

March 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, March 13, 2019.

CALL TO ORDER

Mark Prosperi, President, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Members present: Mark Prosperi, President; Mira Barbir; Susan Greer; Eugene Griffin; Jonathan H. Maks, MD; and Richard Kong, Director.

Staff present: Eileen Coulombe, Customer Services Manager; Beth Dostert, Human Resources Manager; Laura McGrath, Deputy Director; Blythe Trilling, Finance Director

Members absent: Diana Hunter, Vice President/President Emerita; Karen Parrilli, Secretary

Others present: Josh Campanelli, Shales McNutt Construction

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no observers present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF February 13, 2019

Dr. Maks made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barbir to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 13, 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

Andrew Berman Architect (ABA) and Shales McNutt (SMC) visited the library for meetings with staff on February 19-20. They reviewed revised cost estimates for the entire project, which Josh Campanelli from SMC presented in more detail during the Board meeting. During the visit, Neil Donnelly, a graphic designer who has worked previously with ABA, joined the conversation to begin a discussion about the graphic design elements of the project, including signage considerations. ABA will now proceed with the design development phase, while both ABA and SMC will continue to work on finding cost effective alternatives for some of the construction elements of the project. ABA will be in attendance at the April Board meeting to provide a thorough update of the renovation plans and talk about the next phase.

Strategic Planning Update

The core committee will meet on March 15 to receive and review the findings and recommendations of the five subcommittees. In March and April, the committee will start to identify the most

important goals for the next three years. A draft of the written strategic plan will be presented to the Board in May.

Computer Donations

The IT department recently worked with Community Engagement staff to donate several Apple iMac desktop computers to three different community agencies, including the Talking Farm, the Niles Township Community Closet, and the Niles Township Food Pantry. These computers, originally purchased in 2011, were no longer used by the library. Instead of recycling them, we were able to extend their use.

Bookmobile Garage and Office Assessment

As discussed last month, the library hired an environmental consultant to provide diesel particulate matter (DPM) dust and air sampling services for the bookmobile, bookmobile garage, and the bookmobile office. Based on the results, the environmental consultant determined that airborne DPM was not present in these areas at the time the samples were collected, and that there is no significant, identifiable risk to human health by DPM in these areas. The library will still move forward with the installation of a new exhaust extraction system, custom fit to our 2016 bookmobile.

National Library Week

This year National Library Week will be celebrated on April 7-13, 2019. Across the country, libraries and their communities will celebrate all types of libraries and promote library use and support. In addition to some special programs and activities, the library will be mailing friendly, colorful postcards to Skokie households without a library card, encouraging them to stop in to get their library card and learn more about the library.

ILA Legislative Breakfast

The annual ILA (Illinois Library Association) Legislative Breakfast, held on Presidents' Day each year, was a success. Local elected officials including Laura Fine and Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz attended the event, and Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky was represented by her District Director Leslie Combs. The library is strengthening its relationships with many of our local elected officials on the state and federal level. Several of them are interested in working with the library on some programming that would be of interest to local residents and the establishment of a regular state services table to connect with local constituents at the library.

Jarrett Dapier – Library Journal Mover & Shaker

Young Adult Librarian Jarrett Dapier was recently honored as one of this year's *Library Journal* Movers & Shakers. Jarrett was recognized for his work producing theatrical productions starring local teens. His latest production was a stage adaption of Andrea Davis Pinkney's book *Martin Rising: Requiem for a King*. This production was made possible by the Skokie Community Foundation, and the library collaborated with Northlight Theater and the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center.

Mr. Griffin spoke about how wonderful the play turned out.

BILLS

Mr. Griffin raised a question about the research budget line. Mr. Kong explained the difference between Research and Learning in the budget. Ms. Barbir asked for clarification about the payment schedule for Andrew Berman Architect. Ms. Greer asked for clarification for a restaurant receipt.

A motion was made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Dr. Maks:

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 Statements; Circulation Report; Reports from Department Heads; Gifts; Personnel)

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

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: \$50.00 FROM NURBEK SAGYNBAEV IN GRATITUDE FOR THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LIBRARY; \$500 FROM HUNTINGTON LEARNING CENTER IN SUPPORT OF SUMMER READING; \$2500 FROM NORTSHORE UNIVERSITY HEALTHSYSTEM IN SUPPORT OF SUMMER READING.
4. PERSONNEL: HIRE: FARIHA MANGRIO, PART-TIME MATERIALS PAGE, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 27, 2019

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

RENOVATION UPDATE

Josh Campanelli from Shales McNutt Construction provided an update on the construction cost estimates. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Campanelli left the meeting at 7:13 pm.

APPROVAL OF REVISED BORROWING POLICY

Customer Services Manager, Eileen Coulombe, and Deputy Director, Laura McGrath, gave a presentation to the Board regarding the revised Borrowing Policy.

The current borrowing policy, approved in January 2018, consolidated a number of separate policies and practices. Building on the 2018 changes, the following two minor changes to the borrowing policy were proposed:

- A clarification that fee cards are only available to Chicago residents, not to reciprocal borrowers within the RAILS service area. This will align the library with RAILS policy.
- The addition of a sentence in the section about damaged items which states, “The library is not responsible for any damage to patron’s personal equipment, such as DVD players, through the use of library materials.”

In addition to these minor changes, the revision provided to the Board included wording that explains the library will not charge overdue fines for materials in our youth collection. Charges for lost or damaged items would still be assessed and cards with youth materials more than three weeks overdue would be blocked from checking out any more library materials until items are either renewed or returned. Existing overdue fines at the date the revised policy takes effect would be waived but charges for lost and damaged items would remain on patron cards.

There are a number of compelling reasons to make this change including:

- Affirming the library’s commitment to its core service value of pursuing access and equity. Research shows that library fines have a disproportionate negative impact on families with low incomes. Eliminating overdue fines for youth materials will open the door to greater access to our materials for those who cannot afford to pay overdue fines.
- Strengthening the library’s focus on early literacy and the desire to remove barriers to connecting children and library resources.
- Demonstrating the library’s desire to have more positive interactions with its youngest users, their caregivers, and families in the community, in order to help encourage them to be lifelong users of the library.

Ms. McGrath and Ms. Coulombe examined the potential financial impact this change in policy would have, and determined that the elimination of fines on youth materials will result in a reduction of revenue of less than \$14,000 per year, which is 0.1% of the operating budget.

They recommended that the Board approve the revised borrowing policy.

Ms. Barbir raised some clarifying questions regarding timeframes for blocking of cards and billing for lost items, and rates of return for items checked out. Dr. Maks asked a clarifying question regarding the materials that this policy will apply to. Ms. McGrath confirmed that it would only apply to youth materials (jr high age and younger).

Ms. Barbir asked about the message to the public when the policy gets implemented. She also asked that data be provided to the Board regarding the results of this new policy.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APPROVE THE REVISED BORROWING POLICY AS PRESENTED.

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

Ms. Coulombe left the meeting at 7:28 pm.

APPROVAL OF HVAC PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE PROPOSAL

Last year, the library issued an RFP (request for proposals) for preventative maintenance (PM) on its HVAC systems, and Mr. Kong recommended a one-year agreement with Atomatic Mechanical Services (the lowest bidder) at a total annual cost of \$14,976 with the understanding that there would be an option for a multi-year agreement if we were pleased with their services. The Board approved this one-year agreement, and Tim Murphy, Building Services and Safety Manager, and Mr. Kong have been pleased with the mechanics from Atomatic Mechanical.

A proposal to extend the library's agreement with Atomatic Mechanical for three years was provided to the Board. The costs would be as follows: \$13,944 for the first year, \$14,136 for the second year, and \$14,328 for the third year. The agreement would cover preventative maintenance on the library's air-handling units, boilers, chillers, cooling towers, exhaust fans, pumps, and other related equipment.

If the library enters into an agreement with Atomatic Mechanical, we would continue to work with our primary and secondary assigned mechanics, as well as their contacts for service dispatch, service management, and billing.

Mr. Kong recommended Board approval of the three-year agreement from Atomatic Mechanical Services to provide preventative maintenance for the library's HVAC systems at a total cost of \$42,408.

A motion was made by Ms. Barbir, seconded by Ms. Greer:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APPROVE THE HVAC PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE PROPOSAL
AT A TOTAL COST OF \$42,408 OVER THREE YEARS.

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

APPROVAL OF PATRON POINT RENEWAL

Last year, the Board approved a proposal to renew the library's Patron Point Subscription for one year at a cost of \$13,500. This decision came after the terms and conditions were significantly revised to ease concerns about the use of the library's data. The Board also agreed to continue only the two email programs that were already established (i.e., the "New Titles" emails" and the "New

Patron Welcome” emails). It was agreed that both would continue to be completely opt-in for patrons who wanted to participate.

The “New Titles” program now reaches 5,010 subscribers per month, and has an impressive email open rate of 46% and an “unsubscribe” rate of 0.2%, indicating high satisfaction with the program. The “New Patron Welcome” program has an open rate of 38% and an “unsubscribe” rate of 0.3%. More than 900 emails are sent to participants each month.

The proposal provided to the Board was for a one-year renewal of the Patron Point Subscription at a cost of \$13,500. The one-year term would begin on May 1, 2019 and end on April 30, 2020. The terms and conditions remain the same from the revised language approved by the Board last year.

Also provided was a Letter of Extension that would extend the Service Agreement that is currently in effect for one month, ending April 30, 2019. Offered to the library at no extra cost, this one-month extension would allow us to align our service term to our fiscal year.

Mr. Kong recommended that the Board approve the Letter of Extension and the Service Agreement to renew the library’s Patron Point Subscription for one year at a cost of \$13,500.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE LETTER OF EXTENSION AND SERVICE AGREEMENT TO RENEW THE LIBRARY’S PATRON POINT SUBSCRIPTION FOR ONE YEAR AT A COST OF \$13,500.

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

ADOPTION OF REVISED PERSONNEL CODE

In October 2017, the Board adopted a significantly revised Personnel Code. A few months later in January 2018, because of new state legislation at the time, the Board adopted another slightly revised version of the Personnel Code. The Personnel Code contains policies and information related to the library’s expectations for its employees, so it is good practice to periodically review and revise it.

Thomas Garretson, one of the library’s attorneys at Robbins Schwartz, reviewed the revision provided to the Board and provided feedback. This revision contains minor edits to the current Personnel Code, but also includes two additions worth mentioning.

The first addition is Section 3.5.5, which provides language about how the library will handle employee pay for situations in which the library is closed for emergencies. The library has rarely closed due to weather conditions in the past, but when it has, it has been the practice to not pay non-exempt employees for their scheduled time. Rather, the opportunity to “make up” their lost hours has

been offered when possible. This addition to the Personnel Code makes it clear that the library would pay employees who are scheduled, but excused from work due to an emergency closing, for their scheduled time. This is more consistent with how many local public libraries handle emergency closings.

The second addition is Section 7.5, which addresses changes recently made to the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act, mandating employer reimbursement for certain expenses incurred by employees. Though the state's Department of Labor has not provided clear guidance on how this amendment will be interpreted, the library's attorneys drafted some language to help protect the library from any claims for reimbursement that were not actually authorized.

Mr. Kong recommended adoption of the revised Personnel Code.

There was discussion among the Board about how frequently the library has closed in the past due to emergency closings, and what is anticipated for the future.

Mr. Griffin recommended that the library implement child welfare checks along with criminal background checks for staff, both current and future. The Board suggested that this be brought to the library's attorneys and language be drafted to add this to the personnel policy. The amended version can be brought to the Board at a future meeting for approval.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
 ADOPT THE REVISED PERSONNEL CODE AS PRESENTED.

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

Mr. Griffin asked the Board to consider retroactively paying non-exempt staff for the two days that the library opened late due to weather. The Board unanimously agreed to do so and Mr. Kong will make the executive decision and work with Ms. Trilling to make the adjustments to employee pay.

APPROVAL OF NEW SALARY SCALE AND WAGE ADJUSTMENTS

Last fall, HR Source (formerly Management Association of Illinois or MAI) began working with the library on a market benchmarking and pay (i.e., compensation) structure analysis project. The purpose of the project *internally* was to ensure that the library's positions are valued appropriately in relation to one another within the organization. The purpose of the project *externally* was to ensure that the library's pay rates are comparable to the going rates offered by its local market competitors, though the Board's policy is to provide competitive salaries and benefits at the top quartile of the market.

The benchmarking analysis was developed using compensation data from the following surveys:

- A. Management Association 2018 Library Survey
- B. HR Source 2019 Non-Profit Survey
- C. Management Association 2018 Metro Chicago Compensation Survey

- D. Economic Research Institute (ERI)
- E. LACONI 2018 Compensation Survey

Using job descriptions for a broad array of positions at the library, HR Source benchmarked positions to the surveys. Library-specific jobs were only benchmarked to library data. Jobs that extend beyond the library industry were benchmarked to the different aforementioned surveys using a weighted system. Compensation data from the surveys was adjusted to May 1, 2019.

The project was also designed to develop a custom competitive pay structure for the library. With the assistance of HR Manager Beth Dostert, Finance Manager Blythe Trilling, and Deputy Director Laura McGrath, Mr. Kong examined the suggested pay structure and determined that some adjustments were needed.

- In 2014, the Board approved a 12% increase on top of the structure suggested by MAI in order to account for the library's compensation policy and its desire to pay above local market competitors. After examining this year's suggested structure with a 12% increase, Mr. Kong determined a 7% increase would be more reasonable. A 7% increase will keep the library's structure consistent with the natural growth it has seen with cost of labor increases approved by the Board over the past four years.
- In 2014, to minimize the change in the number of pay grades between the library's former pay structure and the new 2014 structure, a decision was made to insert an extra pay grade (i.e., a half-step between grades 7 and 8 on the MAI structure in 2014). A decision was also made to compress the ranges between grades 9 and 10 on the new pay structure. These adjustments led to the positions in grades 7 and 8, and grades 9 and 10, respectively to fall too closely to each other on our structure. At this point, it would be best to retain the same number of pay grades in our new structure, while re-establishing equidistant pay grades. In the proposed new structure (attached), each pay grade between grades 1-7 (non-exempt positions) is 15% apart, while each pay grade between grades 7-13 is 12% apart. This re-establishes more of an even separation between positions and pay grades throughout the structure.

The proposed new salary scale was provided to the Board, showing the minimum, midpoint, and maximum for each pay range. The current pay scale was also provided to make it easier to compare the two.

To implement the new scale starting in May 2019 when the new fiscal year begins, adjustments need to be made for some staff who are currently below what would be their new minimum. The cost of making these adjustments would be approximately \$12,500 total for one year. Adjustments would also need to be made for other staff in order to maintain internal equity, and these adjustments would total approximately \$10,000 for one year. Therefore, the total adjustments needed to implement the new pay scale would be approximately \$22,500 for one year. In 2014, the implementation cost for the new pay scale totaled approximately \$87,000.

For most staff who are not receiving a special adjustment, and who are not at or above the top of their new range, a 1% cost of labor adjustment would cost approximately \$56,000 total in the next fiscal year. No employee's pay would be reduced if the new salary scale were adopted.

Last year, most eligible staff received a 2.1% cost of labor adjustment and a 1.0% merit increase at the time of their annual review for a total increase of 3.1%. Total increases before that were 3.6% in

2017, 3.3% in 2016, 3.6% in 2015, and 3.1% in both 2014 and 2013.

Year	Cost of Labor Adjustment	Merit Increase	Total Increase for Year
2018	2.1%	1.0%	3.1%
2017	2.1%	1.5%	3.6%
2016	1.8%	1.5%	3.3%
2015	1.6%	2%	3.6%
2014	1.1%	2%	3.1%
2013	1.1%	2%	3.1%

For this year, Mr. Kong recommended a 2.1% merit increase for eligible staff, plus a 1% cost of labor increase for those who will not receive a special adjustment with the introduction of the new scale on May 1, 2019. The total increase for those receiving both the merit and cost of labor increases would be 3.1% for the year, which is the same as last year. Libraries differ in how they handle cost of labor adjustments and merit increases, but most of the larger libraries in our area provided about a 3% increase for staff in the past year.

Mr. Kong recommended the following:

- That the Board adopt the new proposed salary scale as presented, effective May 1, 2019.
- That the Board approve a 1% cost of labor increase for staff who are not receiving a special adjustment, and are not at or above the top of their new range, effective May 1, 2019.
- That the Board approve a 2.1% merit increase for all eligible staff who meet or exceed expectations at the time of their annual performance review within FY 2019-2020, and are not at or above the top of their new range.

The new scale and the wage adjustments will allow us to continue to have an internally equitable and externally competitive compensation structure that will enable the library to recruit and retain a diverse staff of highly proficient and qualified employees.

Action on both the new proposed pay scale, as well as the cost of labor adjustment and merit increase was requested.

Ms. Barbir asked a clarifying question regarding how this is done in the non-profit sector versus the for-profit, especially with regards to the merit based increase. She also asked for more information with regards to the benefits also being offered to employees as an additional incentive for attracting top talent on top of salary. Mr. Kong clarified that our benefits package was not part of the analysis done by HR Source, but when compared to other libraries, the package is comparable.

Mr. Griffin asked for Ms. Dostert's perspective on the proposed changes.

Ms. Greer asked about whether the library can afford the changes and Mr. Kong assured the Board that it is budgeted for.

Ms. Barbir asked for assurance that the analysis done was appropriate and that it aligns with the Board and library's values around recruitment and retention of staff.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE NEW SALARY SCALE AND WAGE ADJUSTMENTS AS PRESENTED.

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

PROJECTED FY 2019-2020 BUDGET

In January, 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 in the second look presented in February.

The only changes in the projected operating budget provided to the Board this month were related to the reduction in anticipated fines revenue by \$15,000 because of the major change reflected in the proposed borrowing policy on the agenda, and a slight reduction in the projected Salaries line to bring the Capital line to an even \$550,000. When the Board approved the long-term capital asset study/plan, it was determined that the target budget for Capital projects each year would be \$550,000, if possible. The amount shown in the Salaries line would still be sufficient to cover the implementation of the new salary scale and the recommended wage adjustments (i.e., 2.1% merit increase for all eligible staff and 1% cost of labor adjustment for eligible staff whose pay is not adjusted for the new scale).

Mr. Kong will provide a final recommendation and ask the Board to approve the final operating budget in April.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

There were no comments from trustees.

At 8:41 p.m. a motion was made by Ms. Greer, seconded by Mr. Griffin to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen Parrilli, Secretary