

HARVARD CITY LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

November 21, 2024

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by President Ann Almgren. Also present were board members Trent Bruha, Heather Kriete, Michelle Faler, John Lavalley, Ivy Talaga, and Library Director Karen Sutera.

Meeting Minutes: The minutes for the October 2024 City Library Board meeting were presented for approval. With no changes needed, John Lavalley made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which Heather Kriete seconded. Motion carried.

Citizens Comments: None

Review and Approval of Bills: The bills for November 2024 were presented by Karen Sutera. Blue Ribbon Electrical was owed \$214.00 to replace a lamp in a light fixture. Gonzalez Lawn Landscaping billed \$1,824.00 for replacing the rear brick walking path. Johnson Controls Security Solutions billed \$2,162.41 for the library's semi-annual security alarm monitoring. Odi's Woodshop, Inc., which is the library's contracted handyman service, billed \$325.00 for completing various maintenance tasks including repairing one of the StoryWalk frames and refilling the soap dispensers. The November 2024 bills totaling \$7,433.46 were approved for payment on a motion by Heather Kriete, which Ivy Talaga seconded. Motion carried.

Review Financial Reports: Karen Sutera presented a summary of the November 2024 financial reports. On the October 2024 Revenue and Expenses Report, the property tax revenue for the 2024-25 amended budget is \$445,000.00. The City of Harvard's Bookkeeper Deb Bejot is concerned that the property tax revenue may wind up being underbudget due to some individuals not paying their taxes at this time. Salaries are lower than what has been budgeted for due to the maintenance and youth services positions remaining unfilled. Phone costs will decrease after the library transitions to using VoIP phones. The City Account is in great shape.

Committee Reports: Technology Committee: No meeting. Friends of the Library: No updates as of the date of the November 2024 City Library Board meeting.

Librarian's Report: Karen Sutera presented the librarian's report for November 2024. Library patrons can sign up on the library's website for biweekly emailed newsletters with updates about the library and a schedule of upcoming events. The library's staff began sending these newsletters on November 3, and they were received by 133 individuals with an open rate of 68 percent. Candace Fleming, the author of *Bulldozer's Christmas Dig*, had to cancel her appearance at the Diggins Construction Christmas Party due to a scheduling conflict. The book's illustrator, Eric Rohmann, will attend in the author's place. As part of the Harvard Park's Foundation's Day of the Dead Celebration on November 2, the library offered a wreath crafting activity, which had 24 participants. On October 22, the library's staff discovered a large tire burn mark on the far east side of the parking lot, which was created by a red pickup truck around 10 PM on October 21. Signs stating that video cameras are in use will be placed on the light posts near the rear of the parking lot to hopefully prevent future malicious and/or criminal incidents.

Old Business: *Community Survey Update:* Karen Sutera will email the City Library Board Members a link to the Google form with the Library Patron Survey. The board members will take the survey multiple times and provide feedback to Karen, who will use the board's critiques to create a final version of the survey that will be distributed to the public.

New Business: *Approve the 2025 Meeting Dates:* Karen Sutera provided the 2025 City Library Board Meeting Schedule to the City Library Board Members. The board had no objections to the schedule, and no formal motion was required to approve it.

Review the 2025 Holiday Schedule: Karen Sutera provided the board with the library's 2025 Holiday Calendar, which is the same as the City of Harvard's with a few minor exceptions. Karen is debating whether the library should be closed on July 5. The board had no issues with the library's 2025 Holiday Calendar, and no formal motion was required to approve it.

Discuss the Status of the Library's Cub Cadet Snow Thrower: The board discussed what should be done with the library's Cub Cadet Snow Thrower. The library does not have a custodian, and it is unlikely that the library staff will remove snow surrounding the library. Therefore, Karen Sutera would like to find a new home for the snow thrower. While Harvard's Public Works Department does not need it, the City and Police Department have expressed interest in taking possession of the snow thrower. Ivy Talaga made a motion to approve the rehoming of the Cub Cadet Snow Thrower, which Heather Kriete seconded. Motion carried.

Review and Approve Fund Balance Policy: The board reviewed the Harvard Diggins Library Fund Balance Policy, which states that the Harvard Diggins Library Fund or the cash on hand must be 25% of the annual budgeted expenditures. The policy also indicates that there must not be more than six months of cash on hand, and a fund balance of more than six months of operating expenditures may be transferred to other funds or capital projects upon the City Library Board's approval. Heather Kriete made a motion to approve the Harvard Diggins Library Fund Balance Policy as presented, which Ivy Talaga seconded. Motion carried.

Expand FMLA Policy in Personnel Handbook: The board reviewed Karen Sutera's proposal to expand the section about the Family and Medical Leave Act in the library's personnel handbook. Currently, the FMLA section of the handbook defers to the federal FMLA website and does not specifically state how the library would handle an FMLA request. Karen recommended that the City of Harvard's FMLA policy be added to the personnel handbook as an appendix so employees will know how FMLA requests will be handled at the library. Heather Kriete made a motion to approve adding the City of Harvard's FMLA policy as an appendix to the library's personnel handbook, which Trent Bruha seconded. Motion carried.

First Look at FY 25/26 City Budget: The board conducted the first review of the FY 25/26 City Budget. The property tax revenue increased from \$445,000.00 to \$448,000.00 due to the property tax revenue being underbudget because of unpaid tax bills. Regarding expenses, the budgeted amount for salaries will remain the same at \$200,000.00. The budgeted amount for health insurance will increase by approximately 10 percent. The budgeted amount for telephones will significantly decrease from \$19,000.00 to \$1,000.00 because the Library Director's cell phone plan will be the only telephone bill paid from the City Tax Revenue account. Funds will be paid from the Diggins Fund for the library's VoIP phones. The budgeted amount for interest payments will decrease from \$6,000.00 to \$4,100.00 since interest charges decrease as a loan is paid down. Karen obtained two quotes from Blue Ribbon Electrical, Inc.: one is for replacing the front walk lights with post lights, and the other is for replacing the interior fluorescent lamps with LED lights. Both light replacement projects are pending per the finalization of the FY 25/26 budget.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM via a motion by John Lavallee that was seconded by Ivy Talaga and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Faler, Secretary