



BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BOYDEN LIBRARY, FULLER CONFERENCE ROOM
10 Bird Street
Tuesday, March 29, 2022
7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Chairman Collin Earnst, Vice Chairman Kevin Penders, Clerk Christine Igo Freeman, Joyce Parlapano, and Katherine Udden.

Also Present: Library Director Libby O’Neill, and Assistant Town Manager/HR Director, M. Johns

Not Present: Anisul Chowdhury

The Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by C. Earnst.

Correspondence: C. Earnst mentioned the OML complaint that was filed against the Boyden Library Board of Trustees.

Public Input: None

Discussion of Open Meeting Law Complaint Filed by Arthur Muldoon on March 11, 2022:

C. Earnst read the OML Complaint in its entirety and laid out some notes from Town Counsel relative thereto. C. Earnst explained the complaint was filed on the Board of Library Trustees but in actuality the complaint should have been filed on the “Library Director Search Committee” which is a separate public body. C. Earnst was clear that at no time did the Board of Trustees ever have a quorum and discuss the process of hiring the next library director outside an open meeting. However, there were unintentional errors made by the Search Committee and that process was procedurally flawed.

Further, the initial in-person interviews with two candidates on February 10, 2022 should have been posted as an executive session meeting. The search committee should have convened and voted to go into executive session stating the proper exemption to the OML which they did not. This was an administrative oversight. C. Earnst said executive session was intended but not formally voted and entered into so the Committee did not have grounds to prevent the general public from attending and participating in the meeting held on February 10th. C. Earnst did reiterate that although the process followed was flawed, it was justified not to allow the public into that meeting based on the confidential nature of the recruiting process. The Committee was also unaware meeting minutes should have been taken during that meeting and therefore they will need to be prepared.

In conclusion, C. Earnst stated that although the complaint should have been filed against the Search Committee, nonetheless, the Board of Trustees should acknowledge the in-person interview process on February 10th was procedurally flawed and agree to respond to the complaint by providing the documentation, records, minutes, votes and a description of the hiring process as set forth in the Trustees January 2022 meeting minutes as it relates to the Search Committee’s meeting on February 10th. C. Earnst worked with Town Counsel and was given guidance on proper OML procedure for executive session so that such an oversight will not reoccur.

C. Earnst suggested the Board of Trustees vote to take the following two (2) actions in response to the complaint:

1. Arrange for the minutes of the February 10, 2022 Search/Screen Committee meeting to be prepared, made public, and provided to Mr. Muldoon.

Upon a motion by K. Penders and second by C. Igo Freeman, the Board voted to arrange for the minutes of the February 10, 2022 Search Committee meeting to be prepared and provided to Mr. Muldoon. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed 5-0-0.

2. Make available any and all non-privileged documents (such as interview questions), records, votes, and record documents outlining the Library Director hiring process, and provide those to Mr. Muldoon.

Upon a motion by K. Penders second by K. Udden, the Board voted to make available any and all non-privileged documents (such as interview questions), records, votes, and record documents outlining the Library Director hiring process. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed 5-0-0.

C. Earnst stated a letter of response detailing the action the Trustees have taken relative to this complaint will be prepared. The letter of response will be sent to Mr. Muldoon and a copy of said letter will be sent to AGO, Division of Open Government along with a copy of the complaint.

Upon a motion by J. Parlapiano and second by C. Igo Freeman, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:18 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Riccio