

LESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 9, 2021 6:00 PM
Community Room, Lester Public Library, Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Call to Order –President Ned Guyette called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Roll Call – Members Present: Stanley Palmer, Kirsten Sleger, Ned Guyette, David Pennefeather, Larry Thomas, Sharon Sleger, and John Casavant. Absent and excused: Tom Van Horn and Rick Henrickson. Also present: Chris Hamburg, Adult Services Coordinator and Jeff Dawson, Director.

Public Comment – Director Dawson read the following 12 email submissions for public comment:

1). neschuler@hotmail.com
Thu, 04 Feb 2021 8:09:01 AM -0600
"jdawson@lesterlibrary.org" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Please reopen our library! Any risks associated with that are far lower than the damages being caused to our communities and children by not being able to access this important public resource.

Natasha Schuler

2). maiannitello@gmail.com
Thu, 04 Feb 2021 11:38:10 AM -0600
"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Greetings -

I would like for the board to consider reopening the Lester Public Library to the public. As a resident of Manitowoc County, I have enjoyed using the Lester Public Library in the past - It is a beautiful facility and welcoming to the community. It is disappointing that the Library has been closed for almost a year. Other libraries in the area have re-opened and it would be nice to have the library and its resources available to the public again.

Thank you for your time,
Margaret Iannitello
1416 Michigan Ave
Manitowoc WI

3). ambermaebecke@gmail.com
Thu, 04 Feb 2021 12:08:26 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Mr. Dawson,

This is in regards to the extended period of our Two Rivers Lester Library shutdown. I am currently a front line worker in retail and have been working since May. We have plenty of safety practices and policies that have kept us safe.

With that being said it is time for our Lester Library to open! We, the tax payers, want to utilize the resources we pay for. Having a young family, we look forward to library time and the programs that were offered. My parents have a home in Florida and we used their library one month ago.

This pandemic is not going away, it's time to get back to a new normal and open the Lester library under new health and safety practices. If you need any suggestions on the policies and procedures we utilize, I would be delighted to share. My company was just rated #1 for safety protocols on chainstorage.com. This is to be used for public input in the upcoming meetings.

Any questions or comments feel free to reach out

Sincerely,
Amber Gates

4). andreamanke@gmail.com
Thu, 04 Feb 2021 12:11:56 PM -0600
"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

This is a public input for the meeting. I have two sons under the age of three. We miss the library being open for a number of reasons. But most of all we miss story time and all the contest they had going on to win stuff. I understand why you closed and everything. But we need to get things back open. They miss all the youth staff and going to pick out books and movies.

FYI I will not put a mask on my child who is 3. I will wear one.

Thank you for your time.

Andrea Christel

5). bandneard07@yahoo.com
Thu, 04 Feb 2021 1:52:13 PM -0600
"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Public comment on the closure of Lester Public Library

Hello, I wanted to send an email to discuss why I think the Lester Public Library in Two Rivers should be reopened immediately.

My name is Sarah Becker, I am a resident of Two Rivers. I recently moved here in November 2020 from Nebraska, where the libraries were open there. I was shocked to hear the library here was still closed.

I believe the library should be open for many reasons, one it is a warm, indoor, safe place to bring my children where I can utilize all the resources for our homeschool.

Two, my children want to be able to come and browse through books so they can see and choose their own books. Trying to pick out books online, or having one of the staff pick out books for my children, defeats the purpose of the library. Sometimes my kids don't even know what books they want until we get to the library and they start looking through all the wonderful books. Plus having the library open, opens up new learning experiences and new subjects to my children they wouldn't get over the internet.

Third, our tax dollars are paying for this public service and we as tax paying citizens should be allowed to come and use it.

Fourth, many neighboring towns and cities around here have libraries open, but Two Rivers has continued to keep theirs closed.

Fifth, you can't stay closed for forever. By staying closed you are clearly showing that you don't want to open and you are showing the unwillingness to do your jobs. Even schools have been open and have students in their buildings. As a public library, you are supposed to be open to serve the community with the resources you have. And by staying closed, you haven't been serving the community to the fullest of your potential.

I am part of a homeschool group, where all the moms and kids want the library open.

Opening the library will bring some normalcy back to our lives and our children's lives.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Sarah Becker

6). rachelcathcart@gmail.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 12:31:21 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Hello Jeff Dawson,

I am sending an email that I would like to be read during public comments for your meeting on Feb 9th 2021.

Hello my name is Rachel Cathcart. I am a mother of eight children under the age of fifteen. We have missed going to Lester Library. This was a weekly trip for our family, sometimes biweekly. During this time our children would pick books to use for research purposes, night time stories, cooking, crafts and so much more. We also loved the children's program you had weekly. It was an event our younger children loved. While the children's program was going on our older children used this time to play board games, use the computers for learning and also pick books that sparked their interest. We also used the library for many of our home-schooling community classes and events. Unfortunately we have not been able to do this for almost a year now. Other libraries in the state are opening or will be opening this month. I am writing to make sure Lester Library also opens. Children in the community need the library. They learn and grow. It has been a disservice to our children having it closed for so long. Our children enjoy picking their own

books, instead of having someone do it for them. They enjoy being IN PERSON. This has been very difficult for them and also for many parents. It is time to open the library up. Tax payers deserve to use facilities they pay for and children deserve to learn. The CDC has put out science based studies to support the opening of in person learning facilities for children.

Thank you and we look forward to return in person as a family.

-Rachel Cathcart

7). Margaret P. obyrm1@yahoo.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 4:49:08 PM -0600

"jdawson@lesterlibrary.org" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Dear Library Board:

My name is Margaret Pauwels. I am a resident of Manitowoc County. I would like the library building open because my children enjoy picking out books in-person and having access to the restrooms when playing at the park across the parking lot . Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely:

Margaret Pauwels

8). modvlastelica@gmail.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 4:53:10 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Dear Library Board:

My name is Modesty Vlastelica, I am a resident of Manitowoc County. I would like the Lester Public Library building open because it's vital to the residents of Two Rivers and those in surrounding communities. The library has now been closed to the public for nearly a year with no plans to reopen, a plan is now needed to reopen (even more so as the Manitowoc Public library has announced their reopening).

Thank you for your service to our community and thank you for taking the time to read my comment on this matter.

Sincerely,

Modesty Vlastelica

9). cindiashbeck@gmail.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 4:54:22 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Dear Library Board:

Dear Library Board:

My name is Cindi Ashbeck. I am a resident of Manitowoc County. I would like the Lester Public Library building open because My grandchildren and I used to visit the library often. It's not the same. Please open for our sanity. Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Cindi Ashbeck

10). ppat324@gmail.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 5:54:22 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Dear Library Board:

My name is Patricia Pelz. I am a resident of Two Rivers, in Manitowoc County. I would like the Lester Public Library building open because it is so important to those who need the services the library offers. Fax machine, internet for job searches. Reading. . Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely:

Patricia A Pelz

2327 9th ST

Two Rivers, WI 54241

11). tj68redroses@gmail.com

Sat, 06 Feb 2021 8:51:02 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

I'm sending this email to let you know I believe the library needs to be open full time. It should have been open all along. Children need hands on activities and it's even more crucial now.

Thank you, Ms. Roberts

12). lindseymarie87@gmail.com

Tue, 09 Feb 2021 3:49:12 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>

Dear Library Board:

My name is Lindsey Hansen. I am a resident of Manitowoc County. I would like the Lester Public Library building open because kids already have enough stuff taken from them, a library shouldn't be another. We can wear masks everywhere else and it's safe, the library should be the same. My kid loves the library and she wears her mask without fuss. Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely:

Lindsey Hansen

Aaron Hansen

Zoey Hansen

After reading the emails Director Dawson addressed the concerns with the following statement:

Nine of the twelve email statements were received from patrons living outside of our 5,277 Two Rivers registered users and therefore may not be aware of the following information.

No plan for reopening - Yes, we have a two-phase building reopening plan, in place since May, 2020. We are utilizing data from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to monitor both Wisconsin and Manitowoc County COVID-19 data. Here are services not offered in phase one of the building being reopened:

- In-person, group programming.
- Suspend newspapers and not set them out for patron use.
- Public jigsaw puzzles
- Free coffee
- Toys in Youth Services
- Board games
- Meeting room reservations
- Technology assistance, personal computing devices - phones, laptops, tablets, etc.

Phase Two is receiving the 'all clear' from the CDC and/or Wisconsin Department of Health Services and resume normal operating hours and reinstitute all library services. Library staff will revisit and update this plan in light of recent downward trends in the seven day average of new COVID-19 cases.

Other libraries are open – Yes some library buildings are open, (not all) but many have opened/closed and are only offering limited services. Patron and staff safety and consistency of service are the main drivers for the Lester Public Library in providing safe curbside services. We have a small staff, one or two members contracting the virus would cause issues and require us to close, not only in-building services but curbside services as well.

Access to resources - Patrons have access to all library materials through curbside service including tax forms, fax, copy and scan services. Our 'youth to-go programming' reached nearly the same number of patrons as in-house programming did when comparing January 2021 to January 2020. Story Time to-go packs in particular are being accessed by a larger audience than in-person programming. Averaging 70 children and their families compared to 25 when library building was open.

Retail is open- Libraries are cherished as a gathering space vs. "shopping" space. Libraries have always encouraged our patrons to visit, stay, conduct research, and interact with library staff and each other, all at their own pace. Retail encourages short stays; get in, get what you need and get out. There are no chairs, benches or workspaces. We normally encourage patrons to interact and mingle. This behavior is antithetical to stop the spread of a pandemic.

Get back to normal- what does reopening look like? It will be far from normal. As demonstrated in our building reopening plan, phase one will restrict normal library use and that includes wearing face masks and limiting your time in the library.

Tax money - what do we want tax money to be spent on? Cleaning materials or library materials? Plexiglas or innovative programming to meet today's challenges? Security staff to enforce masks rules that protect staff and patrons?

Job search - this is a difficult point because there are people who need this, but we are working towards boosting our Wi-Fi even further into the parking lot and grounds to increase patron access to online job searches and applications. (Obviously everyone who sent the emails has a computer and internet service at home, so while it is important, it shouldn't be an issue for the correspondents.)

Choose our own materials – Yes, there is a joy to discovering a new book or title by browsing the shelves. But until it's safe for you to come and *linger*, we are here to help. We are book experts. Staff understand the joy of discovering new authors you may not have picked up otherwise (especially for children), staff will select materials for adults and children based upon interests given, and will also add a couple of books that you might not normally select. Our library staff shares new materials through paper book browses included with checkouts, online videos, virtual age-specific libraries, shared booklists, and through conversation with patrons who call.

Approval of Minutes – Motion to approve the amended minutes of January 12, 2021 meeting, made by Thomas, second made by Casavant. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Expenditures & Financial Reports – Motion to receive and file the January, 2021 financial reports, made by Palmer, second made by Pennefeather. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Board Member Comment – President Guyette shared how good it is to meet in person once again.

Director's Report – Dawson shared his impressions of the carpet project.

Communications – Herald Times Report article was shared with the Board.

Report from City Council Representative – Two Rivers Youth Sports activities are returning to Two Rivers this summer. Discussed the splash pad/ice rink project.

Report from School District Representative – With Superintendent Lisa Quistorf's upcoming retirement staff is preparing with a survey for the interview process. Staff is required to take a survey on whether they will be getting a vaccine.

Report from County Representative – No Report

Unfinished Business

- A. COVID-19 Strategies – Dawson discussed staff revisiting the building reopening plan in light of recent downward trends in COVID-19 positive cases in Wisconsin.
- B. Motion to approve changes in the Home Delivery policy made by Thomas, second made by Kristen Sleger. Voice vote carried unanimously.

New Business

- A. Motion to approve the library annual report made by Pennefeather, second made by Sharon Sleger. Voice vote carried unanimously.
- B. Pennefeather accepted duties of the nominating committee and will bring a slate of officers forward to a future meeting.
- C. Board of Trustees terms were reviewed.

Board Education – Upon adjournment, the Board toured the library’s new carpet, Thread technology, and new layout.

Closed Executive Session – None

Motion to adjourn made by Kirsten Sleger, second made by Sharon Sleger. Voice vote carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Jeff Dawson, Director