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Orland library trustees vote again on policies

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Orland library trustees vote again on policies

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David Lipowski, Staff Writer

5:04 pm CDT March 24, 2014

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Update: *In the original version of the following story, we incorrectly stated that Kevin Dujan and Megan Fox called for the resignation of Orland Park Public Library Board of Trustees President Nancy Healy. In fact, only Dujan called for a specific resignation, and it was for that of Trustee Diane Jennings. This story has since been updated, but the story already went to print. A correction is to follow in the Thursday, April 3 edition of The Prairie.*

The Orland Park Public Library Board of Trustees kept busy Monday, March 17, at its regular board meeting, working through a three-page agenda. Some of the items — including the appointment of Orland Park resident Dan Drew to the board — were new topics, but a number of items were reappearing from the board's Feb. 12 special meeting.

The reappearance of the items came after the validity the Feb. 12 meeting was challenged, as it was held on Lincoln's Birthday, a state holiday. The board chose to "ratify and confirm" the actions taken Feb. 12 rather than reopen the items entirely.

At the start of the meeting, before voting on the issue, trustee Catherine Lebert asked whether the Feb. 12 meeting should be voided completely. But the library's attorney, Dennis Walsh, advised that this was not necessary.

The most notable of the approved ratifications are the revisions to the library's Electronic Information Networks Policy. Those revisions include an assertion that use "of the Orland Park Public Library wireless access network is entirely at the risk of the user." It does not include, however, the establishment of filters for adult library internet access.

The Orland Park Public Library offers patrons unfiltered access to the internet, and while some board members assert that this unfiltered access is a protection of patron's constitutional rights, other board members have argued that stronger filters would be beneficial.

The board passed the motion Feb. 12 with a 5-2 vote, with trustees Catherine Lebert and Julie Ann Craig voting against the revisions. The board ratified the action on March 17 with a 3-2 vote, with Vice President Denis Ryan absent for the meeting and trustee Mary Ann Ahl having since resigned her post.

Dan Drew was not able to vote, as he had need yet been sworn in as a trustee and had not been present at the February special meeting.

Drew also abstained from voting for another number of items the evening of March 17, citing that, as a new trustee, he did not have the information necessary to make those decisions.

The board has been considering the topic of filters since October, after a patron complained of a pornographic image that was reportedly visible on another patron's computer. The board considered options for filtering the content during previous board meetings, but ultimately decided to keep the internet access unfiltered.

Additional action items requiring reapproval included revisions to the Public Comment Policy, the Patron Behavior Policy and the Study Room Policy, which were approved unanimously at the Feb. 12 meeting. These actions were originally approved on March 17 with a 5-0 vote.

Another item up for ratification and confirmation was approval of the closed session board minutes from Jan. 23, which was approved with four votes in favor and one abstention — Beth Gierach could not vote as she was had not been appointed as a member of the board until Feb. 12. Gierach's election for office of secretary, a new

action item on the March 12 agenda, was approved by a unanimous approval from all six members.

After ratifying the actions taken at the previous meeting, the board began with the new series of action items. This included the appointment and swearing in of a new trustee.

Drew, an Orland Park resident for the past 13 years, was appointed by a unanimous vote to fill the seat left vacant after the resignation of trustee Mary Ann Ahn last month. Another new action item consisted of approving Ahl's resignation and issuing a resolution honoring Ahl's 36 years of service as a library trustee.

Drew, the newly appointed trustee, said that he was excited to join the board.

"I'm [at the library] quite often — sometimes four times a week," he said. "I come here not only when conducting my business but I also bring my four young children."

The board chose Drew from the candidates previously interviewed on Jan. 23 when the board was looking to fill the vacancy from when Carole Hillman resigned last October from the position now held by Gierach.

"The board was advised by our attorneys that they may select from the viable candidates they interviewed on Jan. 23 to replace Ahl at the March 17 meeting," said Bridget Bittman, the library's public information officer. "Therefore, Dan Drew was sworn in as Ahl's replacement on March 17."

Two members of the public, Megan Fox and Kevin Dujan, attended the meeting. Both Fox and Dujan recorded video of the entire meeting — not including closed session — and each spoke for the five minutes they were allowed for public comment. Their comments included calling the Feb. 12 meeting "illegal" and criticizing the board for continuing to allow unfiltered internet access to patrons. Dujan also called for the resignation of Trustee Diane Jennings.

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March 25, 2014 - 1:07pm

The Orland Prairie gets it wrong again. We called for the resignation of Diane Jennings!!!! When will you people get it right? This is just embarrassing for you.

reply

March 27, 2014 - 5:02pm

This story is actually about a lot more than just someone not liking a pornographic image she saw on a screen. The writer of this article really does the community a disservice by stating it like this. That's like saying the story of the Titanic is about a boat that took on some water during its sailing. What the Prairie is not reporting is that child porn was accessed in this library and is still available on its unsecured internet. There was a police investigation into this and the cops determined that the library staff didn't do their duty to stop or call the cops to apprehend the people looking at the child porn. The Library Board has been covering stuff like this up for a long time, going back at least 12 years. The story is that the Board hides the illegal activity going on in this place and attacks its critics who brought it to light. But the media just won't report on this.

reply

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