

**BLACK EARTH PUBLIC LIBRARY – Regular Meeting 02/18/2025**

**1210 MILLS STREET, BLACK EARTH, WI 53515 – Zoom Meeting**

**1. Call to order**

a. Called to order 7:07

**2. Roll call of members**

a. Schuetz, Wittenwyler, Helmenstine, Ederer present. Carla Huston, Netty Koenig, Kevin Eipperle (FEH), and Christy Monk (FEH) in attendance.

**3. Proof of posting**

a. Schuetz read the proof of posting

**4. Adoption/amendment of agenda**

a. Helmenstine motioned to amend the title of #6 to read “Reading and approval of minutes from 01.15.2025”. Schuetz seconded the motion.

i. Motion passed.

b. Wittenwyler moved to approve the amended agenda. Helmenstine seconded.

i. Motion Passed

**5. Public comment**

a. No comments

**6. Reading and approval of minutes from 01.15.2025**

a. Wittenwyler motioned amend 12a from the minutes to read “Wittenwyler believes the board needs all positions filled on the board soon, and believes recruitment efforts should begin before the new director comes in.” Schuetz seconded.

i. Motion Passed

b. Wittenwyler motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Helmenstine seconded.

i. Motion passed.

**7. Report from FEH Design**

a. Schuetz introduce Kevin Eipperle and Christy Monk from FEH.

b. Eipperle discussed work they have done to find contractors or developers

i. New Richmond “Archway” Library (archway.360.bz)

1. 360 develops and manages the facility.

ii. Spoke with Jeremy Novak from “360”

1. Submitted an RFP to the community.

2. Had site identified. Engaged a community development authority to do the bonding for the facility, that way the community did not have to do the bonding.

3. Reached out to Noah Wiedenfeld (?), the city administrator for the city of New Richmond.

4. For 360 to do the project, 32 units is not enough. Would need more like 70 to 80 units.
  - iii. Helmenstine asked if 360 mentioned “Land banking” in any of their other projects. Eipperle did not recall them ever using that term.
  - iv. Schuetz asked what local developers have involved in similar projects.
    1. Eipperle discussed some local developers were spoken to.
    2. No Madison developers were consulted, but Eipperle believed an RFP would effective to get applicants.
  - v. Wittenwyler asked why developers were not interested in the project. Eipperle would have to get back to that.
    1. Schuetz asked Eipperle to try and gather the feedback and knowledge why
  - vi. Koenig asked again how many units were at the Archway project.
  - vii. Helmenstine discussed a meeting he, President Moyer, and Clerk/Treasurer Abegglen had with Dane County that unveiled some possible alternatives
    1. “Scatter development”.
    2. County Funding for housing.
  - viii. Helmenstine said that it sounds like the village should work closely
    1. Netty will give Dylan her son’s number to get insight for development in Black Earth.
  - ix. Monk asked to go through the action items.
    1. Schuetz again asked for a summary of responses from developers for why they did not want to engage this project.
    2. Helmenstine asked for FEH to have good information ready once we can stay ready to move forward with support from the community.
  - x. Ederer spoke to the ongoing need of a new library space, as it is a critical community space that is fully civically oriented.
  - c. Schuetz stated that the library board should meet with the library to discuss aligned goals and projects to ensure everyone is on the same page.
8. Friends of the Library update
- a. \$1,272 raised for the libraries from trivia night! Will be split equally.
  - b. Carla Huston “Welcome” Day on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2:30-4:00 [This was postponed per conversation listed below]
  - c. The Friends have agreed to replace the decals on the windows in front of the library.
  - d. Wittenwyler asked if the “Friends” group has tried to put a mailing into the village bills. Koenig said they have not, but it is a good idea.
    - i. Schuetz stated that the option may not be available for a non-village entity.

- e. Schuetz asked the group to consider stating a specific purpose for which trivia funds will be used. It may get more donations. Koenig said she would bring that to the group.
  - f. Wittenwyler discussed ways the “Friends” could get involved in the “Village Garage Sale” days. Such as hosting a book sale on that weekend and handing out coupons to area businesses to customers that spend enough money.
    - i. Koenig stated that the Friends have discussed changing the date of the book sale to the garage sale weekend.
  - g. Huston thanked the Friends for organizing the Welcome event.
9. Village update (Helmenstine)
- a. Discussed the zoning and development update earlier with FEH.
  - b. Helmenstine reported that the village now has a contracted grant writer for 20 hours. It is a general contract for the grant writer to research what grants may be available for the village or its departments.
    - i. Schuetz asked if the contract includes a part about reward sharing with the writer.
      - 1. Helmenstine was not sure due to being absent from that meeting. The current contract is research focused.
    - ii. Wittenwyler asked if the board and grant writer understood that the library is open to working with the grant writer.
      - 1. Helmenstine stated that he wasn’t at the conversation to know for sure, but the contract was general, and the library would fall within the scope.
    - iii. Helmenstine said Huston should reach out to President Moyer and Clerk/Treasurer Abegglen to make it clear the library wants to be a part of working with the grant writer.
  - c. Helmenstine state that the BEvents group is looking for people to help with planning and organizing Field Days.
10. Treasurer’s Report (Schuetz)
- a. Schuetz delivered the report.
  - b. Wittenwyler asked if or when the board makes contributions to the SCLS foundation, and whether the board should have a plan to make contributions.
    - i. Schuetz recapped the history of the foundation, but did not find specific ongoing contributions. It has been ad hoc.
    - ii. Wittenwyler said it would be something to discuss so we are prepared for potential capital fundraising.
  - c. Huston asked if the library plans on fundraising for the expansion project.
    - i. Schuetz discussed the potential of such an activity. The board commissioned a study that found the village could raise \$1.5-2.0 million. Huston shared her professional knowledge of the process.

- d. Wittenwyler asked if Huston could add titles to the excel reports that have been created so that board members can reference them more easily. Huston agreed.
- e. Wittenwyler asked if “Databases” is the proper term for those budget items.
  - i. Huston stated that “Databases” is the general term for such programs.
- f. Helmenstine moves to approve the report. Ederer seconds.
  - i. Motion Passed

11. Action on bills

- a. Schuetz stated that the “Junior Library Bill” stated that there were possible savings, but due to the cadence of the village payments BEPL is not eligible.
- b. Wittenwyler asked if the “Credit Card” statement can be made more specific so board members can tell where those expenses are funded from in the budget.
  - i. Schuetz and Huston discussed the specific expenses.
- c. Schuetz motioned to approve payment of the bills. Wittenwyler seconded.
  - i. Motion Passed

12. Discussion/Action on 2024 Annual Report

- a. Huston delivered the 2024 Annual Report.
- b. Schuetz and Wittenwyler discussed the reduction of access the BEPL imposed on Hoopla. The usage going down was the goal.
- c. Schuetz discussed copy edits on the report.
- d. Helmenstine asked if Huston could make another summary financial estimate from the report that the board can circulate.
  - i. Huston will look where Bailey’s records are for that document.
- e. Schuetz moves to approve the report. Ederer seconds.
  - i. Motion Passed.

13. Discussion/Action on Director Welcome/Meet and Greet

- a. Wittenwyler discussed the original idea behind the Meet and Greet. Wittenwyler asked Koenig if she knows what the plans are.
- b. Wittenwyler and Koenig discussed the event details.
- c. Board members discussed the importance of a more formal event, and whether it would detract from the purpose of the event.
- d. Schuetz stated that it might be too soon host the welcome event on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - i. Huston agreed, she wants to meet people. However, having a formal event would be a lot to prepare for while she is still learning about the community and library history.
- e. Koenig and Wittenwyler will work together to create a meet and greet that is later than March 3<sup>rd</sup> so that a strong invite list can be developed. But, the event will be informal in the sense that there will be no planned agenda besides casual conversation with Carla.
- f. No action taken.

14. Discussion/Action on Gateway to the Driftless Resolution

- a. Helmenstine stated that the resolution will come to the BEPL board in March.

15. Director's Report (Huston)

- a. Huston delivered the report.
- b. The board discussed possible printer variations, and how the board wants to proceed.
  - i. Schuetz stated that if Huston will recommend a printer that is priced under the limit stated in policy, then she can purchase the printer without a specific vote.
- c. Huston asked if the board would be open to an Amazon Business Prime card to avoid using the credit card.
  - i. Board members were not opposed, but would like it to come back to the board for another discussion.
- d. Huston asked if membership fees for professional organizations are the director's responsibility or if the library will pay for that. A total cost of \$260 for the two Huston wishes to join.
  - i. Schuetz asked to add this item to the next agenda
- e. Schuetz motions to approve the report. Wittenwyler seconded.
  - i. Motion passed.

16. Future agenda items

- a. Gateway to the Driftless Resolution
- b. Meet and Greet
- c. Director's Professional Membership Dues
- d. Library Copier
- e. Amazon Card
- f. Non-village Board Trustees

17. Next meeting

- a. March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 7PM

18. Adjournment

- a. Helmenstine moved to adjourn. Schuetz seconded.
  - i. Motion passed.
  - ii. Adjourned at 9:32PM