

**MINUTES
ELMHURST PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Tuesday, September 21, 2021
ELMLIB.ORG/VIRTUAL, 7:00 PM**

This meeting was held both virtually via Zoom and in-person in the Kossmann Room.

President Susan Sadowski called the September 21, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:02 p.m. via Zoom.

Board members in attendance in the Kossmann Room included: Marsha Baker, Ingrid Becton, Jane Chornij, Taylor Holop, Susan Sadowski, and William Shanklin.

Trustees Carol Jacobsen, and Bill Ryan were in attendance via Zoom.

Trustees Teresa Menolascino were absent.

Also in attendance were Library Director Mary Beth Harper, Assistant Director Marcy Rodriguez, and Admin/HR Manager Rita Andreuccetti.

Visitors in attendance included: Head of Kids' Library, Alea Perez, Head of Marketing Rita Perona, and Elmhurst University student and Veteran, Matthew Aldinger.

Director Harper indicated that she received two public comments via email.

Deacon John Feely provided public comment via email. Trustee Sadowski read the email aloud:

Dear Director Marybeth Harper, Ms. Rita Andreuccetti, & Trustees of the Elmhurst Public Library Board,

I am writing you out of concern about the Tarot 101 presentation scheduled for October 20, 2021, at 7:00 PM at an Elmhurst Public Library meeting that is open to adults & high school students as young as 13 years old.

I am submitting this note as input for the Library Trustee's Monthly Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 21, 2021.

As the library publicity write up says, the Tarot 101 presentation involves divination & a push to make it a "hobby" for attendees. That is something that is contrary to not only Christian and Jewish Faith (the Bible book of Deuteronomy 18:10, followed by many other verses in other books of the Bible) but also contrary to the Muslim Faith (Qur'an Sura 5:90 and Sura 52:29) which has resulted in violence in some nations & is considered idolatry by a local Moslem acquaintance.

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I think it is especially inappropriate for young minds in High School. The Elmhurst Public Library has been a great aid to Elmhurst residents and deserves much credit for its contributions to our community. I think this particular presentation is a detriment rather than a benefit to our community.

Thank you again for the past contributions of our Library.

Deacon John Feely
Immaculate Conception Parish
134 Arthur Street
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630-530-8515

Mary P. Tyson provided public comment via email. Trustee Sadowski read the email aloud:

September 20, 2021

This is a formal public comment submitted to the Library Board of Trustees for the September 21, 2021 meeting.

I have grave concerns about the planned program, Tarot Card 101. The Catholic Church (and all other major religions) forbids the use of Tarot or other methods meant for divination or invoking evil spirits. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to “unveil” the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone (2116).

I am particularly concerned about the young men and women who are extremely vulnerable to being lured into this realm. Please read about the dangers. It is not something to promote as a hobby for anyone! Tarot Card use can lead to Witchcraft, which leads to Satanism. What will be next? Tarot Card 201, Witchcraft 301, etc.? I strongly urge you to cancel this program. Further, I object to the library using my taxes to support this dangerous program.

Please respond as to who allowed this program to be accepted. How are such decisions made? Did the Board have input into this decision? I ask that you reply to me, whether the Board has any concern over the danger of this program after considering my comments and auditing the program.

I do appreciate the quick reply from Ms. Mary Beth Harper last week. She referred to your policy that libraries make available the widest possible diversity of views and expressions. She also hoped “although this program doesn't appeal to you (me), there are other offerings that do.”

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My concern is not about a preference or an appeal. This is about participation in evil while calling it “a choice” or a viewpoint. If you do go ahead with Tarot 101, at least do so informed of the danger you are putting people in and accept that your actions may unwittingly cause people great harm. Divination is not a self-help program, or a hobby. “Most people lack an accurate understanding of these topics at best and are entirely misguided about them at worst and see no harm in them. Nothing could be further from the truth.” (from Joel S. Peters’ commentary attached).

I look forward to your reply. There is a very simple and straight forward way to manage this problem – cancel Tarot 101. If not, please ensure that a diverse set of Board members audit the program in advance to ensure that it is not a class on divination or a veiled first step to allowing Witchcraft and other Satanic programs to become part of Elmhurst Library’s regular programming.

I am attaching an article I sent to Ms. Harper and a title of a book (set of books) that the Library may want to purchase, and a commentary on the book. I will highlight in the attachments which parts of the attachments I would appreciate being read aloud at your meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary P. Tyson

Director Harper stated that Head of Marketing, Rita Perona, was also in attendance during the meeting to answer any questions regarding the program. Director Harper and Rita Perona answered several questions from the Trustees.

The first order of business was the approval of the Minutes of the August 17, 2021 Regular Board of Trustees Meeting. William Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the August 17, 2021 Regular Board of Trustees Meeting be approved as presented.

Marsha Baker seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Chornij, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: None

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

The next order of business was the approval of the September 21, 2021 Accounts Payable. Ingrid Becton moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the September 21, 2021 Executive Session be approved as presented.

William Shanklin seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Chornij, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: None

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

Director Harper discussed the financial reports. She noted that a property tax payment of \$743,985 and a replacement tax payment of \$8,348 were received.

Under the expenditure report, Director Harper noted that the personnel budget is predicted to be underspent this year due to staff resignations. Several positions are being re-hired but the hiring process takes time. She also noted that the insurance renewal takes place in November.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Harper stated that in-person programming and meeting room reservations are available. Patrons are still enjoying attending programs virtually so it looks as though virtual programming is here to stay.

This year's One Book One Community choice has been popular. The author offers ways for everyone to get involved in protecting the environment.

There was no President's Report.

There was no Unfinished Business.

The first order of New Business were the Materials Reconsideration Requests. Director Harper stated that the Library received three Materials Reconsideration Requests for the book titled, *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley. The Board received information about the title including: book reviews, EPL's Collection Policy, the Freedom to Read Policy, and the response letter sent to the requestors. Director Harper brought copies of the book for the Trustees to review. Trustee Jacobson asked about the number of copies in the collection. The Library owns 2 copies of the 2009 edition and 1 copy of the 2021 edition. Director Harper stated that the public library makes a large variety of materials available. Patrons are free to choose what they wish to read, watch, or listen to.

The next order of business was the approval of the Personnel Handbook. The Personnel Handbook was reviewed and revised by Sonal Shah, JD Senior Employment Council, HR Source. Ms. Shah conducted a comprehensive review of the handbook and suggested edits and additional policies to update the handbook to current legal standards. Director Harper also thanked Admin/HR Manager Rita Andreuccetti for putting this handbook together. She highlighted notable changes. After a lengthy discussion regarding proposed changes that included sick time pay for all part-time staff members and holiday pay for part-time staff who are regularly scheduled to work on a holiday, William Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Personnel Handbook be approved as presented.

Ingrid Becton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: Chornij

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

The next order of business was the approval of the Program Conduct Policy. Director Harper stated that this new policy specifically applies to conduct during program participation. She reviewed the policy with the Trustees. William Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Program Conduct Policy be approved as presented.

Ingrid Becton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Chornij, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: None

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

The first item of New Business was the review of Closed Session Meeting Minutes. Director Harper stated that closed session meetings are reviewed twice a year. Bill Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Executive Session Minutes dated September 20, 2016 remain closed.

That the Executive Session Minutes dated July 20, 2021 be opened.

Director Harper stated she would bring the closed session minutes back to the Trustees in six months. Ingrid Becton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Chornij, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: None

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

The next order of New Business was the Destruction of Executive Session Recordings. William Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the recording of the Executive Session dated: 7/16/2019 is approved for destruction.

Ingrid Becton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Baker, Becton, Chornij, Holop, Jacobsen, Ryan, Shanklin, and Sadowski

Nays: None

Absent: Menolascino

The motion carried.

In Other Business, Director Harper stated that she is working with Head of Marketing, Rita Perona, on crafting a message to the community about the levy reduction in next year's budget.

There being no Other Business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.