

BENJAMIN JEWELL, President, City of Coldwater  
THOMAS LOWANDE, Vice President, Union Township  
MARTHA WATSON, Secretary, City of Coldwater  
SUSAN BROOKS, Trustee, County-at-Large  
KIMBERLY LANGWORTHY, Trustee, County-at-Large  
KAREN SMITH, Trustee, Bronson Township  
SUE SMITH, Trustee, Quincy Township

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Branch District Library – Coldwater Branch  
10 E Chicago Street, Coldwater, MI 49036  
Monday, March 16, 2020  
5:30 pm**

**MINUTES**

*NOTE: Due to restrictions imposed by the Governor of Michigan in Executive Order 2020-09, the Coldwater Branch was closed to the public. The Board had to meet in order to discuss the effects of the COVID-19 virus on BDL staff and services, but could not admit members of the public to the meeting. In an attempt to still comply with the Open Meetings Act, the board meeting was livestreamed on YouTube. The livestreamed event was publicized on the BDL's website and on Facebook. People watching the event were encouraged to enter their comments online and BDL staff read all of the comments aloud during the final time for public comments. All votes taken during the meeting were done by roll call. These actions were in line with the guidance in the subsequently issued Executive Order 2020-15.*

**1. Call to Order**

BDL President Ben Jewell, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Roll Call / Attendance**

Board Members Present: Ben Jewell, Tom Lowande, Martha Watson, Susan Brooks, and Kim Langworthy.

Board Members Absent/Excused: Karen Smith and Sue Smith

Others Present: John Rucker, Kimberly Feltner, Jessica Tefft, Ashley McCall, Lindsay Villa, Bonnie Sherman.

**4. Time for Public Comments.** None.

**5. Consent Agenda (Items A-H)**

Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Tom Lowande, to approve the Consent Agenda and place the items within on file. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

- A) BDL Regular Meeting Minutes: February 17, 2020
- B) Bills: February 2020
- C) Financial Statements: February 2020
- D) Branch County Penal Fine Report: January 2020
- E) Administrative Reports: March 13, 2020
- F) Branch Reports: March 11, 2020
- G) Monthly Statistical Report: February 2020
- H) Publicity and Comments: March 2020

**6. Approval of the Agenda**

Motion by Tom Lowande, supported by Kim Langworthy, to approve the Agenda as presented. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**7. COVID-19 Coronavirus Update**

Director Rucker provided the Board with an update on the BDL's activities in response to the COVID-19 virus and guidance from the federal and state governments. He also reported some of the things being done by other Michigan libraries. In response to COVID-19, the BDL has canceled due dates and overdue notices; is auto-renewing expiring library cards and accepting and processing online applications for new cards and renewals of cards which had already expired; and have several ideas generated by staff for continuing to provide some services while the BDL is closed. Some employees may volunteer to work during the closure to do special projects or other tasks. The Director may permit that at his discretion, but it was recommended that he have each volunteering employee sign a waiver of liability should they contract the COVID-19 virus.

A) Motion by Tom Lowande, supported by Martha Watson, to continue paying employees the regular pay they would have received had the BDL branches not been closed. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

B) Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Kim Langworthy, to keep the BDL closed indefinitely and that the appropriate time to reopen be left at the Director's discretion. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**8. Funding Requests from the Union Township Branch**

The Union Township Branch requested to use funds from the anonymous Union Township Facilities Trust to replace an unreliable photocopier and to purchase additional multimedia and hinged periodical shelving. The cost is \$2,300 for a refurbished multifunction copier and \$1,700 for the purchase and installation of the shelving, for a combined total of \$4,000. Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Susie Brooks, to approve expenditures from the anonymous Union Township Trust of \$2,300 for a refurbished multifunction copier and \$1,700 for the purchase and installation of the shelving, for a combined total of \$4,000. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**9. Personnel Committee Report**

This was an informational item and no action was taken under this agenda item. The Personnel Committee met on March 4, 2020 to review and discuss staff feedback on the draft *Employment Handbook*. The committee recommended 6 changes which have been incorporated into the final draft of the *Handbook* discussed in the next agenda item. The committee also outlined the 3 motions that should be made as part of that discussion.

**10. Final Review of the Draft *Employment Handbook***

It was announced that the Director had just received information from our employment law attorney which will necessitate further review of, and possibly some changes to, the draft document prior to its final consideration by the Board. Motion by Ben Jewell, supported by Tom Lowande, to table this agenda item pending further review by the Personnel Committee. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**11. Amending BDL Board Bylaws**

At the meeting on February 17, 2020, the Board discussed amending the bylaws to change or delete Article V, Training, which requires board members to attend a mandatory training session every quarter on specific days and times of specific months. Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Tom Lowande, to repeal Article V, Training pending review of the whole of the Bylaws by the ad hoc Bylaws Committee. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**12. Director's Self-Evaluation**

Director Rucker presented his evaluation of his performance as director over the last year. Board members will do their individual evaluations of his performance over the next 2 weeks and those will be compiled into a composite evaluation which is scheduled to be reviewed and discussed at the April

board meeting. This was an informational item and no action was taken.

**13. National Library Workers' Day and Week**

Martha Watson reminded the board members that National Library Week is April 19-14 this year, will Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> being specifically designated as Library Workers Day. In the past, the Board has placed an advertisement in the *Shoppers Guide* recognizing and thanking staff for their great work and has provided treats for the all-staff meeting scheduled closest to Library Workers Day. Watson also suggested that it would be nice to try to expand recognition of our employees and of the work they do for the communities we serve by trying to get more publicity by, for example, exploring the possibility of getting a weekly BDL column in the local newspaper. The American Library Association also provides sample letters to the editor, language for public service announcements, and the like.

- A. Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Tom Lowande, to place the advertisement in the *Shoppers Guide* and provide treats for the staff meeting. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.
- B. Motion by Martha Watson, supported by Tom Lowande, to ask the Director and staff to explore other options for promoting the great work by our employees. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously.

**14. Announcements**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Branch District Library Board of Trustees will be held Monday, April 20, 2020, at 5:30 pm, in the Coldwater Branch meeting room. Should that change because of continuing conditions resulting from the COVID-19 virus, the appropriate announcements will be made.

**15. Additional Public Comments** – Staff read comments received via the livestreamed broadcast of the board meeting. All were from BDL employees expressing appreciation for the Board's decision to continue paying them during the BDL shutdown.

**16. Adjournment**

Motion by Tom Lowande, supported by Susie Brooks, to adjourn the meeting. By roll call vote of the five members present, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Martha J. Watson  
BDL Board Secretary

The Branch District Library will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon one week's notice to the Branch District Library by writing or calling the following:

Branch District Library, 10 E. Chicago St., Coldwater, MI 49036  
[info@BranchDistrictLibrary.org](mailto:info@BranchDistrictLibrary.org)  
(517) 278-2341