

February 13, 2019

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

CALL TO ORDER

Diana Hunter, Vice President/President Emerita, called the meeting to order at 6:31p.m.

Members present: Diana Hunter, Vice President/President Emerita; Mira Barbir; Susan Greer; Eugene Griffin; Jonathan H. Maks, MD; and Richard Kong, Director.

Staff present: Laura McGrath, Deputy Director; Katy Jacob, Adult Services Intern

Members absent: Mark Prosperi, President; Karen Parrilli, Secretary

Observer present: Floyd Payne

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

Mr. Payne had questions about the plans to renovate the library, specifically the computer area. He had concerns regarding privacy when using the computers. Mr. Kong thanked him for his comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF

January 9, 2019

Mr. Griffin made a motion, seconded by Dr. Maks to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 9, 2019, subject to additions and/or corrections. There being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved unanimously and placed on file. The vote was 5 ayes and 0 nays.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Renovation Update

Though smaller changes to the schematic design are still being made, architect Andrew Berman submitted the schematic drawings and consultant reports so that Shales McNutt can create a revised cost estimate for the entire project. This cost estimate should be ready by mid-February. Berman and his associates are beginning their work on the design development phase, which will include furniture, finishes, etc. We are further along with the layout of specific collections throughout the 1st and 2nd floors, and expect that to be finalized soon. Both Berman and Shales McNutt will be back in the building on February 19-20 to review the revised cost estimate and discuss the next phase of planning. We are still on schedule to begin construction in January 2020. A side note: Andrew Berman's work on the MCC Theater in New York was recently featured in the New York Times (<https://nyti.ms/2t6Vipl>).

### Strategic Planning Update

The core committee held its third meeting last month. The group heard from data analyst Devan Parkison and Village planning supervisor Steve Marciani. The discussion focused on identifying the differences and similarities between the various regions of Skokie, both in terms of demographics and library use. In addition, five subcommittees, chaired by members of the core committee and made up of staff from various departments, began their work this past month. Each received an aspirational statement with which they will center their exploration and recommendations, all culminating with written reports and presentations in March. The February core committee meeting provided an opportunity for discussions with close to thirty different leaders from the community, including Mayor Van Dusen, Village Manager John Lockerby, and representatives from local school districts, the park district, and many local organizations and community groups.

Mr. Griffin commented that the presentation by Mr. Marciani at the strategic planning core committee meeting in January was very interesting. He also commented on the strong relationships and trust between the various community leaders who participated in the February strategic planning meeting. Mr. Kong plans to bring the final strategic plan to the Board in May for approval.

### Martin Rising: Requiem for a King

As previously shared, the library and its partners (The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center and Northlight Theatre) received a \$10,000 grant from the Skokie Community Foundation to adapt and perform a play that focuses on a message of social inclusion. A production based on Andrea Davis Pinkney's *Martin Rising: Requiem for a King* will be performed by local teens on February 23 (Skokie Public Library) and 24 (Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center). Board members are invited to attend one or both of the performances.

### Bookmobile Garage and Office Assessment

Mr. Kong is working with staff to assess the environmental conditions within the bookmobile garage and office area. The library is waiting to receive test results back, and has already begun working with a consultant to prepare for the strong possibility that a new exhaust extraction system, custom fit to our 2016 bookmobile, will be needed. While the testing and potential modifications are being completed, the bookmobile may be occasionally parked in the outdoor Park District property on Frontage Road. Mr. Kong will provide updates to the Board in the upcoming months.

### Emergency Closings

Due to extreme temperatures and weather conditions, Mr. Kong made the decision to close the library on January 30 and open late at 1pm on January 31. Though most of the library was closed, the library was able to staff a portion of the east side of the building as a warming center.

### 2018 Skokie Citizen Survey Results

The results from the 2018 Skokie Citizen Survey are available on the Village's website. The survey was conducted by the National Research Center last summer, and was sent to 1,600 randomly selected homes in Skokie. Residents also had the option to complete the survey online. Responses

were favorable, with a high percentage of respondents (82%) reporting use of the library.

### Net Promoter Score

In January, Communications and Multimedia Engagement staff posted a Net Promoter survey on the library's website, asking people how likely they are to recommend the library to a friend on a scale of 1-5. We received 60 responses in a short period, with fifty-seven 5s, two 4s, and a single 1. Many of the respondents added some kind comments about the library's services and staff.

### Policy Revisions

Mr. Kong is currently working with colleagues on three different policy revisions, including the Borrowing Policy, Personnel Code, and the Meeting Room Policy. We are continuing to gather information about how other libraries have handled the elimination of some or all overdue fines. The Personnel Code, last updated in late 2017, will largely remain untouched, though Mr. Kong will suggest some clarifying language about how the library handles pay during emergency closings. The Meeting Room Policy has not been revised in years, so Mr. Kong will review that in full.

### Staff Day

Staff Day, held on January 17, was a big success. Mr. Kong started the day by giving a slide presentation about the history of the library, and connecting it to our present and future. During the rest of the day, staff heard about various aspects of the Village from its community partners, participated in a strategic planning exercise, received an update about the renovation plans, and spent time in the afternoon focusing on celebrating each other and team building. Special thanks to Learning and Development Coordinator, Leah White, for organizing the day, and to Trustee Mira Barbir for attending.

Ms. Barbir praised the day and enjoyed seeing the staff's enthusiasm. She felt it was a very uplifting experience. Mr. Griffin asked about the possibility of Mr. Kong giving his presentation regarding the history of the library to the Board.

### Library Trustee Forum Workshops

Illinois Library Association (ILA) is hosting its annual trustee workshops on March 9 in Springfield and March 16 in Oak Brook. These workshops provide library trustees training on the role of a trustee and some issues presently affecting libraries. If trustees are interested in attending, they are to let Monica know.

Dr. Maks expressed interest in attending on March 16.

### BILLS

Dr. Maks raised a question regarding the length of the parking lease with St. Paul Lutheran Church. Mr. Kong will review the contract.

Ms. Barbir asked a clarifying question regarding the purchase of AEDs for the library.

A motion was made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Ms. Greer:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
APPROVE THE BILLS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

The roll call vote for approval was 5 ayes and 0 nays; the motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statement; Circulation Report; Dashboard; Reports from Department Heads; Gifts; Personnel)

Mr. Griffin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barbir:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
APPROVE THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT,  
AND THAT THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BE  
PLACED ON FILE:

1. CIRCULATION REPORT
2. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS
3. GIFTS: \$18.00 FROM BARBARA KEER IN MEMORY OF BRENDA WEISS
4. PERSONNEL: HIRE: MICHELLE ABRAHAM, PART-TIME CUSTOMER SERVICES ASSISTANT, CUSTOMER SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 2019; TERMINATIONS: CHRIS AUMAN, FULL-TIME CONTENT STRATEGY SPECIALIST, COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 2019; SARAH MITCHELL-MACE, PART-TIME PROGRAM ASSISTANT, LEARNING EXPERIENCES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2, 2019; ROGER MORALES, PART-TIME REFERENCE LIBRARIAN, ADULT SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2, 2019; PROMOTIONS: NEIL DUCKLOW, PART-TIME INFORMATION SPECIALIST, ADULT SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 28, 2019; PERRY NELSON, PART-TIME INFORMATION SPECIALIST, ADULT SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 31, 2019; RETIREMENT: EILEEN COULOMBE, FULL-TIME CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER, EFFECTIVE MARCH 15, 2019.

The motion passed unanimously. There were 5 ayes and 0 nays.

#### PROJECTED FY 2019-2020 BUDGET

Last month, Mr. Kong presented the Board with a first look at the projected operating budget for FY 2019-2020. No changes were made to the projected budget from last month. He will provide another revision of the projected budget in March, and will ask the Board to approve the final budget in April.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has issued final figures for 2018 for wages and salaries for state and local government workers and the increase for the year is 2.4%. The salary line as proposed allows for a combined merit and cost of labor increase of 3.1% for staff who are eligible.

During the March Board meeting, Mr. Kong will provide the Board a recommendation for a revised salary scale based on the salary benchmarking provided by HR Source. Part of this discussion will be a recommendation for the Board to consider a cost of labor and merit increase for staff. This will allow the final proposed budget to be presented to the Board in April.

Approval of the budget is not required until April.

Mr. Kong noted the change of the name of the Reception and Entertainment budget line to Reception and Meetings to better reflect the use of that budget line.

The Board noted the projected budget and had no further comment.

#### APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF INN-REACH

The library's subscription to INN-Reach is up for renewal and we would like to renew for one year effective February 1, 2019.

INN-Reach is a resource sharing software provided by Innovative Interfaces and allows the library to participate in LINKin (a group of standalone public libraries in Illinois which includes Arlington Heights, Elmhurst, Naperville and six others). Because of this shared software, requests for items are filled at least three times as quickly as traditional interlibrary loan.

Currently, the full LINKin catalog includes 2,074,716 titles with 733,314 of those items unique to individual libraries. This fiscal year the library has averaged nearly 2200 LINKin transactions per month. It is a valuable service that is well-used and well-liked by patrons, and its ease of use improves the way patrons are able to access materials.

Mr. Kong recommends that the Board approve a one-year renewal of INN-Reach for \$26,927.40.

Dr. Maks asked if each library participating pays the same amount for the service and Mr. Kong confirmed that they do. He also asked about the difference between the LINKin and RAILS delivery system. Mr. Kong explained that RAILS is funded by the state; the library does not pay for their services. He explained that part of their service is to provide the delivery mechanism for the inter-library loan systems. The LINKin software allows the library to create its own smaller inter-library loan system that gets materials to patrons faster and more efficiently.

The Board asked if Mr. Kong feels that the system is a good value for the money, and Mr. Kong confirmed that it is.

A motion was made by Dr. Maks, seconded by Ms. Greer:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
APPROVE A ONE-YEAR RENEWAL OF THE INN-REACH SERVICE  
FOR \$26,927.40.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 5 ayes and 0 nays.

#### UPDATE OF ANTICIPATED CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Board has asked for an updated list of potential, upcoming capital projects every six months. Since the capital asset study includes a fuller picture of what capital improvements are needed over the long run, Mr. Kong provided the Board with a list of completed projects from the past few years, as well as anticipated and in-progress projects for the remainder of the current fiscal year and the next couple of years.

The new task chairs for staff and the IT upgrades (i.e., network infrastructure and storage upgrades) were the major projects completed this fiscal year. There were also some repairs to the roof. In the remaining few months of the fiscal year, it is anticipated that there will be some repairs to one of the cooling towers and the brick wall along the south courtyard. The library is also looking into installing a new exhaust extraction system in the bookmobile garage.

A number of larger projects related to the interior spaces and courtyards are not listed because they will be folded into the renovation project beginning in early 2020. Looking ahead to 2020-2022, both the lower roof and upper roof will need to be replaced. In addition, the library may consider a major repaving project for the parking lot and driveways once the renovation project is completed.

Another updated list of anticipated capital projects will be provided in August 2019 as the Board considers the 2019 tax levy. The complete capital asset study is available through the Board's Dropbox, and can be viewed at any time.

No board action is needed at this time. This update is for informational and planning purposes only.

Ms. Barbir asked about the potential replacement of the upper and lower roofs. Mr. Kong briefly summarized the plans for the roof work and the timeline in relation to the renovation project. He mentioned that he has been in conversations with Shales McNutt to get their opinions on the best timing for the project. He explained that the warranty for the roofs will be ending soon but it does not mean that the roof project has to be done at that point if the roof is still in safe condition.

Dr. Maks asked about the timing of the computer replacements given the renovation project. He was concerned about the dust and the potential problems that could cause. The plan right now is to introduce the new computers as new spaces are opened up to avoid any issues.

Ms. Greer asked about how the library is planning on preparing the community and the library's

users about the renovation project, the changes, and potential closing of areas of the library. Mr. Kong explained that he has been talking to staff including the Communications and Multimedia Engagement department about considerations that need to be made.

## SUMMARY OF STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Deputy director Laura McGrath presented a summary of the recent staff engagement survey. Beginning 6 months post-realignment (July 2014) and then continuing annually each January, the library has invited all staff to participate in a survey designed to elicit feedback about their work and about the overall culture and work environment at the library. Since 2014 the survey results have improved in 25 of the 26 categories (in 8 of the categories we have seen an increase of more than 25 points).

This year 116 staff completed the survey (down slightly from the 123 staff who responded to the survey in 2018). The overall survey results were very similar to last year with an overall rate of staff engagement of 84% (up slightly from 81% last year). Staff continue to feel involved in and focused on their work (93% responded that they either agree or strongly agree with this statement) and enjoy their work (92%). They also understand how their work contributes to the library's goals (97%) and feel that the library positively affects people in the Skokie community (98%). They feel they have a good working relationship with their co-workers (97%), that staff take the initiative to help each other when the need arises (90%), and that staff treat each other with respect (97%). And almost all staff (92%) feel that the library is dedicated to diversity and inclusiveness for staff.

Areas which showed a 5 point or more increase over last year's survey include:

- I am satisfied with my overall job security (79%, up from 70% in 2018)
- I am satisfied with the culture of my department (86%, up from 80% in 2018)
- I have taken steps to improve the culture of the library (79%, up from 73% in 2018)
- Staff adapt well to difficult situations (87%, up from 82% in 2018)
- Staff effectively identify future challenges and opportunities (84%, up from 78% in 2018)
- Staff willingly accept change (78%, up from 63% in 2018)
- Managers and supervisors recognize strong job performance (81%, up from 74% in 2018)
- There is trust between my department's managers/supervisors and staff (84%, up from 75% in 2018)
- Staff treat each other with respect (97%, up from 91% in 2018)

Only 1 area showed a decline of 5 or more points:

- My supervisors and I have a good working relationship (88%, down from 95% in 2018)

Areas which continue to present the most opportunity for growth include:

- Communication between departments and teams is good (52%)
- Teamwork between departments and teams is good (62%)

It is interesting to note that staff feel that communication within their department is good (81%) but also feel that communication and teamwork between departments is an area for growth. One of the reasons the percentages are low for these areas is that many staff selected “neutral/neither agree nor disagree.” For the question about communication between departments only 13 staff selected disagree or strongly disagree out of 116 respondents. And for the question about teamwork, only 4 staff marked disagree or disagree strongly. The high number of neutral responses may reflect the fact that for some staff their job doesn’t require or involve much communication or collaboration with other departments (shelving, for example) so they didn’t have an opinion. This is an area that the management team will continue to dig into and focus on improving.

The Board was provided with the complete survey results from 2014-2019.

Dr. Maks asked about past action plans regarding communication between teams and departments. Ms. McGrath went over some of the changes to the way information is circulated among staff and communication between departments is happening.

Mr. Griffin asked if the quarterly reports are shared with staff. Ms. McGrath said that they are. Mr. Kong mentioned the possibility of posting the quarterly reports somewhere in the building for staff to review. Ms. Barbir suggested sharing periodic updates with staff and Mr. Kong explained that the library does this with weekly updates from the management team meeting. There was brief discussion among the Board about how many staff members are reading the information posted and emailed around.

#### REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

The following are highlights from the January 18, 2019, RAILS Board of Directors meeting’s supporting documents and recorded videoconference.

**Financial Report:** Mr. Kregor reported that the unassigned General Fund total cash and investment balance ending December 31, 2018, increased from the November balance to \$12,600,000, due to receipt of two Area and Per Capita grant payments. He stated that RAILS received \$1,763,444.49 from the FY2019 APC grant, and \$2,145,000 from the FY2018 APC grant, with \$3,217,500 remaining for the 2018 fiscal year. December’s balance would cover 13 months of operation.

**Executive Director’s Report:** Deirdre Brennan updated the Board on a change to the Strategic Plan. A revised document was distributed, describing the 2019 project: *Helping RAILS Libraries Tell Their Stories / Prove Their Value Campaign*.

The Executive Director also provided and discussed an extensive report on the history and the RAILS plan for providing library services to the unserved. She spoke to the challenges library directors face within their community or county of their citizens not having access to libraries, whether the library is public or academic.

**Continuation of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Discussion:** Richard Kong, Executive Director of Skokie Public Library, was invited by Deirdre Brennan to address the RAILS Board to

share the process and progress of EDI training at the Skokie Public Library, both in-house and within the community. He explained that beginning about three years ago staff started having conversations, which resulted in forming an EDI Committee and hiring a consultant to guide staff in this area. A question and answer period followed. From this, Mr. Kong described the challenges and successes that library staff have experienced.

Next meeting: Friday, February 22, 2019, at Burr Ridge Service Center. (Note: There will be no written RAILS report for the March 13 meeting, as Mrs. Parrilli will be out of town.)

#### COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

Ms. Barbir mentioned Eileen Coulombe's retirement. She asked what the plans are for her successor. Ms. McGrath is working on the job description as she will be the hiring manager. Ms. Coulombe will be at the Board meeting in March.

Ms. Barbir also noted the legislative update in the Trustee folders regarding the potential increase of the minimum wage. Mr. Kong indicated that this would be discussed further next month with the discussion regarding the salary scale and staff salary increases.

Mr. Griffin asked about potential state funds available for capital improvement projects that was discussed in a meeting with Senator Villivalam. Mr. Kong indicated that he and his colleagues would investigate further to see if the library would be eligible for possible funding.

Mr. Payne left the meeting at 7:41 pm.

At 7:43 a motion was made by Dr. Maks seconded by Ms. Barbir to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

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Karen Parrilli, Secretary