

Elk Rapids District Library Board of Trustees
October 5, 2023
11:00am SPECIAL Meeting
held at the Government Center, 315 Bridge St, Elk Rapids, MI 49629

approved October 12, 2023

Note: Minutes follow the agenda

Call to Order: By President Tom Stephenson at 11:04

Members Present: Liz Atkinson, Dan McAuliffe, Dick Hults, Julia Pollister Amos, Emily Petrovich, Tom Stephenson, Mike Weber and Nancy Wonch.

Also Present: Director Pam Williams, Aaron Hill Library IT, Sharon Bacon Liaison from the Friends, Laura Savoie Treasurer of the Friends, Rachel Jarosz from *Olive and Evergreen Design*, Mark Morrow from *The Breton Group* and 2 members of the public were in the audience

1. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: by Atkinson/Hults to approve the agenda
Motion Carried

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. New Business

a. Williams and Petrovich introduced Rebecca Jarosz from *Olive and Evergreen Design* who lives in Milton Township and has children in Lakeland Elementary and Cherryland Middle School. Her business focuses on promoting successes, sharing stories and creating a consistent brand presence. She included a service plan for communications support for the library that included a project scope and timeline, foundational standards and a library communications strategy sample. She would assist the director and staff and would collaborate with the fundraising specialist that we choose to hire.

Williams stated that one of the advantages of having a contract person/partner to work with would free up some of her time and would assist in developing a consistent “brand” for our library. This is part of our strategic plan – to add a marketing specialist.

Jarosz stated that she put a 6 month timeline in her proposal, but is flexible. Hiring a contactor will allow creating a plan that could set things up for a potential staff member to follow in the future.

Petrovich said that goal is to be very collaborative.

Wonch asked if she would be able to communicate well with our older demographic. Jarosz replied that she would use all of the tools in her tool box....”let me at it”.

Weber asked the strategic plan implementation. Petrovich shared that she had not shared the strategic plan with Jarosz yet, but would if we chose to use her.

Williams reminded that part of the strategy is still listening to the public that we would need Jarosz to help with the story that we are trying to tell. We need to communicate that the potential move is something that has been talked about for years. We always want to be open to listening to those that are speaking against us – especially if they are communicating with us.

Pollister Amos asked how this would affect the budget.

Williams stated that she expected the funds from the Heffer Fund.

Pollister Amos stressed that we need to justify if all of it would be part of our library operations and suggested that Williams continue to justify the expenses. Lets be fair about this.

Atkinson stated that she felt there were advantages to using a local person for this job. This is a critical time and the survey supports our action.

Wonch suggested that we have a communications committee that shares information with the board, so that all information that we are getting from individuals that we are working with is shared with all of the board members.

MOTION: by Pollister Amos/Atkinson to hire *Olive and Evergreen Design*

Per the proposed contract that she gave us for up to six months of service for \$650.00 - \$1,300.00 per months based on 10-20 hours of service.

Roll Call:

Petrovich: Yes

Wonch: Yes

Hults: Yes

Atkinson: Yes

McAuliffe: Yes

Pollister Amos: Yes

Stephenson: Yes

Weber: Yes

Motion carried.

b. Stephenson introduced Mark Morrow from *The Breton Group* – and stated it's time that we start looking for a campaign manager. The building committee report will be very positive, so we are moving into phase 2.

Mark Morrow from Grand Rapids shared his Breton Group Feasibility Study Overview with the group. They consider themselves fundraiser development professionals. That is the process that they would engage our community in. They have been in business for 28 years and have assisted non-profits, over 100 churches and over 60-75 libraries. They want to help non-profits to prepare for and then execute successful capital campaigns. A pre-campaign feasibility study would develop a case for support. Define the need, propose the solution, propose a funding plan

and then at that point ask them for money.

Bacon asked who our point of contact for his business would be? Morrow replied that it will be him. She asked how would he work with Jarosz? Morrow replied that they will work well together for the success of the project. Having her on board early means his fees will be less. Bacon also asked how the privacy of donors would be protected during the training of volunteers? Morrow stated that in all campaigns there needs to be general confidentiality in the process.

Weber asked how would major donors be identified. Stephenson stated that he gets many, many questions from people who want to donate. Morrow stated that it's vital to get to the prior major donors early since they are "already in the tent". Generally 95% of the funds will come from this community.

Wonch asked if Morrow would use the strategic plan resources. Morrow said yes.

Pollister Amos asked who handles grant opportunities. Morrow said they would develop a baseline grant. A staff person or volunteer would have to personalize that and submit it.

Atkinson suggested that since we are a resort community that a lot of outreach could be done seasonally.

Hults discussed the difficulty of handling the confidentiality of pledges with conditions. Morrow stated that policies need to be developed to receive, record and acknowledge donations. There is never public listing of donors and amounts.

Bacon asked if Morrow had experience with donations going through the Friends or Foundations? Morrow stated that very few went through the Friends. A few have used Community Foundations. Ultimately it will be up to the leadership here to decide. Stephenson has reached out to the Grand Traverse Regional Foundation and will be meeting with them for further discussion.

MOTION: by Petrovich/Hults to hire *The Breton Group* for our development services and campaign counsel for a fee of \$2,000.00 per month assuming one day long visit each month , professional fees for additional travel days billed at \$500.00 per visit, fees invoiced on the first of each month, with payment due by the 15th, milage billed at .60 per mile per round trip . Other expenses to be approved by the Elk Rapids District Library leadership.

Roll Call:

Stephenson: Yes

Petrovich: Yes

Weber: Yes

Wonch: Yes

Pollister Amos: Yes

Atkinson: Yes

Hults: Yes

McAuliffe: Yes

Motion carried.

Morrow will put together a budget. He will try to be in town for our regular board meetings.

4. Committee Report: Building update

Hults reported that he put together a binder regarding all the functions of qualifying the building. It includes:

Purchase agreement

Title commitment – there is still an outstanding restriction on the property

Structural Report – building will maintain current code except for one small portion of the building that the design architect will have to deal with, but that should not be any trouble.

Environmental II – passed

Architect – he met with John Reid about interviewing architects.

Survey – was ordered and should be done in next week or two.

Zoning – he appeared at the Planning Commission and asked them to make changes to the Zoning to specifically allow for a library at that location. They approved and it goes to public hearing on October 24th at 7:00pm.

Regarding the restriction on the property: They were put on by the original developers but were taken off later. They came off for us by the fact the those developers are deceased. The restrictions were put back on when a trust was created several years ago. Bill Derman thinks it might not be a bad idea to do a “mini probate” to have them officially removed again. The heirs who put the restrictions back on would have to sign off on it. Does the board want to pursue this?

Pollister Amos – can you ask Mr Derman on how much it would cost and bring that information back to us at the next meeting?

Hults - feels that the chance of having it being pursued are very minimal.. None the less it may be prudent to do this for future generations.

Stephenson and Weber asked about Phase II Environmental.

Hults stated that it's all in the report and a copy is available at the library. There were no tests undone.

5. Public Comment

Mary Lobiso said thank you to the board for doing their due diligence. When are the start dates for the two groups that we just hired. Stephenson stated ASAP.

Betty McCaghy asked about the potential of having a movie theatre put in the new building. Stephenson stated that we need to draw a design to determine space first. We have also been asked if the community garden could move there too.

Aaron Hill shared that the Cherryland Middle School students will be using their student IDs as their library card. A parent volunteer will transport the books between the school and the library twice a week.

6. Board Comment

Pollister Amos stated that she is proud that this board has been transparent about their due diligence and our goal to continue that going forward.

Hults asked if there were still tours scheduled.

Stephenson/Williams stated that there will be one tomorrow (October 6th) at 9:00am for The Friends of the Library.

Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 12:30pm.

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