortunately the gutters work well and flow into a buried pipe that drains to the west.

Gunn explained that the District only has to maintain Crawford, Paonia, and Hotchkiss libraries. However, due to the proposed deficit budget, the District elected to defer all maintenance.

Holiday inquired about the District's maintenance priorities. Gunn said the HVAC issues at Hotchkiss and Crawford are actively being addressed, and Paonia's irrigation and drainage issue is the next priority and viewed as an urgent one.

The roof leak is still considered a maintenance issue. However, two contractors, including Jones, could not figure out the cause, and it hasn't been an issue since, even in last year's record winter. The recommendation from both contractors was to leave it be.

Major mentioned issues with the irrigation on the north side. One area leaks so badly that cattails grow! Beezley confirmed that the controller is inconsistent, sometimes resulting in a brown lawn. The Friends have anticipated this being a secondary phase, funds permitting. Gunn proposes both the north and south side irrigation repairs be one capital project slated for the spring. The District is eager to get the capital improvement funds off the balance sheet and complete these repairs.

Bound of Artsapes offered to meet with Jones to expedite the process. Gunn agreed. The District will entertain alternative scopes but will ultimately defer to Jones.

IV. District Manager's Report

Gunn distributed copies of the 2024 proposed budget. The District is fully staffed. Carl Smith and Ariel are at Paonia. Caitlin will be with the Crawford-Hotchkiss team. Smith has agreed to manage all NF libraries until a manager for Crawford-Hotchkiss is in place. Interviews for open positions were promising, and preliminary job offers were made to two individuals. The plan is to increase Crawford-Hotchkiss and Paonia libraries one more day per week. Gunn said closing Crawford and Hotchkiss was "hardest decision of her life," and admin chose the least worst option. Closing libraries was not and will never be on the agenda. Gunn is happy to report that things are moving in the right direction, and thanked the Friends for their patience, and asked for support in curbing misinformation and discord between the community and the District.

Weber asked how Prop HH will affect District revenue. Gunn explained that Delta County and Montrose Property tax revenue will be adversely impacted by prop HH if it passes and if it fails due to SB 22-328.

Major asked why the \$50K from the County does not appear in the proposed 2024 revenue? Gunn explained the history of the Capital Outlay Fund. In 1969 voters approved a 1% sales tax, 65% of which passes to the District from Delta County (approximately \$50K annually). Over the years, these funds contributed toward the construction of Paonia and Crawford libraries, computers, and other improvements. The Delta Library overran its budget, so the \$50K will be returned to the County in 2024.

The Library District Board will meet October 18 at Paonia. The November 15 meeting will include a public hearing for the budget.

V. Library Manager's Report

Carl Smith introduced himself, and said he's still in the 'honeymoon phase'. Smith remembers when the Paonia library was built and commended us for creating a "world class library" rivaling those of Telluride and Crested Butte.

Smith has a background in library science (and Shakespeare). He started 15 years ago as a library assistant and teen services coordinator in Hotchkiss. He has spent most of his career working with teens and young adults, and he knows how to do it. "Theater. There are other ways too."

Smith attended Fort Lewis and worked at Reed Library, and then the University of Arizona 's Reference Department before returning to public libraries. He is most passionate about early childhood development and literacy and believes these are the most important services offered by the District. Smith is a self-proclaimed "idea man. I dream big, and bring it back down to what's realistic."

Smith also acknowledged the PR issues facing the District. Smith says actions will show commitment and change the narrative, but it will take a little while. The District is bringing back programming, focusing on childhood development, and training impeccable staff.

Major asked about summer music. Gunn said shade sails are a must and would be an easy fundraiser (tangible, pretty, tied to programming) at future book sales.

Smith showed enthusiasm for a gardening program and asked if we'll save a plot in landscaping plans. Major said there used to be one that was never popular, but everyone agreed it's all about programming. Smith will get back to us on landscaping suggestions and a request for any new furniture.

VI. Treasurer Report

Major asked if we had received or paid any invoice for mowing?

Weber confirmed that the Friends purchased a \$15K CD. This revealed out-of-date permissions which have been updated with the bank.

Weber created a QR code for future book sale patrons wishing to use PayPal.

VII. Holiday Book Sale

Holiday suggests the sale coincide with the Creative Coalition's Holiday Faire. The group agrees. The holiday book sale will setup November 30 at 3:30 pm. The sale will run Friday and Saturday, Dec 1-2 from 10-4.

The group agrees to forego organizing a hay ride. Children's' books will be given away for free. Livingston will organize volunteers for the book sale. Holiday will make the flyers. Stephens will post on the KVNF calendar and High Country Shopper / Spotlight. Major will bring cookies.

VIII. Book sorting

Major proposed we buy more shelves for the fiction in the soft book barn? Stephens suggests Thorup decide, as more shelves may make sorting more difficult.

IX. Next M

The next meeting to plan the annual meeting will be February 9, 2024 at noon.

X. Cards

Major will send a get-well card to Marjorie who fell and broke her pelvis, as well as a thank you to the Crawford Friends who inspired us to use a donation-based model at book sales, which is more profitable.

XI. The meeting adjourned at 1:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lesandre Holiday, Secretary