

Cuyahoga County Public Library
Policy, Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting
Minutes
March 12, 2019
4:30 p.m.
Administrative Building Auditorium

Call to Order

Policy, Planning & External Relations Committee Chair DePiero called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. In attendance were Board President Shlonsky, Trustee Blakemore, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Spangler, and Trustee Varley. Also in attendance were Executive Director Feldman; Deputy Director Strobel; Operations Director and Fiscal Officer Morgan; Communications & External Relations Director Rich, Human Resources Director Sample; Literacy and Learning Division Director Jankowski; Branch Services Director West – Vicchiarelli; Facilities Director Mori; Technical Services Director Barden; IT Director Haprian; Assistant Marketing & Communications Director Rua, Assistant Development Director Marnecheck; Middleburg Heights Branch Manager Monroe; and other interested observers

The minutes of the September 11, 2018 Policy, Planning & External Relations Committee (PPER) Meeting were approved as presented.

Middleburg Heights Branch Plaque

Director Rich stated at our last Board of Trustees meeting a woman who came late to the meeting missed the public comment period and submitted her comments via email and conveyed a message of concern and dismay at the naming rights of the CCPL Middleburg Heights Branch that reflect the gift made by Mayor Starr, given his recent resignation from his position. This has become a topic of conversation in the Middleburg Heights community. Holly Camino, CCPL Middleburg Heights Branch Manager, can speak more specifically of the conversations in the community.

Manager Camino stated in talking to people and informing them the plaque represents the gift that Mayor Starr gave, we understand their concerns. People are commenting and complaining on the plaque at the Middleburg Heights Branch. The following are comments we are hearing from the community: The plaque needs to come down he is not the Mayor anymore; as a criminal it is a disgrace to our community; he didn't pay for the plaque the community did; the plaque is offensive to them; Manager Camino had a resident ask her for a screwdriver to take down the plaque herself; they are disappointed and angry rather he is convicted or not doesn't matter; Women's Club says the plaque needs to come down; Garden Club asked if we could at least cover the plaque up.

Director Rich stated we have the Board approved naming rights policy, and within that policy there is specific language that states the Board reserves the right to terminate or alter naming designation under unusual or extraordinary circumstances. This is specific as the language in the policy gets. It would be a Board determination whether or not the conditions in the environment in the Middleburg Heights Branch stay and the individual who made the gift to rise to the level of unusual or extraordinary circumstances where the Board would want to take some sort of action to revoke or terminate the naming right that is associated with the gift that was named. The individual has not been convicted of any crimes, but there is some public sentiment that we felt needed to be presented for Board conversation.

Board President Shlonsky asked if there are any charges pending against Mayor Starr?

Chairperson DePiero stated there are no charges. He thanked Director Rich, and Branch Manager Camino for the feedback and he think we need to continue to monitor the situation. The City Council had hired an Investigator that wrote a report that was released about two weeks ago. That report may or may not be in the hands of County Prosecutor or a Special Prosecutor. It is Chairperson DePiero's understanding that he did make the gift, and it was not taxpayer money it was personal dollars or campaign dollars. He stated the PPER Committee continue to monitor the public opinion and revisit at the appropriate time if we need to.

Trustee Varley asked did the Friends Group or any one from the Mayor's Administration commented on this situation?

Branch Manager Camino commented that the Friends Group met last week and says the plaque needs to come down. She also met with the Executive Director of Chamber of Commerce and they have the same sentiment the plaque needs to come down.

Circulation Changes

Deputy Strobel stated we are asking the Board to consider a change in the circulation policy for lending digital content. We have seen significant growth in popularity of the resource Hoopla which offers access to streaming music, comic books, movies, and television shows. There has been almost a 16% increase in circulation from 2017 to 2018. With this resource the library is charged "by the circ" for Hoopla which makes it difficult to budget for. We want to encourage this growth but that is daunting when it could result in jeopardizing the bottom line regards to the budget. Our Technical Services Director Barden was able to negotiate a cap on the Hoopla expenditure for 2019 and 2020 with the caveat from Hoopla that we change our borrowing limit from 50 per month per customer to 30 per month per customer as a way of controlling cost. This is still a generous amount with the benefit of allowing the library to depend on a maximum possible expense so that we may budget accordingly. The 30 per month is the limitation most of Hoopla's customers place on their patrons. We are asking the Board to consider this change from 50 per month per customer to 30 per month per customer.

The Committee recommended that the circulation revisions be considered by the full Board with the approved changes.

Deputy Strobel mentioned we would like to take the Board's temperature on the question of adjusting these borrowing policy to allow the Library to tweak the lending parameters of the digital collection in the interest of promoting circulation and/or controlling cost without Board action. How does the Board feel about the Library making these minor tweaks to digital content without Board action? If the Board approves but asked that we bring a revised policy and resolution to the next PPER Committee meeting.

Chairperson DePiero commented the Board will look for the policy revision at the next PPER meeting.

Resolution To Approve Consensual Relationship Agreement and Release Policy

Executive Director Feldman mentioned we had a situation a few years ago where two staff members working in the same department came forward and informed the Executive Director that they had entered a consensual relationship. It was very unusual. I never had a situation like that before and I asked the Human Resources Director to contact an Employment Attorney because the employees had come forward. We had another situation where the employees came forward to Administration so we feel it is recommended at this time to follow this with

policy the major reason we are protecting the Institution through this agreement and the second piece we are reminding staff that when it moves beyond a consensual relationship to a cohabitation relationship it then falls under our nepotism policy they can't work in the same department, but work in the same building. This is overly cumbersome and complicated and invasion of privacy, but we do not ask about consensual relationships, but on occasion people do come to us.

Chairperson DePiero asked do we have a policy on employees dating each other right now?

Executive Director Feldman answered no we do not.

Chairperson DePiero asked if we pass this policy will it require them to notify us?

Director Sample stated we would rather not ask, this is for CCPL's protection. If management becomes aware of it, we will address it, but we are not seeking out relationships or asking the questions of them. However, if Management does become aware, we need to make sure we have a policy in place to protect the organization. Keeping the policy in aware versus seeking out.

Trustee Blakemore commented do we want to solicit that information or do we need a broader policy for those relationships we do not know about or those that do not come forward? How do we address those in consensual relationships?

Executive Director Feldman mentioned that Larry Miller, Human Resources Generalist is working on some updates to the policy.

Trustee Spangler commented at Sherwin Williams this situation is not housed in Human Resources it is housed in Loss Prevention because it is a tool to protect the company and protect the employees. If you are working in the same building or on the same team and if they should become their boss, as an organization we continue to support career growth but will do some rearranging and knowing on the front end will have a better outcome and is helpful to everyone. We do not seek out those relationships. This is a good starting point to move forward.

Trustee Leonard asked if we could tweak the nepotism policy. Whether you are living together or dating.

Executive Director Feldman commented the nepotism policy does say that they cannot work in the same department.

Executive Director Feldman asked if the Board's preference is to hold this until more pieces come together collectively in a more wholistic way. The PPER Committee agreed.

The Committee recommended that the resolution for the consensual relationship agreement and release policy be revised and presented at the next scheduled PPER meeting.

Staff Use of Social Media Policy

Director Sample stated there are a few changes to the social media policy due to a staff member who had overly personal interchange with a customer through social media. Under Section Three in the Social Media Policy bullet points six and seven were added to the policy which reads:

- 6); All communications via social media between staff and customers should be

appropriate and professional and limited to Library-related program, service, and resource promotion.

- 7) An employee may not use social media “direct messaging” or similar tools to communicate with library customers who are minors.

As social media evolves, we are making sure our policy is more directive towards our staff and make sure they aren't doing things that would put us in jeopardy and it talks about the trust that parents place on our staff when they are interact with the children.

Trustee Spangler asked how does the employees know about the policy, how are they educated?

Director Sample stated this is the policy itself, but there is a bigger effort that goes around as our staff more comprehensively interact with customers on social media, we plan to educate our staff. When we release this policy, we will make sure all our employees have it.

Executive Director Feldman commented social media has evolved the way you communicate with the customer through text messaging, but we have not perhaps been most thoughtful about more minors have access to social media we have to educate our staff about private messaging that is now available to minors.

Executive Director Feldman stated we do not want to communicate with children.

Trustee Blakemore asked if there will be a reason for employees to send direct messages to adults?

Executive Director Feldman stated some of our customers are also friends of our staff and it becomes complicated.

Deputy Strobel also commented on Trustee Spangler question how does the employees know about the policy, how are they educated? The day after the Board meeting the Staff Newsletter comes out with any Board action taken at the meeting. This would be the first education piece.

Trustee Leonard asked if we should tweak number seven in the policy to read: An employee may not knowingly use social media “direct messaging” or similar tools to communicate with library customers who are minors. How do you know if they are 92 or 2? If I know if they are minor, I will not do it. If you do not know if it is a minor, do not do it.

Director Sample mentioned our staff is doing a good job of finding different avenues to connect with people there are many platforms; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram they allow you to send messages broadly without it being in a private closed off channel. What we are saying is; do not use the private closed off channels in direct messaging but do encourage folks to broadcast message while using those tools.

Trustee Varley commented you cannot have it both ways you will have a lot of gray areas. Are we trying to regulate people's Face Book accounts?

Executive Director Feldman stated that is why we are stressing the piece around minors it is hard to shut down people's social media.

Trustee Blakemore mentioned he does like Trustee Leonard's idea of adding the word "knowingly". He likes the idea of giving clarity around how it works.

President Shlonsky commented she disagrees with adding the word "knowingly" if you do not know you should not communicate with them and why are they communicating privately anyway?

Trustee Varley says we should not be conducting library business on a private social media account.

Trustee DePiero commented to Director Sample that we need to look at the change and tweak it. We do not agree. Employee shall not communicate with a minor at all. We need more information and education and the policy needs more work.

Trustee Blakemore agree with Trustee Spangler to prohibit everything including smoke signals and that would address the concern and you are not worried about any improper communication.

Executive Director Feldman mentioned its devil's advocate we have increasingly we do not require registration for our youth programs. For instance, children come to a program and then does not come to the next program. The library wants to call to remind kids of the programs and different series. The kids give us their personal cell phone number it gets complicated.

Trustee Varley asked Director Sample why are we doing this?

Director Sample stated to make sure we are staying safe on social media and we are keeping a place of trust the parents have with us as the Library interacts with their children.

Trustee Varley asked how many instances or complaints have we had?

Director Sample stated this came about from a recent investigation where we did have an employee who was found to be interacting in an overly personal way through social media direct messages that we had to act on.

President Shlonsky commented she cannot think of an instance where you would need to communicate through direct messaging, take it out completely.

Director Sample mentioned our next steps are to have our Teen Librarians come talk to us about what methods they currently engaging and communicating with teens to get more context.

Director Strobel commented she would be more interested on how adults are communicating with adults. She asked are we banning it all together or are we allowing adults to communicate directly and not minors? Perhaps I would direct message my neighbor about a WCS author coming? This could be a reason for direct messaging.

Director Rich commented the library social media platforms that are staffed by our employees we will receive direct messages from something we post on Twitter and DM and our customers respond, that is cool, can we get more information? Where do I go to register? and our staff respond to those.

Trustee Blakemore asked do you know how old that person is?

Director Rich stated not always but when it is those kind of direct interactions at the library platform that is the we can convey information.

Trustee Blakemore asked if staff responds and the person is sixteen have, they violated this policy?

Director Rich commented that is why it is tricky because we rely on social media from a communication standpoint to connect.

Trustee Blakemore commented there would be some situations where people are getting direct messaging from somebody, go see this and they have violated the policy.

Director Rich commented we need to specify an employee may not use their personal social media handles for direct messaging. Any time a staff is communicating or responding with direct messaging it is from the library platform.

Trustee DePiero asked Director Sample and his team to tighten up this policy. We cannot prevent every situation.

The Policy, Planning & External Relations Committee recommended that the use of the Social Media Policy be reviewed and presented at the next scheduled PPER meeting.

Adjourn

Seeing no additional business before the Policy, Planning and External Relations Committee, Trustee and Committee Chairperson DePiero adjourned the meeting at 5:19 p.m.