

**MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, April 25, 2023**  
**DRAFT**

**Call to order:** Board President Ren Baldwin (City of St. Joseph) called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Other board members present:** Vice President Melissa Clapper (St. Joseph Township); Secretary William Ast (City of St. Joseph); and trustees Barbara Thompson (City of St. Joseph), Betty Mundy (St. Joseph Township), Kathy Buursma (City of St. Joseph), Mimi Elwell, (St. Joseph Township), and Patrice Rose, (St. Joseph Township).

**Also present:** Library Director Paula Stakley; Curtis Osmun, library assistant for computer service; Virginia Antonson of the Friends of the Library; and Joe Magnan, finance director and treasurer for the City of St. Joseph. No members of the public attended the meeting, either in person or remotely.

**Friends of the Library:** Antonson said the Friends' book sale at the library on April 13-15 took in \$3,879.31, an "increase of 10.3 percent over the last sale." The event had "lots of great volunteers," and had "people lined up outside the door" for the opening day. she continued.

Members of the St. Joseph High School Key Club were a big help, Antonson said. The Friends are "already getting books" for the next book sale, which will be in November, she added.

**Minutes:** Thompson moved to approve the minutes of the March 28 meeting as presented, and Buursma supported the motion. The board in a unanimous vote approved the minutes.

**Bills:** Clapper moved to approve the monthly bills, totaling \$25,834.69, and Thompson seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve paying the bills.

**Financial report:** Joe Magnan, finance director and for the City of St. Joseph, attended the meeting to explain how the city handles financial matters for the library.

"We're just cutting the checks for the library," Mangan said. He explained different types of investments made for the library, such concepts as basis points, restricted funds, and why bank investments are currently paying little in interest.

"I don't know what's going on with the market right now," Mangan said. "Things will get more complicated. They always do."

Mangan told the board the library is "doing a good job of managing operations. You have \$1.6 million."

Mangan also said he enjoys the library.

"As a patron, my family comes here all the time," Mangan said. "We really like it here."

Besides keeping funds with the city, the library also has funds with the Berrien Community Foundation. Baldwin said a foundation representative was "supposed to be" at the meeting, but no representative attended.

Clapper moved to approve the financial report. Thompson seconded the motion, and the board voted unanimously to approve the report.

**Landscaping:** The board had grounds maintenance proposals from Crowder Landscaping and Lawn Care of Benton Harbor, and Villwocks Outdoor Living, Berrien Springs.

"I like Crowder's presence," Baldwin said. "I liked what he had to say" at the March meeting.

"I liked Crowder, too," Clapper agreed. "He had ideas about how to make it (the library grounds) look better."

Clapper moved to accept Crowder's \$4,120 proposal, and Buursma supported her motion. The board in a unanimous vote approved acceptance of the Crowder Landscaping proposal.'

**Special project:** Buursma moved to accept a bid of \$20,385 for grounds improvements from Crowder Landscaping and Lawn Care, and Rose supported the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

"I think it's important to the city" to have the library grounds looking as good as possible," Buursma said. "We had several complaints last year," Baldwin added.

**Collection development policy:** The board held a first reading of a proposed policy for dealing with complaints about books or other items in the library's collection.

Baldwin suggested that "a requirement (for the complainant) is, have you read the whole book?" Clapper agreed, saying the question to the complainant should be, "have you read it in its entirety? Yes or no."

Baldwin said the board will act on the policy at its meeting in May.

**Survey in library:** Stakley said Colleen Burke has asked for permission to conduct a survey in the library to see "how comfortable people are with computer based technology" for health care. She is working on her doctor of nursing practice capstone project, Stakley added.

The board by consensus agreed to the proposal. Burke will have to notify Stakley of a date to conduct the survey, may have a sign and use a table out of the quiet area, may not solicit or approach patrons, and must agree to follow all the library's rules of conduct.

**Director's report:** Stakley said the library experienced some "water intrusion in several locations" during some recent rainstorms. Two sump pumps had burned out because of clogged lines, and City Plumbing repaired them and cleared the lines, she said. There were also intrusions in storage areas, she added.

Stakley said two supervisory positions had to be filled. She said she named Jesse Crosby as Technical Services Supervisor, and Chastity Edlefson is now Programming Supervisor.

Previous office administrator Marsha Ammeson has "graciously come out of retirement" to fill in for Sue Morgan while she is out on leave, Stakley said.

Stakley also said Cass County had been "poised to consider a book ordinance that could put librarians in legal jeopardy. The proposal was pulled from the county commissioner's agenda after public pushback led by librarians."

**Adjournment:** Ast moved to adjourn the meeting, and Elwell seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion, and Baldwin declared the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Secretary William Ast**