

**Building & Grounds Committee Minutes**  
**November 6, 2024**

1. *Call to Order:* Frances Beadle called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m. Mike Blaum was appointed as minute taker for the meeting.
2. *Roll Call:* Beadle called roll. Present were Maria Rector, Frances Beadle and Mike Blaum. Absent were Sandra Schultz, Jenna Diedrich and Rachel Lenstra
3. *Public Comments:* Peggy Stortz thanked the committee for its work and spoke about her concern that digitization has not been done for a year. She also spoke about what she believes are the technology needs of the historical room and mentioned that she believes the post office would like to rent the library the top floor of the building for \$1 a year. She stated she could write the library grants to cover the cost of an ADA elevator for the building.

Tim Doser spoke about digitization. He believes there is enough money allocated to digitize most of the weekly Gazettes. He discussed the timeline for digitization from Crowley to University of Illinois (UIUC) and asked for statistics on use and the number of users on the Illinois Digital Newspaper Collection website. He also spoke about parking at the library, particularly on weekends, when he believes there are cars in the lot that are not using the library.

4. *Approval of May 14, 2024 minutes:* Rector moved to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2024 Building & Grounds Committee meeting. Beadle seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
5. *Newspaper Digitization Project:* Blaum asked for a motion for discussion and possible action. Rector moved. Beadle stated she didn't believe that was necessary for committee meetings because committees don't make decisions but rather recommendations. Beadle seconded the motion. Blaum discussed the scope of work Diedrich gave the committee. He believes it's very similar to the scope the board saw in January. He also believes the May minutes indicate there is no need to wait on (UIUC) and the documents are deteriorating. Discussion was had about seeking other digitization vendors. Discussion was had about money from the Galena Foundation and the belief that matching funds had been lost and that the Foundation could award the project money to another organization. Blaum asked about how the budget works and whether unspent money budgeted for a project rolls over for the next year. Beadle stated that that is now how the budget is currently set up. She stated that there are other ways to set up a budget and that she believes we do not have to be as rigid as the library is with its budget. She said the library may get questioned on the audit, but we would not get sanctioned.

Blaum listed what he thought were the "why nots" for pushing ahead with a more aggressive digitization schedule: we have one vendor, no one can pack the items up and the backlog at UIUC. Discussion was had about finding other vendors, reassigning staff to pack up materials and solving the backlog at UIUC by using the cloud to transfer files. Beadle suggested having another meeting before bringing the topic to the board so that Sandra Schultz can be involved. It was decided to come up with a timeline for the start of the project at the next meeting, with metrics

along the way to ensure the project is on schedule and adjust if it is not. Blaum stated he will alert the board to expect such a timeline at the December meeting in his president's report at the November full board meeting.

It was agreed that the main points for the recommendation will include getting bids from companies other than Crowley, a schedule with accountability and more routine meetings for the committee to complement the schedule, securing Galena Foundation commitment for 2025 and transferring files to the library and UIUC using the cloud.

Since there was no vote, Beadle withdrew her motion regarding digitization.

6. *Landscaping*: Blaum stated that since money was put into the beautification of the building, he believes the library should put more money into beautifying the landscaping around the building. His understanding is that the current landscaping project will take two to three years to complete. He suggested bidding it out to landscapers to accelerate the process. If the bids come back too expensive, the library will at least have explored the option. He stated that no action was needed on this but that the Building and Grounds Committee chair could reach out to contractors or have Diedrich do it. Beadle stated she doesn't want a savanna in front of the library because it is a historic building in a historic town. She suggested finding someone who does historic landscaping. Discussion was had about looking at how landscaping was done in old photos of the building. Blaum stressed that he wants bids for all four sides of the building, not just the front.
7. *Future Building Needs*: Blaum brought up technology needs in the historical room. Beadle stated that she thinks the room needs to be cleaned and a row of computers for public use put in it. She said that the post office second floor is an interesting idea, but she doesn't believe it satisfies the library's needs. She suggested moving the circulating collection and children's programming somewhere more accessible, like the old I Do Bridal building by Piggly-Wiggly. Discussion was had about how there was more parking and youth could walk there after school or with their classes for visits. Beadle said the current library building could be used for adult programming and housing the historical collection. Discussion was had about the inconvenience of parking and the current location for many locals. The storefront next to the Pig is a leasing situation. Discussion was had on how another location would necessitate hiring more staff. The committee did not think that would be an insurmountable problem. Discussion was had about square footage and who owned the strip mall. Beadle stated it was a group out of New Jersey.  
  
Blaum brought up the time capsule in the library building's cornerstone. He is interested in opening it as part of 2026 Bicentennial activities and having children make a new capsule to put in its place. He stated that the issue was removing the front of the cornerstone to extract the time capsule. He believes this could be overcome by removing the side of the cornerstone instead. He would like the library to check with a contractor on feasibility. Discussion was had about how to involve youth in the community in the project, if it's feasible.
8. *Items for Next Agenda*: The same items from this agenda will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Schutlz will determine a time for the next committee meeting, to be held before the December board meeting.

9. *Adjournment:* Beadle adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted (minutes based on recording),

Rachel Lenstra  
Youth Services Librarian