

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

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**Call to Order** –President Ned Guyette called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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

**Public Comment** – In attendance for the meeting Dan and Barbara Kanera; wanted to know the library reopening plans. The Library Board thanked both Dan and Barbara for their interest and attending the meeting.

Director Dawson read the following 10 email submissions for public comment:

1). Tue, 09 Feb 2021 6:14:17 PM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>, "guyettened" <guyettened@gmail.com>,  
"Kirsten.Sleger" <Kirsten.Sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us>, "rickhenrickson"  
<rickhenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us>, "dappy66" <dappy66@yahoo.com>, "slaptastic79"  
<slaptastic79@hotmail.com>, "sharon.sleger" <sharon.sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us>, "spalmer"  
<spalmer@uta.edu>, "jcasavant" <jcasavant@two-rivers.org>, "6308vat"  
<6308vat@gmail.com>  
"jimmyjoe4" <jimmyjoe4@juno.com>

Dear Library Board:

My name is James Harris. I am a resident of Manitowoc County. I would like the Lester Public Library building open because I and my son are avid readers. 1) we brouse. 2) we need access indoors as we are homeschooling family whom does not read from screens as we rarely use screen time due to headaches, possible eyesight depletion onset, and addiction to it is not in our best interest nor our family values. It is not possible for us to browse online. It is to my understanding yous have updated the library with new carpeting which is nice to have utilized downtime to do. Please email me back with any obstacles you see to fulfilling my request. Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely:

James Harris

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2). bcarsok@gmail.com

Wed, 10 Feb 2021 9:28:02 AM -0600

"jdawson" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>, "guyettened" <guyettened@gmail.com>,  
"Kirsten.Sleger" <Kirsten.Sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us>, "rickhenrickson"  
<rickhenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us>, "dappy66" <dappy66@yahoo.com>, "slaptastic79"  
<slaptastic79@hotmail.com>, "sharon.sleger" <sharon.sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us>, "spalmer"

<spalmer@uta.edu>, "jcasavant" <jcasavant@two-rivers.org>, "6308vat" <6308vat@gmail.com>

Good Morning

I am a resident of the Town of Two Rivers. I would like to know what the plan is for reopening the Lester Library? We are now approaching 11 months of closure. I noticed that it was not even on the agenda for your meeting last night.

I currently know of 2 elderly friends that are driving to Green Bay or Kiel to use their facility. With nearly every single business in our county operating safely, I see absolutely no reason why our citizens cannot enter the building unless you believe that masks and social distancing do not work. I would personally be available to teach every one of you how to do this.

Please let us know what your plans are.

Regards,  
Brad Carsok

**From:** Brad Carsok <[bcarsok@gmail.com](mailto:bcarsok@gmail.com)>

**Date:** March 3, 2021 at 3:02:33 PM CST

**To:** guyettened <[guyettened@gmail.com](mailto:guyettened@gmail.com)>, "Kirsten.Sleger" <[Kirsten.Sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us](mailto:Kirsten.Sleger@trschoools.k12.wi.us)>, rickhenrickson <[rickhenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us](mailto:rickhenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us)>, dappy66 <[dappy66@yahoo.com](mailto:dappy66@yahoo.com)>, slaptastic79 <[slaptastic79@hotmail.com](mailto:slaptastic79@hotmail.com)>, spalmer <[spalmer@uta.edu](mailto:spalmer@uta.edu)>, jcasavant <[jcasavant@two-rivers.org](mailto:jcasavant@two-rivers.org)>, 6308vat <[6308vat@gmail.com](mailto:6308vat@gmail.com)>, sharonsleger <[sharonsleger@gmail.com](mailto:sharonsleger@gmail.com)>

**Cc:** [gbuckley@two-rivers.org](mailto:gbuckley@two-rivers.org), [awachowski@two-rivers.org](mailto:awachowski@two-rivers.org), [jremiker@two-rivers.org](mailto:jremiker@two-rivers.org), [bshimulunas@two-rivers.org](mailto:bshimulunas@two-rivers.org), [bleclair@two-rivers.org](mailto:bleclair@two-rivers.org), [mbittner@two-rivers.org](mailto:mbittner@two-rivers.org), [kkoach@two-rivers.org](mailto:kkoach@two-rivers.org), [dleclair@two-rivers.org](mailto:dleclair@two-rivers.org), [candrews@two-rivers.org](mailto:candrews@two-rivers.org)

**Subject:** Library board meeting - 3/9/21

**To Mr. Wachowski:** Thank you for representing the citizens of Two Rivers and patrons of the Lester library so well. You are exactly correct about the need to defund or simply shut down our closed library. You are a true asset to our community and I would like to sincerely thank you for your continued outstanding service.

**To the TR City council members (excluding Mr. Buckley):**

Where is your voice about this? After watching the video of the 3/1 meeting, I did not hear one word from any of you. Your silence was deafening. Do you not even have an opinion? Shame on every single of you. The current director has no intention whatsoever of reopening it anytime soon. As employers are no longer requiring testing, he will never acquire the positivity rate he is seeking. The taxpayers should not have to continue to pay for a closed building, period. Prior to the reopening of the Manitowoc library we have had patrons traveling to Green Bay or Kiel to use their library. I strongly recommend that the library gets either defunded TODAY, or just shut it down. **To the Lester**

**Library Board:** This is my 3rd email to every one of you with not one response. Instead I just received the canned reply from the director that he just read to the city council. What is wrong with you? I can bet most of you go to work and shop for groceries and haven't locked yourself in a closet. Do you not believe that following the CDC's recommended protocol works? Your website shows 17 employees. I would have to believe that if 2 got sick (the director's number, not mine), the library could still manage to stay open. Start doing your job. I see that the meeting agenda for 3/9/21 has not yet been posted. Perhaps after you praise yourselves on the new carpet and the WiFi booster (for people that cannot afford a laptop to sit in your parking lot with) that we taxpayers have paid for, you could decide to either reopen the building or just shut it down

Brad Carsok

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3). ---- On Fri, 12 Feb 2021 09:00:23 -0600 Margaret P. <[obytml@yahoo.com](mailto:obytml@yahoo.com)> wrote ----

Dear Supervisor Henrickson and Director Dawson:

First thank you for your service to our community and the Lester Public Library. As a Manitowoc County resident, I have enjoyed the library for several years. If the library building is safe enough for you to have a Board of Trustees meeting inside the building, it is safe enough for me to go and choose a book with my preschooler. I request you immediately and fully open the building. Thank you.

Margaret Pauwels

Margaret Pauwels' Lester Public Library Board Public Input March 9th meeting

Margaret P. <[obytml@yahoo.com](mailto:obytml@yahoo.com)> Tue, 09 Mar 2021 1:25:19 PM -0600

"jdawson" [jdawson@lesterlibrary.org](mailto:jdawson@lesterlibrary.org) "Rick Henrickson" [RickHenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us](mailto:RickHenrickson@co.manitowoc.wi.us)

Dear Jeff,

I appreciate you taking the time to answer my questions and your presentation at the City Council meeting last week. Below is my public input for tonight's meeting. Thank you for including it.

I, Margaret Pauwels, a resident of Manitowoc County, am giving public input for two reasons. First, I would like to sincerely thank you for your serving on the Lester Public Library Board. Second, I am concern about the ongoing closure of the Lester Public Library building. Weekly, at times during the year, my children and I used the Lester Public Library and the playground across the parking lot. We would like to again have access to the library building.

On Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, you, the Lester Public Library Board, met in the library at the invitation of the library director. When I contacted the director to see why I still was not allowed to enter the library with my toddler to choose a board book and a meeting could be conducted there, I was told, "In terms of safety, being able to control a Library Trustee meeting is very different from opening our doors to the public and the Lester Public Library has a small staff.

Honestly, I was not at all satisfied with that response so did some research.

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Wisconsin libraries file a PI-2401 with the DPI. This form states how many people work at the library among other pieces of information. I requested this form from 24 library directors in Manitowoc, Kewaunee, Brown, and Sheboygan counties.

Out of the 24 libraries I contacted only one director emailed back stating the building was closed, Chilton Public Library, although that library had reopened for a time. Page 10 of the PI-2401 states how many Full-Time Equivalent staff members a library has. I reviewed many of the forms the directors sent me. Between 3 and 4 full time staff equivalents was common. Kohler Public Library is open with a staff of 2.6. Lester Public Library is not open with a staff of 11.42.

I would sincerely appreciate you working with the Lester Public Library Director and staff to get the library building open. Kohler should not be better than Two Rivers. County and city parents depend on Lester Public Library and the playground to help with their children's academic and social development. If you absolutely will not open the library, please at least open the restrooms. This is essential for playground visits with a toilet training toddler.

Thank you again for taking your time to serve the Lester Public Library and any action you are willing to take on this important matter.

Sincerely:  
Margaret Pauwels County of Manitowoc Resident

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4). ROBIN WALTERS <d.r.walters@comcast.net>  
Mon, 22 Feb 2021 7:26:26 PM -0600  
"jdawson@lesterlibrary.org" <jdawson@lesterlibrary.org>  
Hello:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on this important event scheduled for March 1st. I am not a resident of Two Rivers but feel compelled to provide input. For close to 11 years I worked as a pharmacist at The Medicine Shoppe. Honestly, those were the best years of my personal and professional life. The community welcomed me with open arms and I was afforded many opportunities to develop relationships and "network" within the community. One person who I grew to cherish and respect was the late George Lester. He was a man of great integrity and a person who always had a kind word and smile on his face. He was what we call a "the salt of the earth" person. He was a successful man and blessed in many ways. One of those blessings was the use of financial resources to leave a legacy for future generations. The fact that he understood and valued education and life long learning was one reason why the Library was expanded and now sits where it does. "Sits" is the operative word.

As I understand the current situation, the library has been closed since the events of early 2020, known as the Covid Pandemic, took place. While people have differing opinions of the ongoing pandemic, the response to the pandemic has been a subject of debate.

Many families rely on the public library for access to computers and other valuable resources. Homeschooling families and the elderly in particular rely on the library system on a regular basis. The ongoing shutdown places students at a disadvantage. The ongoing shutdown perpetuates this dilemma with no clear path in site. While the library has been closed, many

others have remained open. I can travel to other cities and states where libraries are open. I can purchase books at stores such as Barnes and Noble and Half Priced Books.

The time to open and return to business is now. Everyday the library remains closed is another day of missed opportunities to serve the community. In the end what it comes down to is how people manage gifts that have been entrusted to them. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, Mr. Lester left a gift to the community. The gift was to be managed and shepherded for the good of the people. Finding a balance between meeting the needs of the public while managing and mitigating health risks is something that others have already figured out and have implemented. I sincerely hope that others share my views and that you will respect all input. In the end, it is my hope along with others that the library will reopen soon.

Thank you for your time in allowing me to address this issue.

Sincerely and Respectively,

Dan Walters

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5). From: Julie Rosado <[julierosado57@gmail.com](mailto:julierosado57@gmail.com)>

Date: February 25, 2021 at 1:03:55 PM CST

To: [slaptastic79@hotmail.com](mailto:slaptastic79@hotmail.com)

Subject: Two Rivers library

Please reopen the Two Rivers library, I miss going there & looking & going online to access certain things on the computer.

I also miss the people who I would interact with & who has helped me, young & old to find things at the library.

Sincerely

Julie A Rosado

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6). On Mon, Feb 22, 2021 at 2:41 PM Katreena Powell <[knowa295@gmail.com](mailto:knowa295@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Hello Bonnie, [sent to City Council member Bonnie Shimulunas]

My name is Katreena Powell and I have been a citizen of Two Rivers for basically all of my life. I am writing this email to share my thoughts and concerns regarding the closed library building in Two Rivers. I would attend the council meeting, but it is at a very hard time for me and my family with small children.

We are so fortunate to have one of the best library's around right in our small town. When I went to college in Steven's Point I realized just how lucky we are. Their space was a fraction of the size (even though the town is way bigger) with very limited programming and kids space.

I have heard numerous answers as to why our library building still isn't open after almost a full year. One of the reasons I keep hearing is that there is a staff shortage/funding shortage. I just want to say, as a citizen of Two Rivers and a parent to two children who used the library all the time, we need to give them whatever money or staff they need to open the doors to our

community. It is my understanding that the city council is responsible for 80% of the funds for the library and I just want to voice my opinion that we need to find a way to get the doors open. Our community is better with our Library open and fully functioning! Clearly they were open before Covid-19 and if funds were for some reason taken away from them to put towards something else we need to find somewhere else to take money from.

In regards to Covid... I realize in the beginning we didn't know much and it was a good idea to close down, but at this point basically everything, including the Manitowoc Library, is open. I am not sure why we can't just wear masks and safety go inside like we do everywhere else? I don't see any good reason for our library to be closed as far as covid goes at this point. All of our surrounding libraries have found ways to open safely so there should be a way we can too.

I realize that they are doing the curbside service, but that doesn't work well for young kids, who are some of the main patron's of the library. I have a newborn and a 2 1/2 year old. We attended the Babygarden programming and lots of other events held by the library. My 2 year old doesn't know what books she wants, we make the decisions when we go in and see the books. The socialization offered at the library is also so valuable, especially in the winter when there is nothing to do! The library is a free and accessible option for so many families. It has been really hard as a parent not having this amazing resource to utilize for the last year. I have tried to do some of the story time "to go" resources, but they are always gone by the time we have a chance to stop. We did the virtual summer reading program, but we couldn't even get our book prizes since they wouldn't let us inside to pick out our books. What fun is that? Many parents are also frustrated that there are no public bathrooms available at the public park by the library because with young children, who are potty training, that is pretty essential to being able to go out to the park. I am sure many of the people making decisions about the Library probably don't have young children so I just want to point these things out and let you know just how much parents with young kids rely on the library as a resource and safe space for their children. The curbside can work well for adults who know what books they want (heck I have used it for myself), but this is not a good option for the young people in our community.

There are also many resources the library offers for people with no access to internet and a computer for job searching and other important services that can't be done when the doors are closed.

We have some amazing children's librarians and an amazing library, it is time to make opening the library a priority. We need a plan and an opening date set in place asap, a year has been long enough without our open library building.

Thank you for your time,

Katreena

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7). For Public Input To Open Library

[jmh0815@hotmail.com](mailto:jmh0815@hotmail.com)

Tue, 02 Mar 2021 7:01:55 PM -0600

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

Dear Mr. Dawson,

This email is for public input for the March 9th meeting, to open the Lester Library. I will be out of state and in a different time zone on that date, otherwise I would participate via other options set up for public input.

Before addressing opening the library building, I want to compliment the staff who directly provide the curbside service. These associates are appreciated as they are always cheerful and helpful over the phone and at curbside, providing excellent service to all patrons.

Over the past year businesses and organizations have been creative to implement measures to continue serving their patrons. It's our choice whether or not to enter any building or facility open to the public. While the curbside pickup is a successful option, the issue is denying entry to very people who fund the library and are denied the full services the library offers. There is no reason the Lester Library building should remain closed when other libraries are open, having managed whatever challenges are at hand, and planning accordingly.

As director it would seem you would open the building using successful measures used by all the open libraries. It's long past time to look beyond a few selective statistics and look at all the data that provides a larger picture, revealing there is no reason for the Lester Library building to be closed.

Sincerely, Julie Hart Two Rivers

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8).

**Adam Wachowski** <awachowski@two-rivers.org>

Tue, Mar 2, 2021 at 9:31 AM

To: "Dawson, Jeff" <Jefdaw@two-rivers.org>, Greg Buckley <grebuc@two-rivers.org>, Curt Andrews <candrews@two-rivers.org>

Hi Jeff,

First off I wanted to tell you last night but it got really late, I enjoy the beautiful pictures you have displayed at Wiggly Wiggly, absolutely beautiful!!

As it pertains to the library, as you can tell I'm extremely passionate about getting the library open as are numerous citizens. My intention was NOT to be cocky or to take lightly your process of reopening the library. I had questions and ideas I wanted to speak on. I would truly and I hope you can take another look at your opening plan and get guidance/guidelines from the school system and other library's that are open. Listed below are some options I thought of that you could possibly take into consideration to jump start the opening process.

1. Allow for 15-25% occupancy face masks required, if you have a health issue preventing that you may use the curbside service.
2. Limit in person hours. Say 10-noon and 3-5.
3. Have a certain number of people allowed in, guest have to reserve a day and time on a schedule.
4. In person service only on 2 or 3 days a week.

Those are some ideas to help jump start the open process but yet keep mitigation and staff safe. I hope you can consider 1 of the ideas above or combine all of them just to at least show progress in the right direction. I like the library as do others. I understand where they come from when they say it's been closed for a year but yet their taxes didnt go down. We have a high cost of living in TR with taxes, utilities and fees. Some people accept those because of exceptional

services such as the library, then when its closed for a year, I can and do understand there frustration.

I believe (and its certainly a complement to you and your staff) that the library is a HUGE asset that many people enjoy. Its run well which attracts alot of users.

I also dont want you to think that I am against you or the library by any comments made. That simply isnt true. The work done at the library is exceptional. We are are all best and we serve best to the citizens when we work together. Please take the above into consideration.

Enjoy the day  
Adam

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9). kwolf2@hotmail.com

Mon, 08 Mar 2021 10:31:03 AM -0600

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

Dear Jeff,

I do believe it is time to fully open the library to the public. It's been a year and I work in retail this whole time and we are open. There is no reason you should be keeping the library closed. Open it up for gods sakes this is rediculous. I am a Two Rivers resident and I pay my taxes and use this library when its open so I expect it to be open. Do something about it please. Thank You, Kim Wolf

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10). Public Input for Tonight's Board Meeting

Margaret Iannitello [maiannitello@gmail.com](mailto:maiannitello@gmail.com)

Tue, 09 Mar 2021 10:47:23 AM -0600

"jdawson" [jdawson@lesterlibrary.org](mailto:jdawson@lesterlibrary.org)

Greetings -

As a resident of Manitowoc County, I am requesting for the Lester Public Library to re-open. According to the Manitowoc County Website, the seven day average of new cases is 3. If it is safe enough for people to go the grocery store or dine inside, based on their OWN preferences, it is safe enough for the library to open on the limited basis discussed in the COVID 19 Reopen plan.

Thank you for your time. Margaret Iannitello, Manitowoc WI

**Approval of Minutes** – Motion to approve the minutes of February 9, 2021 meeting, made by Thomas, second made by Sharon Sleger. Voice vote carried unanimously.

**Expenditures & Financial Reports** – Motion to receive and file the February, 2021 financial reports, made by Thomas, second made by Van Horn. Voice vote carried unanimously.

**Board Member Comment** – Van Horn noted the number of emails sent for public comment calling for the library building to reopen, 20 emails over the past eleven months, is very low compared to 5,277 Lester Public Library registered card holders (0.4%).

**Director's Report** – Dawson answered questions regarding his written report.



**Communications – None**

**Report from City Council Representative – No Report**

**Report from School District Representative** – The search committee for the opening created for Superintendent Lisa Quistorf’s upcoming retirement is working on parameters for the search. Since March first, over 100 district staff has received at least the first dose of the vaccine. Staff are featuring everyday heroes, by dressing up as nurses, firefighters, police, etc.

**Report from County Representative – No Report**

### **Unfinished Business**

- A. Motion – Barring a surge in COVID-19 cases, the Lester Public Library will reopen the building utilizing the parameters from phase one of the building reopening plan Monday, May 3, 2021 made by Van Horn, second made by Thomas. Voice vote carried unanimously. Library staff will place the reopening information on the library website, Facebook (and other social media outlets), and Herald Times Reporter to communicate this decision to the public.
- B. Dawson presented the final version of the approved 2020 Annual Report.

### **New Business**

- A. Dawson presented the 2020 end of year financial reports for review.
- B. Pennefeather brought a slate of officers forward, Thomas as president and Pennefeather as vice president. The board will vote on the slate at the April 2021 meeting.

**Board Education – None**

**Closed Executive Session** – President Guyette read the Wisconsin Statutes s. 19.85(1)(c) allowing closed session when the employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee under the jurisdiction of the particular government body is being considered. Mr. Guyette stated the reason the Closed Session is in regards to the Library Director’s annual review. He then opened the floor for a motion to enter into Closed Session. Motion made by Kirsten Sleger to enter into Closed Session, second made by Pennefeather. Roll Call Vote: Sharon Sleger – Aye; Larry Thomas – Aye; Kirsten Sleger – Aye; Ned Guyette – Aye; David Pennefeather; Tom Van Horn – Aye; Stanley Palmer - Aye. Motion carried. The Board of Trustees entered into Closed Session at 8:39 PM.

At 8:49 PM, a motion to reconvene in Open Session was made by Thomas, second made by Palmer. Voice vote carried six aye votes with one nay vote (Van Horn).

Motion to adjourn made by Kirsten Sleger, second made by Palmer. Voice vote carried six aye votes with one nay vote (Van Horn). Meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Jeff Dawson, Director