

April 14, 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held virtually via Zoom, Wednesday, April 14, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER

Mark Prosperi, President, called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Members present: Mark Prosperi, President; Gene Griffin, Vice President; Shabnam Mahmood, Secretary; Mira Barbir; Michelle Mallari; Magnolia Rivera-Pulex; Noreen Winningham

Staff present: Richard Kong, Director; Laura McGrath, Deputy Director; Blythe Trilling, Finance Manager; Monica Chavez, Administrative Assistant to the Director

Observers present: Nancy Kim Phillips; Amy Koester; Ly Nguyen; Veena Villivalam; Allyson Coan; Holly Jin; Mandy O'Brien; Lorrie Pomian Fisher; Sue Teller; Beth Dostert

Guests present: Julian Prendi, Director of Finance, Village of Skokie; Andrew Berman, Andrew Berman Architect; Josh Campanelli, Shales McNutt Construction

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no comments from observers.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR AND CLOSED MEETINGS OF MARCH 10, 2021

Mr. Griffin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barbir to approve the minutes of the regular meeting and amended minutes of the closed session of March 10, 2021. A roll call vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously and placed on file. The vote was 7 ayes and 0 nays.

PRESENTATION FROM JULIAN PRENDI REGARDING PENSION LIABILITY

Julian Prendi, Finance Manager for the Village of Skokie, presented to the Board regarding the Village and library's pension liability and how that is reflected on Skokie property tax bills.

Mr. Prendi left the meeting at 7:00 pm.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Written report provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

COVID-19 Reopening Update

I am pleased to report that all of the staff who expressed interest in receiving a COVID vaccination through our coordination efforts with the Village have received one. We also received some vaccinations through Erie Family Health Center, and some staff were able to secure vaccinations on their own. Of course, with the recent uptick in COVID numbers recently in Illinois and Cook County, we still want to be cautious and maintain safety measures such as requiring masks, social distancing, and limiting certain services throughout the building.

Shelving, signage, custom millwork, and furniture have all been installed for Phase 3 (youth area and east side) of the renovation, and the collections that were in storage or temporarily located elsewhere in the library have been placed on the new shelving. Staff have worked diligently to prepare our new youth area and east side of the first floor for the public, and we are ready to expand in-person browsing on Monday, April 12. At this time, we will be adding a significant amount of square footage for public use, and this will allow us to increase the number of patrons allowed in the library at any given time and the time allowed per visit. We will still be on the conservative side of capacity and time limits compared to some other local libraries, but I feel that it is best to be cautious and observe how patrons use our newly renovated areas before expanding services further. Just as Governor Pritzker announced a “Bridge to Phase 5” plan for Restore Illinois, we are working on creating a plan to transition between Stages D and E of our COVID Reopening Plan.

Hopefully we will see local COVID numbers improve soon as more people in the community receive vaccinations, and that will mean “dialing up” our level of services and operations. According to the April 6, 2021 SkokieNews email, Skokie's current positivity rate is 2.71 percent, down from 4.30 percent last week. In addition, 45% of Skokie's total population, 58% of residents age 18 and above, and 84% of residents age 65 and above have received at least one dose of vaccine.

Renovation Update

Major construction aspects of the renovation project are essentially completed, and Shales McNutt Construction (SMC) will no longer have a daily presence on site. Some remaining work will be completed over the next month or so as we wait for parts. Andrew Berman Architect (ABA) made two visits in the past month and identified some smaller changes that they would like to see in the youth area and east side of the first floor. This includes possible lighting enhancements and shelving adjustments. We also need to wait for some remaining landscaping work that will be taken care of after the weather gets warmer. Door operators for the first floor restrooms, which will offer greater accessibility, are also expected in the next month as we are waiting for some hardware. SMC will try to group the remaining work together so that there will be minimal disturbance to public services and library operations, and they will be on-site to manage the work as needed.

We are also working with local artist Jay Ryan, who designed the wrap for the bookmobile in 2016, on a design for the dome ceiling in the storytime room. The combination of lights and the design Mr. Ryan is working on will present our youth librarians with a wide array of “scenes” for kids and their families attending programs in the room.

The renovation will be completed under budget, even with the aforementioned work expected over the next month. Final closeout documents, including a budget summary, will be shared by SMC after the project is totally completed. ABA and SMC can provide a final presentation to the Board as we close out the project.

Financial Outlook for FY 2020-2021

Note: An update will be provided each month through FY 2021

The projected balance sheet for the current fiscal year is presented this month, and finance manager Blythe Trilling and I expect to end the fiscal year with an excess of revenues over expenditures. We will provide an update next month and in June. Of course, we are still on track to meet our unofficial reduced (by 10%) spending target this fiscal year.

All COVID-related reimbursements submitted thus far have been received. This includes \$20,043.47 submitted through the Village of Skokie (CARES Act Funding), \$500.00 from the LSTA Cares Act Grant, and \$5000.00 from Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity's Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). These funds provide reimbursements for items such as facemasks, acrylic safety shields for public service desks, and cleaning products.

Spring real estate tax collections are at \$5,648,959 as of the end of March. This is 77.63% of what we budgeted for. As a comparison, at a similar point in the fall, we had received 78.21%, so collections appear to be very similar. Still, we will need to watch the revenues coming over April and possibly into May to see if we will have close to what we are projecting for the year. We anticipate receiving more of the expanded collections in April and May since the property tax deadline was extended to May 3, 2021.

Renovation Dedication Ceremony and Plaque

With the renovation project winding down, I would like Board input on whether or not we should have a dedication ceremony to mark the project's completion. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the event would need to be on a much smaller scale than what we would plan in normal circumstances, but it might be a good idea to do something simple possibly in June when a small gathering can be held outside before allowing guests to tour the library. We could invite Mayor Van Dusen and other local officials and perhaps some key community partners to join us. I have had some initial conversations with Andrew Berman Architect (ABA) and ASI Signage to discuss a dedication plaque, as is customary when a public building like the library undergoes a major renovation. In the past, after each building expansion or renovation, there has been a physical plaque hung on the wall somewhere in the building. ABA suggested the idea of having a film/vinyl "plaque" applied to the glass in the west vestibule. It would include the names of the Library Board members, as well as acknowledging the library director, the deputy director, architect, and construction manager. If the Board would like, it could also include the names of the former trustees who were involved with the planning of the renovation earlier on. Board guidance on a possible dedication ceremony and plaque is requested.

Building Review

As previously mentioned, I would like to update our capital asset study now that so much work has been completed as part of the renovation project. The last capital asset study was completed in 2017 by Building Technology Consultants, Inc. (BTC), and it is a good idea to update this kind of study every 4-5 years. An updated building review should give us useful information to determine the condition of the building and an idea of what major capital expenditures may be needed in the next 10-15 years for maintenance.

I received a proposal from BTC to update their capital asset study from 2017 at a cost of \$8,000, with an additional \$1,000 for an optional meeting with the Board, so it would be \$9,000 total. I have also discussed a similar building review with John Shales from Shales McNutt Construction (SMC) at a cost of \$8,900. There might be some advantages to continuing our working relationship with them now that they are so familiar with our building and grounds. They would bring in a team of engineers, roofing experts, elevator experts, and consult with our Renovation Project Manager Josh Campanelli and Site Superintendent Mike Glover. A field assessment would include site elements (i.e., landscaping, asphalt pavement, walkways, etc.), roofing, façade, and mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems and equipment. In the years ahead, SMC could also work with us on larger, complex projects such as the roofing replacement by putting together a scope of work, assisting with the bidding process, and managing the project.

IMET Update

Finance Manager Blythe Trilling recently attended the Annual IMET (Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund) Participant meeting. She found out that 59.3% of the amount invested had been distributed with the last distribution occurring back in April 2020. We have received 55.64% as of December 2019, so we expect to receive an additional \$4,096.87. IMET has another mediation with a third party receivership in April, as they are trying to recover additional funds. Additional updates will be provided to the Board as we get them.

Short Takes for Trustees

RAILS provides access to United for Libraries' series of recorded training videos "Short Takes for Trustees" for library trustees and staff. Topics include what it means to be a trustee, how to set policy, how to evaluate the library director, board self-evaluation, and ethical and parliamentary standards for boards. Trustees can create their own login to access these training videos on the RAILS website. Information is available at <https://www.railslibraries.info/services/trustee>.

Discussion of Director's Report

Mr. Prosperi asked about the possibility of placing some chairs on the floor, spaced out. Mr. Kong said he believes we can do that sooner rather than later. Mr. Prosperi asked how many patrons other libraries are letting inside at a time. Mr. Kong said that it varies depending on the library, anywhere from 25-200+. Ms. Barbir asked which library was permitting 200 people in at a time. Mr. Kong said that it is Gail Borden Library, which is a very large building. Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked if Mr. Kong

was aware of a rise in local COVID cases after spring break. Mr. Kong stated that he monitors the COVID metrics for the state, county, and village on a daily basis.

Ms. Mahmood asked if there are any additional photos of the renovation that can be shared on social media. Mr. Kong said he would send the Board some photos taken by the library's staff photographer.

Mr. Berman provided an update to the Board regarding the renovation project. ABA is very pleased with where things stand. The project came in on time and as expected. He explained that there is still a little bit of ongoing tuning.

Mr. Campanelli from SMC said they are very excited with how things have turned out and praised the team. They are working on some final punchlist items.

Mr. Kong asked the Board for their thoughts regarding a renovation dedication ceremony and the mock-up of the plaque drafted by graphic designer Neil Donnelly. Mr. Prosperi's thoughts were to wait until it is safe to increase the numbers of people in the building before holding a dedication ceremony and he expressed a desire to increase the number soon due to the size of the building. Mr. Kong proposed a small outdoor ceremony with a select group of people with the possibility of scattered tours over several days. Ms. Barbir felt that was a good idea. Ms. Rivera-Pulex said it would depend on the day of the week. Mr. Prosperi proposed a Saturday. Mr. Prosperi asked about whose names would be included in the signage. Ms. Barbir said she felt that including those that worked on the project but are no longer on the Board would be appropriate. Ms. Winningham liked the idea of tours spread out over several days. She also liked the idea of the window film versus a physical plaque. Ms. Barbir feels that it would be very meaningful to have some kind of plaque. Ms. Winningham proposed including the bookmobile as part of the celebration. Ms. Mahmood feels like window film might seem a little temporary so a physical plaque might be a good idea in addition to the vinyl.

Mr. Kong asked the Board for their thoughts on an upcoming building review. Mr. Prosperi and Mr. Griffin were in favor of having SMC perform the review, given their recent knowledge of the building. Ms. Winningham asked how a capital asset study might affect the insurance for the library. Mr. Kong stated that the insurance is not given a copy of the capital asset study. Mr. Prosperi explained that it is more of a budgeting tool. Mr. Kong will follow up with SMC to get the process started.

Mr. Prosperi asked for an update on the roof leaks. Mr. Kong explained that the library brought in a structural engineer and a roofing expert, Tom Hutchinson, to look at the issue. Mr. Hutchinson found some water pooling under the roof membrane at the point where the first and second floor roofs are joined. Mr. Hutchinson suggested that a total replacement of the first floor roof would probably be a good idea, if that can be accelerated. Mr. Kong asked Mr. Hutchinson if it would be necessary to make the repair to the roof if the decision is to do a full replacement

in the fall. The contractor felt that it would not be necessary but Mr. Kong is going to evaluate it more. Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked if the library has a maintenance contract with roofing companies. Mr. Kong stated that the library has roofing companies come out regularly for both inspections and repairs and had a full assessment done recently. Mr. Kong commented that he does not think that the library should wait out the entire warranty, which expires in December 2022, before carrying out the project. Mr. Prosperi asked if that would mean shutting down parts of the library. Mr. Campanelli said that there might be some disruption of service depending on the roofing system they decide on. It would be maybe a half a day or day here and there, not for any extended length of time.

Ms. Mahmood left the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Ms. Winningham asked if any toxic substances have been identified in former studies such as asbestos, mold, or lead. Mr. Kong stated that there have not, to his knowledge.

BILLS

Ms. Barbir asked a question about a payment to Dell Marketing under the technology line. Mr. Kong stated that it was for the purchase of the computers approved by the Board in February. Ms. Winningham had a question regarding the purchase of a panic device on an exterior door. Mr. Campanelli said that he believes it is for the panic device added to the new storytime door. Mr. Prosperi asked how many panic devices the library has. Mr. Kong stated that there are panic buttons set up at all the public service desks and one in the bookmobile. Mr. Prosperi also asked who is contacted when one of the devices is triggered. Mr. Kong stated that there is a phone tree that includes police and fire, as well as himself and Ms. Brooms, the library's safety manager.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked if there is a policy or limit with regards to the library credit cards. Mr. Kong stated that his spending limit is \$10,000 without Board approval. He said that there is not any limit designated in the Finance Policy with regard to a single charge limit for credit card transactions. She asked how many credit cards the library has. Mr. Kong stated that there is a Fifth Third account primarily used by the finance office for the purchase of supplies, renewal of memberships, and other purchases when it is not possible to cut a check. There is also an American Express card that Mr. Kong carries but rarely uses. She asked if the library gets any kind of rewards or points. He stated that there are some bonus points which get used for things like gift cards or lunches for staff.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex also asked about a \$1,700 charge on the Amazon account. Mr. Kong said that he believes it is a purchase of items for the makerspace.

Ms. Winningham asked a question about Jensens Plumbing and Heating that showed up under maintenance, capital, and renovation. Mr. Kong explained that the charge under maintenance of buildings and grounds for the repair to a manhole cover from last year, which was billed quite late. The one in the capital line was part of the renovation, which is managed in the pay apps by

Mr. Campanelli. Mr. Kong explained that the construction pay app and the bills are two separate things.

A motion was made by Ms. Rivera-Pulex, seconded by Mr. Griffin:

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

The roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

Mr. Campanelli left the meeting at 7:38 pm.

APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION #16

The Board reviewed Construction Pay Application #16 and change orders #184, 211, 213-219, 222-224, 226 and 229. None were in amounts requiring Board approval.

Mr. Prosperi asked if this is the final pay application. Mr. Kong stated that there may be two more. Mr. Griffin asked about the change in formatting. Mr. Kong said that SMC puts it together so that would be a question for them.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION #16, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

Mr. Berman left the meeting at 7:42 pm.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statements; Reports; Personnel)

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

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. REPORTS;
2. PERSONNEL: HIRE: FRANCES KANG, PART-TIME PATRON SERVICES ASSISTANT, PATRO SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE MARCH 30, 2021; PROMOTIONS: DENISE HUDEC, FULL-TIME COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISOR, ACCESS SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE APRIL 12, 2021; SOPHIA LAWRENCE, FULL-TIME MATERIALS HANDLING ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR, ACCESS SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2021; MONICA MIRELES, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS

SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE MARCH 22, 2021; DEPARTURES: FARIHA MANGRIO, PART-TIME MATERIALS PAGE, ACCESS SERVICES DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE MARCH 13, 2021; AMBER SMITH, PART-TIME PATRON SERVICES ASSISTANT, PATRON ENGAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE MAY 12, 2021; RETIREMENT: LUKIE MARRIOTT, PART-TIME ADVISORY SERVICES SPECIALIST, PATRON ENGAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE APRIL 30, 2021.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

PROJECTED YEAR-END BALANCE

Mr. Kong said that he expects there will be an excess in revenues over expenditures this year in the operating fund. Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked what is done with that excess at the end of the year. Mr. Kong explained that in past years the Board has agreed to transfer the excess to the reserve fund. Last year, the excess stayed in the operating fund. The Board usually decides what to do with the excess in June.

Mr. Prosperi asked what account the excess would go into. Mr. Kong explained that there are a number of different accounts, which he and Ms. Trilling manage on a month-to-month basis.

The Board noted the projected year-end balance.

QUARTERLY INVESTMENT UPDATE (Written memo provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

The investment policy states that the director shall prepare a quarterly report on investments and their returns.

The library's Reserve Fund for Sites and Buildings includes the following accounts, with their respective balances at the end of the 1st Quarter 2021.

- Fifth Third Bank Reserve Fund (\$1,095,007)
- IL Funds Reserve Account (\$5,418,375)
- IMET Reserve Fund (\$571)
- North Shore Community Bank Max Safe 4 CDs (\$1,068,319)
- First Bank Chicago CD 0436 (\$1,076,936)
- First Bank Chicago CD 2083 (\$1,082,122)

The total balance of the Reserve Fund as of March 31, 2021 is \$9,741,331. This is a 5.33% decrease from the balance one year ago on March 31, 2020 due to the 2019 Bond Debt Service payments made on June 1, 2020 and December 1, 2020.

The spreadsheet provided to the Board includes more detail about the accounts that make up the Reserve Fund and their returns.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked about how the banks are chosen. Mr. Kong said that the criteria are in the library's investment policy. There are many different factors considered. The library tries to use banks with a local community presence.

The Board noted the quarterly investment update.

APPROVAL OF TEMPORARY EXPANDED FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY DUE TO COVID-19 (Written memo provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

In June 2020, the Board approved the Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) Expansion and Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy mandated by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). These provisions applied through December 31, 2020, when the FFCRA expired. In January 2021, the Board approved a temporary policy to expand FMLA benefits for staff through March 31, 2021.

This action allowed library staff to be eligible to use the expanded FMLA if they are unable to work (or telework) due to the need to care for their child when the child's school or place of care has been closed or their childcare provider is unavailable because of a COVID-19 related reason. Each library staff member was given up to 12 weeks of leave to use from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, paid at 2/3 of their regular rate of pay. Library staff who have already utilized expanded FMLA hours from FFCRA last year will have their leave time treated as we would normally handle FMLA and not have their time "reset" for 2021. Since the Board approved a separate temporary paid sick leave policy earlier during the December Board meeting, staff already have the option to request up to two weeks of paid sick leave during 2021.

Only a very small number of staff have used this expanded FMLA benefit thus far (241.75 hours for a total amount of \$4,377.93), but since the challenges of the pandemic continue to affect library staff, another extension of this temporary policy would be very helpful to those who may need it through June 2021. Mr. Kong recommended Board approval of the Temporary Expanded FMLA Policy.

A motion was made by Ms. Barbir, seconded by Ms. Rivera-Pulex:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE TEMPORARY EXPANDED FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY DUE TO COVID-19 AS PRESENTED.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATOR CARDS (Written memo provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

In June 2018, the Board approved intergovernmental agreements for school educator cards. Lorrie Pomian Fisher, School Services Librarian, worked on some changes to the current agreements. The first attachment provided to the Board shows the changes to the current agreements with comments, and the subsequent attachment shows the new proposed intergovernmental agreements. There is one agreement for use with local school districts, and another for use with local private schools.

The library currently issues cards to administrators, teachers, and staff who work directly with students or supervise such work. In doing so, our goal is to provide services to the educators who support the education of Skokie's students, but do not live within the boundaries served by our library.

At the start of each year, the library works with each school district, as well as private schools serving Skokie residents, to identify individuals who wish to obtain an educator library card that is valid for one full school year. The cards are used for borrowing materials for educational purposes only. This is just one of a number of services we offer to support the education of Skokie students and schools.

In order to comply with state statutes and administrative codes related to issuing library cards to educators, it is recommended that the library adopt intergovernmental agreements with our local schools and school districts. The intergovernmental agreements adopted in 2018 were reviewed by our attorney, and no significant changes requiring further legal review were made.

Mr. Kong recommended approval of the revised intergovernmental agreements for school educator cards.

Ms. Pomian Fisher provided a brief explanation of the IGAs to the Board. Ms. Mallari asked if the agreement only pertains to schools. Ms. Pomian Fisher explained that there are two agreements, one for public school districts and one for private schools. Mr. Kong asked if Ms. Mallari had another entity in mind. She asked if the park district's preschool program, for example, has access to the library. Ms. Pomian Fisher explained that the early childhood centers and home daycares have business library cards, so the library does serve them, they just do not have IGAs because they tend to be for-profit entities. Ms. Mallari asked if this includes preschools run by churches or other faith-based entities. Ms. Pomian Fisher reiterated that it is her understanding that all of those entities are served through the business library card program. Mr. Kong explained that the privileges are very similar to those of individual cardholders.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked what kind of feedback the library receives from the educators for being allowed to use these cards. Ms. Pomian Fisher said that, by and large, they express their appreciation for not only the materials but also their access to staff people to help save them time and curate book bags for them.

Ms. Winningham said that she was very impressed with the reciprocity with the schools. It is sort of a megaphone into the community for the library. She asked what the benefit of the business card program is to the library. Mr. Kong explained that it has helped form great relationships with our local businesses and results in things like sponsoring of our summer reading program, among other things.

Mr. Griffin thanked Ms. Pomian Fisher for her work on the IGAs. He asked why schools are not giving the library copies of textbooks to add to the collection anymore. Ms. Pomian Fisher explained that actually, students are not using textbooks anymore. They are able to access the resources from their online devices and the textbooks just aren't being used anymore. He asked if there is any advantage to the library getting online access to the textbooks so that students could come to the library for that access. Ms. Pomian Fisher explained that the students can access those directly through the schools, sometimes with help from staff at the library, but she does not see a need for the library to have additional access. On the contrary, the schools use the library's subscriptions to augment their resources for their students.

A motion was made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Ms. Rivera-Pulex:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE REVISED INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATOR CARDS.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF FY 2021-2022 OPERATING BUDGET (Written memo provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

With the new fiscal year starting in May, the proposed FY 2021-2022 Operating Budget was presented for Board consideration. Finance Manager Blythe Trilling assisted Mr. Kong in preparing this information, which includes the projected revenues and expenditures sheet and a more detailed proposed operating budget spreadsheet.

Due to uncertainty stemming from the ongoing economic impact from the pandemic, the library is being conservative with its projections for revenue. In total, the projected revenue for FY 2022 is \$550,000 less than what was projected for FY 2021. A large portion of this comes from the projected difference in property tax revenue compared to last year at a total of \$269,500 for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 collections combined. Revenue from corporate replacement taxes (i.e., personal property replacement taxes collected from corporations, partnerships, trusts, and public utilities) is also projected to be lower by \$100,000. We also significantly reduced projected revenue from interest from our interest-bearing accounts and donations in comparison to last year.

It is also important to note that projections for property tax revenue are based on a 0% increase from the total levy amount from the prior year. The total amount of the 2020 levy, approved by the library Board in September 2020, is \$13,474,986, which is the same amount it has been since 2017. This is the third year in a row that the library did not increase its total tax levy amount.

This projected reduction in revenue of \$550,000, in addition to increases that are required in some budget lines (e.g., Insurance), needs to be accounted for in the operating budget for the next fiscal year. Here are some key points to understand how this was handled in the proposed budget:

- The Programming budget is significantly reduced because we do not expect to have many in-person programs inside the building for at least the first part of the fiscal year. Even with this reduction, we anticipate a strong level of service with programming, including strategic increases from this current year to support EDI events for the community, reading programs, collaborative opportunities with community partners, and experiential learning services (i.e., Studio and BOOMbox). Mr. Kong expects this budget line to return to prior levels in FY 2023.
- There is a decrease in the Salaries line by \$200,000 compared to last year's approved budget. The proposed budget of \$6,900,000 would cover salaries and wages at our current levels, as well as return to the full staffing levels we will need as we expand our services and operations as expected. For additional context, it is important to note that during FY 2021, all library employees received full wages for normally scheduled hours regardless of their ability to work while the building was closed, and no one was laid off or furloughed due to the pandemic. All eligible employees also received a merit increase and COLA increase during FY 2021. Still, we will end this current fiscal year underspent in our Salaries line because not all vacant positions were immediately filled this past year. Mr. Kong expects there will be a need to hire additional staff to get closer to pre-pandemic levels as library services and operations expand throughout FY 2022. Merit and COLA increases are not factored into the Salaries line in this proposed FY 2022 operating budget since the Board has not yet approved increases, but the Board may choose to approve increases and amend the operating budget later during the fiscal year if desired.
- The Continuing Education and Memberships budget line is significantly lower than last year's approved amount because we expect most library conferences will be held virtually at least for the start of the fiscal year. Still, we are budgeting enough to send a large group to the National Public Library Association Conference, to be held in Portland, OR, in March 2022. Mr. Kong expects this budget line to return to prior levels in FY 2023.
- In earlier drafts of the projected budget, the Physical Content (i.e., physical books, movies, etc.) budget was significantly reduced, but with our circulation already increasing as we open up the library for expanded in-person browsing, this budget line was increased to \$800,000 in this final proposed budget. This is still a small reduction compared to last year's approved budget for Physical Content. The materials processing budget was also reduced by \$30,000 compared to last year. The Leased Content (digital materials like eBooks and streaming content) budget was also increased by \$50,000 from the prior draft of the budget since use of these materials continues to rise.

- The Printing and Publicity budget is reduced from the current year's approved operating budget. This projected budget will still allow for a robust communications plan, including our print newsletters, special brochures, print signage, and new cardholder welcome materials. Once it is safe to bring back all of our services in the library, we will have a significant campaign to spread the word and really highlight the completed renovation.
- The Capital budget is lower compared to last year's approved budget, but there is also a potential "Utilization of Reserves" noted in the projected revenues and expenditures. Though the renovation will be completed soon, recent roofing issues may accelerate the library's plans to replace at least the roof from the original building this fiscal year.

Certain areas of the budget need to be increased:

- The Professional Services budget was increased since the March draft of the operating budget by \$30,000, and overall is significantly higher than the budget last year. We expect to incur more legal fees this next fiscal year, and there is also funding set aside for EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion) work and possibly assistance with our next strategic planning process. This line may also cover the fees for a construction or engineering firm to create a new capital asset plan or building review to revise our long-term projections for capital expenses.
- A large portion of the Maintenance of Equipment budget line usually goes to the cost of maintaining our RFID and materials handling equipment from Bibliotheca. Last year, to coincide with new equipment purchased for the newly renovated areas, we signed a new agreement that included a one-year waiver of the maintenance fees on the new equipment. During the next fiscal year, maintenance fees will go up. This line also includes copier costs.
- As discussed during prior Board meetings, the costs for our LIRA insurance coverage increased for 2021, so we have adjusted the Insurance line to factor in this and another potential increase for 2022.

In summary, Mr. Kong projects \$12,298,186 in general operating expenditures and an additional \$2,000,000 in anticipated expenditures from the 2019 bond proceeds for remaining renovation expenses. The 2019 bond debt payment will be \$1,198,300, and there is a potential "Utilization of Reserves" of \$1,000,000. Total expenditures for the general operating budget, renovation expenditures from the 2019 bond, the 2019 bond debt payment, and potential "Utilization of Reserves" is \$16,496,486.

Board approval of the budget was requested.

Mr. Prosperi asked how much the roof projects are anticipated to cost. Mr. Kong said that the first floor roof is projected to cost \$960,000 and the second floor \$750,000. Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked why Mr. Kong is only allocating a potential utilization of reserves of \$1,000,000 if both roofs will cost more than that. Mr. Kong explained that he was anticipating the replacement of the lower roof only in the immediate future but will confirm that after discussing with the roofing expert. He expects to bring a proposal to the Board at the next meeting for a decision to be made. The utilization of reserves can be amended at a future date if necessary.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked why there is no allocation for the summer/winter reading programs. Mr. Kong explained that there will be a significant summer reading program, it is just being run differently than last year with more online and at-home projects and learning opportunities, versus having every child in Skokie come to the library in a one-week period to pick up shirts and badges. The decision was also made to not approach businesses for donations this year considering the change in format. Ms. McGrath explained that there is money in the programming line for summer reading and there will be a significant program.

A motion was made by Ms. Rivera-Pulex, seconded by Ms. Barbir:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE FY 2021-2022 OPERATING BUDGET AS PRESENTED.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 6 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF CHANGE TO ELECTION CYCLE FOR BOARD OFFICERS (Written memo provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

In 1988, the Board changed the length of officer terms to two years instead of one, and officer elections have been held in even numbered years since then. Our attorneys recently recommend that we have officer elections within 60 days after an April consolidated election, which take place in odd numbered years. Doing this will put us in compliance with 75 ILCS 5/4-6, which reads:

(75 ILCS 5/4-6) (from Ch. 81, par. 4-6)

Sec. 4-6. Within 60 days after their election or appointment, the trustees shall take the oath of office and meet to organize the board. The required oath may be taken and subscribed before the Secretary or Secretary pro tempore of the library board, the County Clerk of the county containing all or a larger portion of the library, the Judge entering the order for the establishment referendum or before any other person authorized to administer oaths.

The first action taken at the organizational meeting of the board shall be the election of a President and a Secretary and such other officers as the board may deem necessary, and the board shall further provide in the bylaws of the board as to the length of the terms in office. The trustees shall determine the time and place of all official meetings of the board at which any legal action may be taken and shall post notice thereof at the public library maintained by the board and at not less than one public place within the corporate confines of the area of library service one day in advance thereof.

(Source: P.A. 85-751.)

Here are two options for the Board to consider if the Board wants to maintain two-year terms:

1. Keep our existing officers' terms in place expiring in May 2022, when the Board can hold an election for one-year terms (i.e., 2022-2023). This would mean the Board would then have another officer election in 2023 after the April consolidated election, getting back to two-year terms (i.e., 2023-2025). This would put us on the odd numbered year schedule to align with the April consolidated election cycle.
2. Hold an officer election this May, essentially cutting short the two-year terms (i.e., 2020-2022) currently held by our three officers. This would allow the Board to keep the two-year election cycle moving forward but switch to an odd numbered year schedule to align with the April consolidated election cycle.

If the Board would like to move to an annual election of officers, instead of electing officers for two-year terms, that would work as well. However, the Board would need to make a change to the current Board Bylaws.

Board action was requested.

Mr. Prosperi stated that he is planning on being President for only one more year to finish out his currently existing term. Mr. Griffin proposed waiting until next year to hold another officer election once Mr. Prosperi's term is up.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES CARRY OUT THEIR CURRENTLY ELECTED TERMS AND THAT ANOTHER OFFICER ELECTION BE HELD IN 2022 FOR ONE YEAR TERMS, AND SUBSEQUENTLY ANOTHER ELECTION IN 2023 AFTER THE APRIL CONSOLIDATED ELECTION FOR TWO YEAR TERMS.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 5 ayes and 1 abstention (Mr. Prosperi).

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

RAILS Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Friday, March 26, 2021

The following are highlights from the March 26, 2021, RAILS Board of Directors meeting's supporting documents and recorded video conference via Zoom.

Opening greeting and call to order at 1 pm: Michael Campbell, President

Roll call by Emily Fister

Financial Report: Mr. Jim Kregor presented the financials covering eight months, ending February 28, 2021. The highlights are that the revenues remain above budget and expenditures well below. He reported that due to deferral of expenditures and savings resulting from the pandemic, the Area and Per Capita Grant revenues are above budget by about \$300,000. Mr. Kregor stated that not listed on the statement is an additional payment of \$1,936,144.00 in March, which is the federally funded portion of the grant. Revenues will remain above budget for the year and the remaining funds to be received are all from the Live and Learn portion of the grant. He stated that they are all put in as vouchers to the comptroller's office for dispersal, but didn't know when those payments will be made. Mr. Kregor stated however, that the outlook on this has improved primarily because the federal government has just passed their support act (the American Rescue Plan 2021), which is going to be funneling a considerable amount of funds to the federally funded portion of the state libraries and also to the state and local governments for additional support for the pandemic. Hopefully this may reduce the backlog of bills and make the state payments faster.

Mr. Kregor said that the investment income remains well below budget due to low interest rates. Expenditures were almost \$740,000 below budget. Last month the board approved granting retroactive salary increases and purchasing laptop computers, so beginning in March the spending favorableness will decrease a bit as these things are incorporated, but he still expects to remain below budget on expenditures for the year.

The last item was the recovery of the fraudulent checks. There were three checks stolen and cashed. All three checks and all stolen funds have been recovered.

No President's Report

Advocacy Committee Report, Jenna Nemec-Loise: Committee met on Thursday, March 11. Discussion included feedback from the ILA Legislative Meet Ups. Overall feeling is that there is a general lack of legislator support, so there was discussion about how that could be changed.

The committee meeting also focused on collecting school library data and how they might be able to become more engaged with the Illinois State Board of Education and help out with the school library data collection process.

The rest of their discussion was about trying to figure out just more globally how -- whether it be for academic libraries, public libraries, school libraries or specialized libraries -- they can reach those who are not currently advocating for libraries.

Consortia Committee has not met since last RAILS meeting, but will be meeting on Monday, April 19.

The EDI committee has not met since last RAILS meeting, but will be meeting on April 21 and again on June 15. However, they reported that since the last RAILS meeting the committee has

created three subcommittees: the Staff Training, Leadership Advocacy subcommittee, the Recruitment, Hiring and Retention subcommittee, and the Programs & Outreach subcommittee. They are formulating a calendar for each of those to meet via Zoom.

Executive Committee, Policy Committee, Resource Sharing Committee, Universal Service Committee have not met since last RAILS meeting.

Consortia Committee has not met since last RAILS meeting, but will be meeting on Monday, April 19.

RAILS Monthly Report, Deirdre Brennan: A sheet was provided which covered the American Rescue Plan 2021 (referenced earlier in the financial report). It highlights what the library funding summary is. What/how money is coming to Illinois is still being figured out. There are a lot of funds going to state and local governments for broadband and education. ILA is leading the effort to form a plan what is needed and how to access the funds.

Also included in the RAILS report are the quarterly reports from the LSAPS, which give information on their services.

Ms. Brennan also gave an update on REALM. There was a meeting this week with members of the CDC vaccine team and she will be sending all the information from that meeting to RAILS members. She stated that the CDC is also planning a webinar in April. Someone from RAILS will either tag on to the webinar or RAILS will have somebody from the CDC vaccine team at one of their member updates.

Today (March 26) is the final day for board nominations to be submitted. Ms. Brennan stated that a lot of nomination have been received and the committee's request for diversity definitely paid off in terms of geography, job title, and ethnicity.

A summary of an ALA report on vaccines was also presented. The fuller report was presented at the ALA Council.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT: Dan Bostrom provided members with documents. He gave an introduction and overview of approaches used to recruit members. He discussed the challenges of engaging every type of member (geographic type, priorities, things like hours, the different types of libraries, etc.), networking groups, presentations, town halls, and symposiums.

He stated that member engagement is a mixture of four things: outreach, customer service, marketing and communications. His presentation was followed-up with brief discussion and Q&A with members.

State Library/Secretary of State Jesse White: Greg McCormick reported that the Secretary's budget has moved forward through the committee hearing processes sustaining funding at the FY2021 levels

for library and literacy programs. He also mentioned the American Rescue Plan/funding. They met with other state library agencies with IMLs regarding their initial expectations for this funding (and the ongoing LSTA appropriation funding) that will need to be expended by September 30, 2022. They will be meeting with them again, including LSTA coordinators, to discuss this and put together some high level plans of how the funding might be implemented. As in other states, this will be incorporated into the state's budgetary process, but that is already underway. There was general discussion and Q&A about the possible uses and allocation of funds and grants.

NEW BUSINESS: Dan Bostrom proposed The Center for Change School for membership. He thanked Ann Slaughter, Jenifer Cellene, and Chritine Schaaf who had already started the conversation with this school before presenting it to Dan. He gave a brief background of the school and their expectations (they already have considerable knowledge of RAILS). They also wish to join the Rock River Library Consortium and can only do so if they are a part of RAILS.

Hallie Cox made a motion to approve The Center for Change School for full membership in RAILS and requested for final approval from the Illinois State Library, seconded by Sarah McHone-Chase. Motion carried.

The next item discussed was joint meetings with IHLS and ISL. This was something that was tabled previously. All believe it would be a good idea to revisit this and begin having the meetings, especially since meeting virtually makes it easier to schedule and get participation.

Next item discussed was FY2022 budget. Preliminary conversation. Deidre Brennen stated that they obtained the Area Per Capita Grant application from the State Library and it is due June 1. This is the main funding source. Ms. Brennen mentioned that the budget is constructed from the ground up every year.

Jim Kregor continued the conversation of the building of the budget with an overview of the process and all it includes, strategic plans, etc. General discussion and Q&A of budget process followed. Proposed plan is presented to committee in April and approved in May so it can go to the State Library by June 1.

Next item is strategic planning. Consultants were brought in for the first strategic plan in 2013-14. Consultants have not been used since. There was discussion about it being time to look at bringing someone in again who can objectively look at it since it's been so long and much has changed over the years, especially now with the pandemic. A list of proposals from consultants is in the works.

Next item is virtual and in-person meetings – committee feedback about planning for future meetings based on where we are in Restore Illinois (phase 4+ of the five phase plan) and beyond. In-person vs. virtual or in-person combined with virtual, taking into consideration the Open Meeting Act and all state laws/requirements for quorum, etc.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Very in-depth discussion about the Board Engagement Survey results. A follow-up report of the discussion will be drawn up and presented to the board.
- Discussion on the statewide database proposal.
- Discussion on the Unserved in Illinois report and Universal Service
- Discussed agenda building for next meeting

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Next meeting: 1 pm, Friday, April 23, 2021 via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Szucsits

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

Mr. Griffin and the rest of the trustees congratulated Ms. Mahmood and Ms. Winningham on their elections.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:28 pm a motion was made by Ms. Mallari, seconded by Ms. Winningham to adjourn the regular meeting. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Shabnam Mahmood, Board Secretary