

Library System of Lancaster County
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
November 14, 2002

Present: Pixie Berman, President; Marian R. Gerhart, Vice President; Richard Heilig, Secretary/Treasurer; Nancy Dyrness; Terry L. Kauffman; Terry W. Reber; Paul Thibault, Chairman, Lancaster County Commission; Mary Ellen Pellington, Executive Director; Joseph McIlhenney, Manager, Operations and Consulting Services; Donna J. Westerhoff, Administrative Assistant; Renee M. Christiansen, Youth Services Coordinator; Dzintra Gorman, Manager, Collection Development/Technical Services; Mary Ann Heltshe, Community Relations Coordinator; William Hudson, Manager, Information Technology; Rhonda Kleiman, Business Information Coordinator; Ed Miller, Special Services Coordinator; Steve Schlegel, Training Coordinator; Sandra Dinoff, Director, Strasburg-Heisler Library; Pat Ditzler, LCL Friends; Joe Duff, President, Quarryville Library Board; Betty Duncan, LCL Friends; Bob Ginger, President, Pequea Valley Library Board; Susan Gerhart, Hospice Preferred Choice; Barbara Grater, Board Member, Ephrata Public Library; Ginny McGrath, President, Adamstown Area Library Board; Melanie Muller, Director, Elizabethtown Public Library; Wayne Murphy, President, Lancaster County Library Board; Jennifer Raimo, Director, Ephrata Public Library; Christa Shoreman, Hospice Preferred Choice; Robert Spotts, Vice President, ELANCO Library Board; James Stetina, Executive Director, Lancaster County Library; Bonnie Young, Director, Lititz Public Library.

President Berman read the following to those assembled:

Sometimes in the course of our everyday lives it becomes necessary for people of vision and leadership to stand up and be counted. We do this not because it is easy, but because what needs to be done is difficult, and standing up is the proper thing to do.

In an effort to break the stalemate that exists, someone must be willing to take the first step to end this non-productive process. It is with deep regret, and tremendous sadness, that I inform all of you that effective December 31, 2002, the Library System of Lancaster County, as it currently exists, will disband. The members of this board will resign effective that date.

A letter has gone to the Governor's Advisory Council, asking them to return the District designation to the downtown library effective December 1.

Essential functions and staff, specifically ITS, CDTS and Special Services will be turned over to the downtown library on December 1. All other system positions and functions will be discontinued effective December 31, unless specifically reinstated by the County Commissioners or the board of the downtown library.

The respect and admiration this board has for the member libraries, their directors and their boards knows no bounds. Their work is too important to us to allow this charade of negotiations to continue.

The Executive Director of the Library System, Mary Ellen Pellington, and the System staff, have done an outstanding job of promoting and supporting public

libraries throughout this county. Through their hard work and dedication, EVERY library in Lancaster County has flourished. More progress has been made in the last four years than in the previous forty.

Sadly, this is of little consequence in where we are today.

The state library has worked diligently to impede the progress of the System. This state control has inhibited the progress of all libraries in Lancaster County. The enormous amount of high quality work over these last four years does not appear relevant to anyone at the state. The state has put more effort into maintaining the status quo and undermining the work of the system, than into helping public libraries do the work that needs to be done throughout the Commonwealth.

Added to that are the few in Lancaster County whose vision is not as clear as ours, a few who would also prefer to maintain the status quo. Rather than focusing on quality library service, some have chosen to make this an issue of financial control and financial power – pure politics. That small minority has been able, through political processes and a public voice, to halt all progress for every library.

The Library System of Lancaster County was a very progressive model for libraries and library services in the 21st century. Clearly, Commonwealth Libraries and the board of the downtown library were not ready for this kind of forward thinking.

Motion: It was moved by Terry Kauffman and seconded by Rick Heilig that the Library System of Lancaster County dissolve and all members resign, effective December 31, 2002. Motion carried 6-0.

Public Comment: Ginny McGrath, Chair, System/District Advisory Council and Board President, Adamstown Area Library, officially informed the System Board of the results of its meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 2002, as follows.

The outcome was overwhelming support for the following proposal – twenty (20) for; two (2) against; with two (2) abstentions. The proposal calls for:

1. The resignation of all current members and the appointment of new members to both the Lancaster County Library Board of Directors and the Library System of Lancaster County Board of Directors.
2. The renegotiation of any contracts that exist between the Library System of Lancaster County and the Lancaster County Library and between the Library System of Lancaster County and all the Member Libraries.
3. The District Library Center designation remaining with the Library System of Lancaster County.

Also noted was that the Advisory Council gave a convincing vote of confidence to Executive Director, Mary Ellen Pellington – nineteen (19) for, two (2) against, and three (3) abstentions.

Numerous members of the audience and System staff expressed their concerns

with the above Board decision. Wayne Murphy, President, Lancaster County Library Board, was asked if he and the LCL Board plan to follow the Library System Board of Directors' lead and to resign also. Mr. Murphy stated that he did not see the point in that. Lengthy discussion followed.

Motion: It was moved by Rick Heilig and seconded by Terry Reber that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried 6-0.

These minutes are a true representation of the Library System Regular Board Meeting held on November 14, 2002.

Donna J. Westerhoff, Administrative Assistant