

Pontiac Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Pontiac Public Library, 60 East Pike Street, Pontiac, MI 48342
July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 Budget- Public Hearing- June 30, 2015
6:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Rosie Richardson. Roll Call: Allen, present; LeDuff, present; Jenkins, present; Richardson, present; Waterman, absent; Duvall, absent.

A motion was made to approve the agenda for the meeting; Motion: Trustee Allen, seconded, Trustee Jenkins; Questions; Trustee Jenkins apologized for showing up late, but clarified that she was unsure of the time of the meeting since it wasn't on the agenda. Trustee LeDuff wanted to know if there was a change on the budget that was being discussed. She also felt that the half-page summary given to the public didn't provide enough information to the public; Roll Call; Allen, yes; LeDuff, no ; Richardson, yes; Jenkins, yes; Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The chairperson mentioned that if the public had any questions that needed clarification, the accountant, auditor, and attorney were present to answer questions.

C. Williams asked the board who put the budget together; Chairperson Richardson clarified that the library director puts the budget together, and that this meeting was to discuss it, and then a special meeting would start later tonight to vote on the budget; she also asked if the library was in jeopardy of closing if the budget wasn't passed; Chairperson Richardson responded that yes, if the budget wasn't passed at that meeting, then the library wouldn't open tomorrow.

Mr. Bass expressed a desire to have a more defined budget than the half-page summary given to the public because it wasn't detailed enough; Chairperson Richardson responded by having copies made of the three page, detailed budget.

Councilman Holland wanted the accountant or attorney to explain some of the line items on the budget; Mr. Harden, the accountant explained that property taxes are generated from the millage, penal fines are also revenue that come from the state, and other is a general category with a variety of different sources including fundraising, state aid, and other corporate contributions. Councilman Holland questioned the debt service and Mr. Harden said that it had been spent on capital improvements. Chairperson Richardson clarified that it went towards a new furnace to replace the old broken one.

Miss Billie wanted a more detailed budget that showed previous years; Chairperson Richardson clarified that this was only meant to show the coming fiscal year budget, but offered to provide documentation from previous years for comparative purpose; Miss Billie asked about an amount that had been set aside of 1.5 million that was mentioned; Chairperson Richardson clarified that it is only 1.2 million set aside, but it hadn't been used for capital improvements because it was set aside as restricted for capital improvements. The library had chosen to pay off loans on the furnace over 5 years instead of paying it all at once; Miss Billie expressed concern that the library was being run by an executive director and not a librarian, but it was clarified that Devan Green, the library director is a librarian, she does have an MLIS degree. Miss Billie wanted to know what the plan was to deal with the negative balance on the budget. Mr. Harden clarified that although the expected expenditures exceeded the expended revenues that the library planned to use their positive fund balance to address that cost.

An unnamed woman was worried if the library would be taken over by the state and wanted to know how often the board meets. She was told that they're scheduled monthly, but there hadn't been one since April of 2015.

Councilman Holland asked about seeing security when the budget has a 0 dollar allotment for security. Chairperson Richardson clarified that previously a company was hired in to provide security, but currently the security position has become a staff one and is included in employee wages.

Trustee Waterman arrived and addressed the public as a citizen stating that no one wanted to see the library closed. She presented a document that was sent to the city treasury that confirmed that a public hearing and budget hearing happened which will allow the state to collect taxes and keep the library open signed May 13, 2015. She also spoke of a desire for financial accountability at the library; Lisa Hamameh, a representative of the attorney office Foster, Collins, and Swift clarified that the document presented doesn't approve the budget, it only attests to the amount being levied for taxes, she also said that if a budget wasn't approved tonight that the library wouldn't have the authority to spend any funds tomorrow.

Mr. Gregory Terrell, the auditor, said that the previous records hadn't been in good order and that the 2013 audit was about eight months late, but for the June 30, 2014 year although the records had to still be reconstructed the auditors finished only a month late. He believes that with the current consistency of the accounting that the library will have no issue being on time for the audit in the current fiscal year.

Mr. Bass was concerned that the original half page budget which was presented just prolonged this meeting and that the public should have had the full version from the start.

Miss Shirley Williams felt the board wasn't working together.

Councilman Holland said that there was public concern that he was at this meeting since citizens had heard that the library might close. He said that even if board members don't get along they should still work together. He also suggested getting board meetings broadcast on TV so the citizens could view it remotely. He proceeded to ask the attorney, Anne Suerunck, who was on the phone, if Trustee Waterman was right and the library wouldn't close or if Chairperson Richardson was right and it would if the budget wasn't passed; the attorney responded that if the budget wasn't passed tonight that the library wouldn't have the authority to spend money, and if the library was open then it would be spending money that it didn't have the authority to spend.

Mrs. Price expressed concern over the board not being united and stressed that a budget needed to be passed tonight for the sake of those who use the library, particularly the children.

B. Eaton, expressed concern that the information provided to the public wasn't enough, that it was still difficult to understand, especially for her younger age group.

Pastor Jackson expressed concern that the library was in jeopardy of closing and wanted a budget passed.

Ms. Miller said that the building has really grown in the last five years and been positive for the community. She wanted the board to come together to a pass a budget.

Ms. Williams expressed similar concerns.

Trustee Waterman addressed the public, stating that a budget would be passed, and the attorney would be present at future meetings to help sort out procedural issues. She also wanted a treasurer's report presented to the board.

President Patrice Waterman questioned why the library board has six members instead of an odd number of members; Anne Seuryck, the attorney responded that there is a law in place that the library is required to have a six member board.

The attorney was asked what would happen in the event of a tie, and she responded that the motion would fail.

Mr. Price asked the attorney about the library being a separate entity from the city and wanted to know if this was caused by the same statute that creates the six person board; Anne Seuryck responded that yes, that was the case and the library board had full authority separate from the city over the budget, property, hiring employees, and other matters.

Ms. Evette Carson wanted to know if the people could have a vote on the budget, and the attorney told her that no they do not get a vote, only the board does.

A motion was made to close the public hearing; Motion: Trustee Allen, seconded, Trustee Waterman; Roll Call; Allen, yes; LeDuff, yes; Jenkins, yes; Waterman, yes; Richardson, yes. Motion carried. The meeting is adjourned.

Submitted, July 2, 2015

Joshua Campeau, Library Assistant, Administration
Pontiac Public Library