Bethlehem Public Library Trustee Minutes – 1/13/2025

Members Present: Doug Harman , Stephen Dignazio, Lisa Ffrench, Nora Clark, Barbara Szeidler, Len Grubbs, Sara Plumley

Absent: Tana LeClair, Mike Culver

Librarian Present: Laura Clerkin

Meeting Commenced at 7:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Barbara made a motion to accept the December minutes as written, with Nora seconding; Sara abstained. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

The year-end budget was over $3,020.63, or 1.5%. Len explained that this was because of last month accruals. We used unanticipated revenue for the overages. Sara made a motion to accept, Stephen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Len has moved $50,000 from the savings account to a new NHPDIP account. This will earn more income on the funds, approximately 4%.

Committees

HR – Nothing to report.

Buildings and Grounds – Nothing to report.

Finance – Donations in the past month, totaling $2,100 were received. There are no conditions on the funds. Sara made a motion to approve, seconded by Len. Motion passed unanimously.

Bylaws and Policies – Laura distributed new copies of all policies that have been approved. Trustees can replace the old policies in their red binders.

Bylaws were discussed as the last policy for review. Barbara had three possible edits.

Article 3.1 – do we want to continue to have a board of nine, since it seems to be hard to have a full board, or should we cut the number down? Len pointed out that the town set the number, and if the board wanted to reduce, it would need a warrant article. Doug noted that this was set a very long time ago. After discussion, 3.1 will remain as is for now.

Article 3.2 – After discussion, it was decided a bullet point should be added "review library policies."

Article 3.5.1 – discussion was if and when the board can request that a habitually absent trustee resign. Because they are elected, a trustee cannot be made to resign. Nora felt the board should be consistent in the circumstances warranting such a request. Also discussed was whether the wording should be positive instead of punitive. Wording of 3.5.1 is changed to:

> *A Trustee is expected to attend at least 60% of meetings. All absences must be provided to the Library Director prior to a scheduled meeting to ensure a quorum is met.*

Motion to approve By-Laws, with changes above, was made by Nora, and seconded by Len. Motion passed unanimously.

Technology – Nothing to report.

Librarian's Report

Anyone running for local public office needs to see Mary Jackson during signup period 1/22 – 1/31/2025. Barbara, Lisa, and Mike are up for reelection.

Staff thanks the board for the holiday luncheon.

Laura summarized a recent Chicago Sun-Times article in which the Illinois ACLU sent letters to two Illinois libraries regarding their policies of security and fees for programs in anticipation of protests (such as Drag Queen Story Time or Israel/Palestine programs). ACLU feels these fees are a form of censorship since it makes unpopular ideas more expensive to express. Sara noted that our policy is not one of discrimination, but of safety, both for the audience and the speakers.

Len made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45, with Sara seconding; the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Laura Clerkin

For Tana LeClair, Secretary