

**Rock Hill Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**November 8, 2021**  
**Via Zoom**

*Attendees: Stephanie Van Stee, Karen Shoulders, Laurie Murphy, Chantal Hoffsten, Katie Brookes, Patrick Long, Erin Phelps, Susan Hoch, Danielle Oettle*  
*Absent: Donia Hunter*

*Meeting called to order at 6:16 p.m.*

Stephanie announced that Connie Schleeper has stepped down from the Board, leaving two vacancies on the library's Board of Trustees.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes from last month's open meeting, and Katie suggested two grammatical corrections. Laurie moved to approve the October 11, 2021 open session minutes as amended. Katie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Financial Report**

The Board reviewed the financial statements as presented by Danielle Oettle. Danielle reiterated that the updates to the building loan account on the Balance Sheet have been delayed due to issues in QuickBooks with importing the journal entries. She will reach out to Croghan & Croghan ensure that the adjustments are properly recorded. Laurie requested that Danielle send out the updated Balance sheets once the adjustments have been made.

Danielle noted that the library is operating under budget, and that both income and expenses are significantly lower than last year. She attributed the drop in both to the unexpected easement sale and the large plumbing project last year. Karen asked about plans to earmark funds from under-budget accounts. Erin and Susan noted that materials and program spending is lower than usual, but expect to incur more expenses this year.

Chantal requested that the Balance Sheet reports be pulled on the same date as the Revenue & Expense and the Budget vs. Actual reports to ensure that the net income amount matches. Danielle agreed that she will pull Board reports as of end of previous month.

## **Approval of Bills**

The Board reviewed the paid and unpaid bills reports. Stephanie moved to approve the Transaction List dated October 10 to November 5, 2021 in the amount of \$7,689.55, as well as the Unpaid Bills List dated November 5, 2021 in the amount of \$1,223.74. Patrick seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Library Director's Report**

### *Building*

Erin reported that the library's electrical furnace, which heats the back room and the office spaces, shorted out when it was turned on October 26. After visits from the fire department and the HVAC company, Climate Masters determined that the wiring inside would need to be replaced. They have ordered a kit, and expect to complete repairs no later than November 19, when they are scheduled to perform routine maintenance on the remaining furnaces. Erin noted that the estimate for materials and labor would be \$500-600.

Erin also reported that KCI Construction sent a letter indicating that the Manchester project will reach the library in the next few weeks. Chantal suggested that Erin review the easement contract to confirm the area of the temporary easement and to ensure it's not damaged by KCI Construction.

Erin reported that the city of Rock Hill came out to mow the grass before winter, and has placed the library on the schedule for the spring. She also reported that the library's new schedule of expanded hours seems to be going well, although it may be too soon to gauge the impact on the library's statistics. Erin reached out to a local sign company to explore better signage for the library's storefront, but will wait to present a proposal until the Manchester project is completed. Laurie suggested that she ask about sign allowance and whether a variance would be required. ABF replaced the battery in the library's motion sensor.

### *Programs*

Erin shared that the Not-So-Scary Halloween program, jointly organized with Rock Hill's Parks department, was a great success. She estimated that about 60 people attended, and complimented Deborah Harry and Katy Niemann for organizing the event. Due to inclement weather, the library cancelled outdoor Story Time in October. The library was able to hold one session this month, and will continue outdoor story hour as long as the weather permits. Virtual yoga will continue through the end of the calendar year. The library will hold a program on December 16 with the Forest Park owl expert Mark Glenshaw. Erin reported that

the Mystery Book Club will be on hiatus until February; the Saturday Book Club is scheduled to meet in November.

### Grants

Erin shared that she submitted the application for the LSTA grant, and expects to hear an update next week. The library will also be submitting an application for a summer library reading club grant. Erin reported that she will be meeting with Deb and Kayla to discuss the summer reading program as part of preparing that grant proposal.

### Strategic Planning

Erin noted that she contacted local consulting firms Vario and Red Hen Business Services to begin getting estimates on cost and timelines for the library's strategic planning process. She shared that the St. Louis County system used a Minnesota-based firm called Library Strategies, but she would like to start with local firms first. Chantal noted that the library would need to have three competitive bids in order to vote, so she urged Erin to contact non-local firms as well.

### MLC

Erin shared that the MLC recently received an ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant to provide access to a legal database and a professional continuing education platform through Overdrive/Libby. The grant will also cover the acquisition of workforce development materials.

The Polaris upgrade will take place on November 17, with no interruption to library services for patrons. Erin also shared that the materials and supplies for the upcoming RFID project are on their way. The software will be installed in November, and staff training is scheduled for early December.

### Staff

Susan will attend a Polaris software training this week, and Olivia will attend a training on book clubs as well. Erin requested permission to attend a meeting of Missouri library directors in Columbia on December 3-4. She shared that travel and attendance costs would be less than \$500. Chantal noted that the budget line item regarding conferences will easily cover the proposed conference. Laurie reminded Erin that the library reimburses mileage and per diem costs at the rates set by the IRS.

Erin reported that she is finalizing the draft for the library's State Report in anticipation of submitting it this week. She also shared that Kayla has scheduled social media posts to advertise the open Board vacancies. Laurie asked Erin to email a short report next month since the Board will not meet in December.

### **Committee Reports**

History Committee: Laurie reported that the committee should review the current archives and materials housed by the library. Karen volunteered to help Laurie.

Bylaws: Chantal noted that the committee hopes to be able to share a draft of the new Bylaws with the Board in January or February.

### **New Business**

#### *Holiday Policy*

Erin requested that the Board approve a floating holiday for full-time staff as Christmas Day and New Year's Day will fall on Saturday this year. Laurie requested that the leave be used within the calendar year it occurs.

Chantal moved to allow full-time employees to use a floating holiday for December 25, 2021 and January 1, 2022, to be used within the calendar year in which they occur. Laurie seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Stephanie and Chantal suggested that the Board should revisit the personnel policies regarding floating holidays.

#### *Reciprocity Agreement with Scenic Regional and Jefferson County Libraries*

Erin reported that the Scenic Regional and Jefferson County library systems approached MLC about entering into a reciprocity agreement. She shared that the MLC will send them a copy of the reciprocity agreement they currently have with St. Louis County. After negotiating edits, the Boards of each individual MLC library will need to vote to approve adopting the reciprocity agreement. Laurie and Stephanie asked about potential downsides for our library. Erin pointed out that the agreement would not hurt the library, and would potentially help some Rock Hill residents. Chantal confirmed that the Board would receive a copy of the written agreement before voting. Erin will email a copy of the current St. Louis County library reciprocity agreement to the Board.

Katie exited meeting at 7:02 pm.

The Board of Trustees entered closed session at 7:14 pm, pursuant to Section 610.021(3) RSMo. to address the hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular applicants/employees by the Board as personal information about employees or applicants is expected to be discussed or recorded.

Board entered open session at 7:43 pm.

Stephanie moved to adjourn the meeting. Laurie seconded. Motion approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Email Discussion: On December 10, 2021, the Library Director Erin Phelps emailed the Board to ask for guidance on the library's mask policy and sharing other libraries' current approaches. The Board discussed and elected not to amend or change the current mask policy at RHPL, and to ensure that it is equally applied to all patrons. See addendum attached.

## Re: Mask mandate

karen shoulders <krnshldrs@gmail.com>

Mon 12/20/2021 9:44 AM

To: Patrick Long <patrickp@patrickplong.com>

Cc: Stephanie Van Stee <stephanievanstee@gmail.com>; Chantal Hoffsten <sanscoeur78@hotmail.com>; Erin Phelps <ephelps@rhplmo.org>; LAURIE MURPHY <cadenmurphy@aol.com>; KATIE BROOKES <kwbrookes@aol.com>; Susan Hoch <shoch@rhplmo.org>

Hi all,

Thanks for the update, Erin!

I agree with keeping the mask mandate in place, and know that is sometimes a challenge to enforce. I am on the same page with Patrick in thinking that this isn't something we need to seek legal advice on at this time and agree with Chantal re: Lashly & Baer.

Hope you all are well,

Karen

On Mon, Dec 20, 2021 at 8:48 AM Patrick Long <patrickp@patrickplong.com> wrote:

Thanks for all your time and effort on this! My initial thoughts are to keep the current policy in place, especially as it sounds that ours is consistent with what the other MLC libraries and St. Louis are doing. It doesn't seem to me that legal counsel would be needed to keep the current policy in place, especially as it seems consistent with what most organizations, especially public/governmental organizations, are doing these days - but I'm not a legal expert those are just my thoughts!

I'm okay with joining any discussions if we think additional discussions are needed. If I'm understanding the previous comments accurately, it seems like we are pretty much on the same page about keeping the current policy in place, but correct me if I'm wrong about that.

Thanks!

Patrick

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Paddymel>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/patrickplong/>

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**From:** Stephanie Van Stee <stephanievanstee@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Friday, December 17, 2021 9:53 PM

**To:** Chantal Hoffsten <sanscoeur78@hotmail.com>

**Cc:** Erin Phelps <ephelps@rhplmo.org>; LAURIE MURPHY <cadenmurphy@aol.com>; KATIE BROOKES <kwbrookes@aol.com>; karen shoulders <krnshldrs@gmail.com>; Patrick Long <patrickp@patrickplong.com>

Susan Hoch <[shoch@rhplmo.org](mailto:shoch@rhplmo.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Mask mandate

Hi Erin,

Thanks for updating us about what the other libraries are doing, particularly the MLC. It's also great to know what Rock Hill government is doing. I agree with Chantal - I think we should be consistent with what the other MLC libraries are doing related to mask requirements.

Board - Should we get local legal guidance, though? I certainly don't know what the legal guidance on this would be and wouldn't want us to be in a vulnerable position.

All my best,  
Stephanie

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 17, 2021, at 7:51 PM, Chantal Hoffsten <[sanscoeur78@hotmail.com](mailto:sanscoeur78@hotmail.com)> wrote:

I think that keeping the mask requirement is fine—the MLC is pretty good about tracking this and we should follow suit here (especially with rising infection rates and Omicron). I think as long as our current mask policy is in place, we should apply it equally and not allow patrons inside without a mask unless they have requested an ADA covered reasonable accommodation. Rescinding the policy would a board decision.

Just FYI, I would strongly be against using Lashly & Baer for anything. We have used them in the past, but had some serious concerns about their work product. I don't know Ormsby but if Maplewood likes her she might be a good option for future legal questions.

Chantal

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 17, 2021, at 11:50 AM, Erin Phelps <[ephelps@rhplmo.org](mailto:ephelps@rhplmo.org)> wrote:

Hello,

I wanted to give you all an update on what I've learned this week regarding the masks:

I spoke with a lawyer from our insurance legal helpline (Jackson Lewis), who was not able to give me any specific legal advice on subject, but recommended we reach out to local government and ask for guidance. I reached out to Jennifer Yackley, Rock Hill's City Manager, who said the City was recommending, not requiring masks in the building (but that the Circuit Court still is requiring them). I'll try to get in touch with

someone at the County government to see what they are advising, but I imagine it's 'recommended'.

The MLC members have all said they are keeping their mask requirements. St Louis Public Library is maintaining their mask requirement by way of a City order. St. Louis County Library has downgraded theirs to recommended.

In case we're interested in getting some local legal advice, I asked the MLC's who they use. Several responded that they work with Lisa Stump at Lashly & Baer, and Maplewood PL uses Cindy Ormsby.

We've had a couple people in the library this week that will not wear masks. As long as their visit is short (such as picking up a book, checking out, and leaving), we've allowed it.

Thanks! Hope you all are doing well.  
Best,  
Erin

Erin Phelps  
Director  
Rock Hill Public Library  
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<https://www.rockhillpubliclibrary.org/>



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**From:** Erin Phelps  
**Sent:** Friday, December 10, 2021 10:30 AM  
**To:** [stephanievanstee@gmail.com](mailto:stephanievanstee@gmail.com) <[stephanievanstee@gmail.com](mailto:stephanievanstee@gmail.com)>; Chantal Hoffsten <[sanscoeur78@hotmail.com](mailto:sanscoeur78@hotmail.com)>; Laurie Murphy <[cadenmurphy@aol.com](mailto:cadenmurphy@aol.com)>; KATIE BROOKES <[kwbrookes@aol.com](mailto:kwbrookes@aol.com)>; karen shoulders <[krnshldrs@gmail.com](mailto:krnshldrs@gmail.com)>; PatrickP@PatrickPLong.com <[PatrickP@PatrickPLong.com](mailto:PatrickP@PatrickPLong.com)>  
**Cc:** Susan Hoch <[shoch@rhplmo.org](mailto:shoch@rhplmo.org)>  
**Subject:** Mask mandate

Good morning,

With the most recent withdrawal of the county mask mandate, I'd like to have the Board's support for RHPL to still require masks in the building for patrons age 5 and up due to County and CDC health recommendations. Is that something you all would be able to discuss and vote on over email?

Thanks and best,  
Erin

Erin Phelps  
Director  
Rock Hill Public Library



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