

**Heartland Regional Library System
Board Meeting
February 21, 2023**

Roll Call: Present at the monthly regional board meeting held at the Iberia Library were board members Carole Wagner, Eleanor Terry, Mary Liebler, Anne Graves, Lerilee Huhman, Nora Bond, Ralf Trusty and attending via Zoom were April Noblett and Laura Schiermeier. Staff present were Director Lisa Garro and librarians Dawn Payne, Kacie James and Chrissi Germann. Also present were visitors Chris Collier of Piper Sandler & Company, and Neill Scheiter of Sapp Design architects.

Public Comments: Collier gave the first presentation detailing funding options for the Eldon Library project, which if we do it will require purchasing and renovating the old City Hall building or construction of a new building at a different site.

Collier said there are two financing options. One is issuing General Obligation (GO) bonds. GO bonds require voter approval in both counties by a four-seventh majority, also referred to as a “super majority.” The bonds would be issued for 20 years or less and our payments would be backed up by the taxing authority of a levy. The levy would go away once the bonds are fully paid.

The second option would not require voter approval as it is a lease transaction Collier called Certificate of Participation (COP) lease. It is subject to annual appropriation and requires collateral (the building) and would require enough cash flow to make the payments. Some entities do get an operational tax increase for it, and this requires a simple majority for passage. This can go up to 30 years. COP is more risky than a GO bond so the interest is generally a bit higher. It is placed with a bank with stated terms. Local banks generally are easy to work with on the COP lease. If we are unable to pay the bank on the COP lease, the bank can take possession of the property for 30 to 35 years and lease it to someone else, but they can't sell the property

Collier used \$500,000 and presented an estimate of interest and fees. For a 30-year lease the annual payment is estimated at \$40,296; a 15-year lease with annual payment of \$47,977; and a 10-year lease with annual payment of \$64,794. We need to figure out how much we can pay and Collier said he will help us with it.

Neill Scheiter of SAPP Design architects gave a presentation on the renovation of the old City Hall building and constructing a new facility. He said there are

some questions about the existing building as it was built in 1959. It was estimated it will cost at least \$900,000 to renovate the old City Hall building into a library. This does not include the cost of the building. It is estimated a new library building on a different site will cost from \$2,250,000 to \$2.5 million.

Lisa said Heartland already operates from old buildings and we continue to spend money on them because of it.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Jan. 17, 2023 meeting were approved on a motion by Nora and a second by Ralf.

Financial Reports: The financial reports were approved on a motion by Laura and a second by Eleanor.

Approval of Monthly Expenditures and Transfer of Funds: This was approved on a motion by Laura and a second by Ralf.

Director and Librarians' reports: Dawn and Kaci gave reports about the February programming. They had good programs and are working on much more for March.

Chrissi Germann was introduced as the new Adult Programming librarian. She is going to have yoga classes. Also, she will be doing a mobile library with assisted living facilities in the two-county system. She has set up five sites so far. She will be having bingo, too.

Lisa had an extensive report. The Evergreen system has been updated. They had a good staff workshop covering a variety of subjects. Lisa said there are tax rebates that will become available for existing buildings. There are grants to make buildings more energy efficient and to add charging stations. There are clean energy tax credits for when constructing new buildings.

Lisa was at an event in Jefferson City and struck up a conversation for Rep.

Rudy Veit who said we may be able to use ARPA money. She said one thing we must have is a 501c3 status, and we also could benefit from a foundation.

Eleanor made a motion to get the 501c3 status, which was seconded by Ralf and approved by the board members.

Lisa spoke of money Heartland has with LAGERS, which we were part of when associated with the Thomas Jefferson library system. There is \$445,615 for Miller County and \$183,427 for Maries County, all money that will go to Heartland once the last person who worked there retires

Lisa said Sec. of State Jay Ashcroft had over 20,000 comments on his library rule changes and only about 2 percent were in favor. Still, Ashcroft moved forward with the rule proposal, which is widely opposed by librarians and the public as the rules want us to censor books. Now, there is a HB 1159, which will

make Ashcroft's new rules the law. The bill would allow the libraries and staff to be used and have restraining orders put on staff plus paying costs and fees. Anybody can challenge any of our books. Lisa said this law throws librarians under the bus. She asked us to contact our state representatives and senators. She said the rumors of us getting kicked out of the city-owned building in Eldon are beginning to circulate in Eldon. Some of the members plan to attend the city council meeting on Feb. 28.

Communications: There were none.

Unfinished Business: The Strategic Plan update was tabled. The director evaluation was put on hold until a committee to design an evaluation protocol can meet.

Committee Reports: Mary said Eldon's 100-year celebration will be the last Saturday in Sept. The library will be open and have some type of program and food. Mary said they will "do it up right and it will be good."

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Eleanor and a second by Ralf.