

May 12, 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held virtually via Zoom, Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER

Mark Prosperi, President, called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Members present: Mark Prosperi, President; Gene Griffin, Vice President; Shabnam Mahmood, Secretary; Mira Barbir; Noreen Winningham

Members absent: Michelle Mallari; Magnolia Rivera-Pulex

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

Observers present: Mandy O' Brien; Jimmy Gonzalez-Vicker; Matt MacKellar; Sue Teller; Veena Villivalam

Guests present: Andrew Berman, Andrew Berman Architect; Josh Campanelli, Shales McNutt Construction; Pramod Shah, Village Clerk

SWEARING IN OF MS. MAHMOOD AND MS. WINNINGHAM

Village Clerk Pramod Shah swore in newly elected trustees Ms. Mahmood and Ms. Winningham.

Mr. Shah left the meeting at 6:38 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 14, 2021

Ms. Barbir made a motion, seconded by Mr. Griffin to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 14, 2021. A roll call vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously and placed on file. The vote was 5 ayes and 0 nays.

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no comments from observers.

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

COVID-19 Reopening Update

Expansion of in-person browsing to include the east side of the first floor, including the renovated youth area, has gone smoothly. Many patrons have expressed appreciation for opening up the library more and circulation has increased with all of our collections now available for browsing and holds. With the COVID-19 positivity rates dropping and vaccination rates increasing in Skokie, we have opened up the south and north courtyards and made some more chairs available on the first and second floor. Study chairs at various tables around the perimeter of the second floor are spaced out to encourage social distancing, and signs are posted making it clear that masks are still required. The large Reading Room on the second floor is also open now, with a limit of 8 people at a time, and the Studio (makerspace) will be opening up in a gradual fashion over the next couple of months. Study rooms throughout the library remain unavailable for now.

Governor Pritzker announced that the state will move into the “Bridge Phase” of Restore Illinois on May 14, 2021. We will look at possibly increasing the number of patrons allowed at any given time and adjusting the time limit for visits. Another part of dialing up our services over the next month, in anticipation of a possible transition into Phase 5 sometime in June, may include establishing revised guidelines for the use of large community meeting rooms and study rooms.

According to the May 4, 2021 SkokieNews email, 60% of Skokie’s total population, 75% of residents age 16 and above, and 92% of residents age 65 and above have received at least one dose of vaccine. A total of 27,860 residents are fully vaccinated, including 56% of Skokie residents age 18 and over.

Renovation Update

Major construction aspects of the renovation project are essentially completed, and the remaining items on the punchlist are being addressed. This includes some lighting enhancements, shelving adjustments, and installation of door operators for first floor restrooms. Mayor Van Dusen and Village Manager John Lockerby toured the renovated library recently and expressed how impressed they were with the enhancements to the library.

A formal dedication ceremony for the renovation project will take place on Friday, June 4, 2021 in the morning. Elected officials, including Mayor Van Dusen, and other community leaders will be in attendance. After brief remarks, guests will be invited into the library for a tour of the renovated spaces. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing pandemic, we will limit the number of attendees. This will not be a community-wide celebration open to everyone, but hopefully we can plan a big event for the entire community in the future when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we have already provided some tours for local community partners, and are planning to have some additional guided tours available to community members in the near future.

Financial Update

We are ending FY 2021 by meeting our unofficial reduced spending target for our operating expenses. Earlier in the fiscal year, due to concerns about possible reductions in property tax collections during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Board asked for me to reduce spending by at least 10%. The figures

will not be finalized until the audit takes place, but we are currently showing 12% of the operating budget remaining at the close of the fiscal year.

An analysis of the General Operating Fund for the past seven fiscal years shows that we are projected to have an excess of revenue over expenditures of at least \$1.2 million in FY 2021. This includes the “other revenue” from the transfer of the remaining balance from the 2001 Bond Debt Service account in the amount of \$369,011 and the insurance reimbursement revenue from the construction project in the amount of \$143,599. Again, these are based on unaudited figures. Finance Manager Blythe Trilling and I will continue to examine the financials and provide a recommendation to the Board to possibly transfer some funds from the General Operating Fund to the Reserve Fund in the next couple of months.

Spring real estate tax collections are at \$6,475,494 as of May 4, 2021. This is 89% of what we budgeted for the spring collection, so we hope to receive at least \$801,000 in additional revenue. We have received 48.06% of the total 2020 property tax levy.

Strategic Updates

This month’s Board packet includes the fourth quarter update showing the progress made on the strategic priorities outlined in our current three-year strategic plan. I am pleased to share that the library’s staff, in collaboration with our many community partners, have done an outstanding job of pursuing our goals of building a resilient, engaged, and inclusive community throughout this past year despite all of the obvious challenges. Department annual reports will be shared in June and July to help summarize the progress made throughout the organization. FY 2022 will be the last year of the current strategic plan, so I will work with staff and the Board later this year to create a strategic planning process that will result in a new three-year plan by May 2022.

Coming Together in Skokie and Niles Township 2021

Learning Experiences Manager Amy Koester, Community Engagement Manager Nancy Kim Phillips, and others are planning for this year’s Coming Together program along with many other community partners. This year’s focus is to help those affected by isolation and food insecurity. Staff members Matt MacKellar and Sue Teller worked on a project team to create a campaign to reduce social isolation. Community members can pick up postcards in the library to send a note of encouragement to a friend or neighbor. We are also making an effort to make access to food and other necessary items easier for those in need. Food source options, including the library’s ongoing meal distribution program on Mondays and Wednesdays, can be found at <https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/>. More information about the entire Coming Together program can be found on the Coming Together website at <https://www.comingtogether.in/>.

ULC Leadership Brief: Anti-Racist Executive Leadership for Public Libraries

The Urban Libraries Council, of which the library is a member, issued a leadership brief to help leaders working in public libraries to “own the challenge and impact of enduring racism, acknowledge their own biases and use their leadership to dismantle structural racism, starting in their own library systems.” I have shared this leadership brief with others in the organization and will hold discussions about

strategies we can take to make meaningful progress. Though the brief is directed to executive leaders in libraries, I have shared it with other local leaders as well as the strategies can be applied in other contexts. I welcome comments from the Board about the brief.

D219 Virtual Powerful Partnership Breakfast

A number of us on staff participated in D219's Powerful Partnership Breakfast, an annual event that was held virtually this year. D219 uses this event to highlight the many partnerships they have throughout the community to benefit students and local families, and to thank their partners. The library was mentioned for our work with D219 students for a food drive.

YWCA Equity Summit

The YWCA is holding their annual Equity Summit virtually on May 13-14, 2021. More information can be found at <https://www.ywca-ens.org/equity-institute/equitysummit/>. If any Board members are interested in attending, please let Monica know.

Virtual State of the Village

The Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual State of the Village virtually on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 11:30 am. Mayor Van Dusen will discuss economic development projects and budget issues, and a Q&A will follow his remarks. A number of us on staff will attend, but Board members are invited to attend as well. Please let Monica know if you would like to be registered for the event.

Discussion of Director's Report

The Board discussed potentially increasing time limits and capacity of patrons in the library.

Andrew Berman provided a brief update on the status of the final steps of the renovation project.

Ms. Barbir asked if Mr. Kong feels confident that the library will collect the expected property tax revenue. He said he does based on the collection in the fall and what other libraries have reported, but that we would have to wait and see if more revenue comes in later this month

Ms. Barbir thanked Mr. Kong for including the ULC leadership brief in the Board packet. She felt it was very helpful. She expressed interest in seeing the kind of metrics that the library can formulate in the arena of EDI.

APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION #17

The Board reviewed Construction Pay Application #17 and change orders #221, 230-237, and 238-240. None were in amounts requiring Board approval.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF

TRUSTEES APPROVE CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION
#17, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

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

Messrs. Campanelli and Berman left the meeting at 7:09 pm.

BILLS

Ms. Barbir asked some clarifying questions about the bills.

Ms. Winningham said that she felt that it is not as easy to find what is available to patrons on the website as it used to be. Mr. Kong said that he would be happy to meet with Ms. Winningham to review it and make suggestions to staff on how to better highlight the library's resources.

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

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 5 ayes and 0 nays.

YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGETARY STATUS

Ms. Barbir and Mr. Prosperi asked clarifying questions about the capital renovation and physical materials budget lines.

The Board noted the Year-to-Date Budgetary Status.

ANALYSIS OF GENERAL OPERATING FUND FOR THE SEVEN FISCAL YEARS

The trustees briefly discussed the differences between the past two fiscal years in terms of revenues and expenditures.

The Board noted the General Operating Fund for the Seven Fiscal Years.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statement; Reports; Personnel)

The Board discussed the circulation and patron statistics and plans for marketing around the completion of the renovation project.

Ms. Barbir made a motion, seconded by Ms. Mahmood:

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: HIRES: DAYLILY ALVAREZ, FULL-TIME

ADULT PROGRAM COORDINATOR, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE MAY 25, 2021; BRENDAN CROSBY, PART-TIME MATERIALS PAGE, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE MAY 25, 2021; MICHELLE HOOSANG, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE MAY 18, 2021; ZAINAB QADER, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE MAY 7, 2021; PHUMIN SATHORNKICH, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE MAY 13, 2021; PROMOTION: ELIZABETH SOLAKA, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE MAY 4, 2021; DEPARTURE: CECILIA CYGNAR, PART-TIME ADVISORY SERVICES SPECIALIST, PATRON ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE MAY 28, 2021; RETIREMENT: TERRY RATOFF, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LIBRARIAN, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE JUNE 25, 2021.

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

FOURTH QUARTER (FEBRUARY-APRIL) STRATEGIC UPDATE

The trustees praised the staff for their hard work. The Board noted the Fourth Quarter Strategic Update.

APPROVAL OF BIBLIOTHECA SERVICE CONTRACT

After obtaining board approval in October 2019, the library signed a contract with Bibliotheca to purchase a new AMH (automated materials handling) machine, security gates, self-checkout stations, and updated hardware to assist with RFID checkout of materials. The sales contract included the first year of service at no additional cost. The second year of service was to be \$35,429.

This equipment is vital for the operations and services of the library. Staff benefit because automated sorting decreases the time needed to handle returned items and get them back on the shelf. Patrons benefit because they are able to checkout materials on their own using the self-checkout stations. The service contract ensures a timely response and resolution from Bibliotheca when we have equipment issues.

The first item installed was the AMH machine in May 2020. The other equipment was installed throughout 2020 and early 2021 as renovated spaces were finished and ready to open. Because the service contract starts at installation, each piece of equipment has a different start date for “year two” of service. Instead of creating multiple service contracts with different start and expiration dates for each piece of equipment, Bibliotheca agreed to pro-rate the service fee depending on when an item was installed and combine everything into one “year two” contract that will run from May 2021-May 2022. The pro-rated total for “year two” of the service contract is \$23,121.03.

Ms. McGrath recommended that the Board approve the service contract with Bibliotheca covering the period May 2021-May 2022 for a total cost of \$23,121.03.

The Board asked some clarifying questions regarding the equipment from Bibliotheca.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE SERVICE CONTRACT WITH BIBLIOTHECA COVERING THE PERIOD MAY 2021-2022 FOR A TOTAL COST OF \$23,121.03.

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

RFQ FOR PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Due to recent concerns about the current condition of the library's roof systems, Building Services Manager Tim Murphy and Mr. Kong asked roofing specialist Hutchinson Design Group to conduct an assessment of a specific area where the original one-story building structure is connected to what was at the time a two-story addition. Based on their analysis, we have no reason to believe that there is evidence of a roof deck failure, but there is a recommendation to perform a long-term repair that would involve removing the existing roof system and replacing it. We had originally planned to replace the roof system in 2022, based on our capital asset study and a recommendation from a roofing contractor in 2020, but given this most recent assessment and the likelihood that costs will increase next year, we believe it would be best to accelerate our plans to replace our roof systems this year.

The RFQ (request for qualifications) for Professional Design Services for Roof Replacement Project provided to the Board and reviewed by attorney Samuel Cavnar has been posted on the library's website. Similar to how the Board selected the architect and construction manager for the recent renovation project, this qualifications-based selection process will allow the Board to review statements of qualifications from various firms, interview several firms, and rank them based on their qualifications. After the ranking is established, Mr. Kong will engage in discussion with the top-ranked firm to try and come to an agreement, which would need to be approved by the Board before hiring them. Once a firm is hired, we will ask them to design a new roof system, oversee the bidding process to hire a roofing contractor, and ensure the actual construction goes smoothly. The hope is to start the actual roof replacement project in late August or early September, and complete it in October or early November at the latest. We have been informed that this timing should work out well as roofing contractors will be completing large school projects in August and available for a project such as ours.

Total costs for the roof replacement project will not be determined until the field assessment and design are completed, and the bidding process takes place later in the summer. As mentioned during the discussion regarding the FY 2022 operating budget, funds for this roof replacement project are available in the Reserve Fund.

The Board discussed the process for interviewing the firms that submitted proposals. A consensus was reached with regards to which firms to interview and a special meeting was planned for Thursday, May 20 at 6:30 pm to conduct the interviews.

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

RAILS Board of Directors Meeting Summary

April 23, 2021

The following are highlights from the April 23, 2021, RAILS Board of Directors meeting, supporting documents, and recorded video conference via Zoom.

RAILS Financial Report - Jim Kregor

- Mr. Kregor reported RAILS revenues were above budget.
- Received Area-per-Capita Grant revenue of \$1.9 million.
- Expenditures way below budget.
 - \$606,000 implemented pay increase of retroactive as of July 1, 2020.
 - Purchase of laptops - RFP went out, budget is set at \$125,000
 - Catalog membership grants budgeted at \$70,000, to be awarded in May.
 - End-of-the-year status is \$400,000 under budget on expenditures.
- Fraudulent checks update: Entire amount of the fraudulent checks has been recovered.

RAILS Monthly Report -- Dierdre Brennan

- On May 11, 2021 the RAILS Trustee Networking Event is holding a round table regarding Strategic Planning for trustees. This is to be presented by Greg Pronovitz. Mr. Pronovitz, along with a colleague, has created an online strategic planning toolkit which would be economical for those libraries unable to afford strategic planning.
- Layla Heath presented Service of the Month reports including:
 - Read Squared, discounts for curbside services and PPE, data analysis and targeted marketing toolkits, and resources for K-12.
 - Discussed procurement process for Deals & Discounts program.

EDI Activities -- Update by Lindsey Biz Ryan

- Rails Climate Team - "Think Tank" of organization, audit of current practices.
- EDI Board Committee-subcommittee structure, move work forward.
- EDI Initiatives:
 - EDI content structure
 - Foundational framework
 - Targeted learning
 - Skill building
 - Equitable decision making
 - Consider cohort model

State Library -- Greg McCormick

- Updates: FY22 Budget to be discussed at Member Meeting:
 - Implications for libraries and library systems.
 - Federal funding source: American Rescue Plan Act.
 - Secretary's budget went through the Senate, State Officers Appropriation meeting.
 - Senate Bill 2232 being watched carefully, passed by the Senate and now on to the House, this will have implications for RAILS.
 - Construction Grants have been given to three more libraries.
 - April 15, 2021 received final applications for Construction Grants which will use up the remaining \$50 million.
 - Received and reviewed all Public Library Per Capita Grant applications for FY21.
 - Upcoming meeting with Institute of Museum and Library Services regarding a review of State Library Administrative Agency and the work of the past five years.

New Business -- Deirdre Brennan

- Operational Plan & Budget, previously referred to by Greg McCormick, is due June 1st.
- Operational Plan must support these statutory priorities:
 - Administration, resource, sharing bibliographic access, consulting, continuous education, and delivery.
- Budget amount for grants itself has not increased in years.
- Expected to end year in surplus; however, next year is expected to be deficit
 - Investment income expected to be down.
- Increase the amount of *My Library* grant to help schools.
- Hiring and keeping delivery staff is very difficult. Even offered incentive to employees for referring hires, which is rarely done.
- Finance & HR Director, Jim Kregor, is to retire. This will bring about organizational changes to staff as well.
- Website needs to be redone, budgeted at \$57,000.
- Executive Director Evaluation surveys are due May 7, 2021. (Ms. Brennan's performance review)

Statewide Databases Proposal Update -- Deirdre Brennan

- House Bill 2071, Amendment 1: has 5 co-sponsors, non-partisan bill.

Board Development & The Future of Delivery -- Monica Harris & Mark Hatch

- Delivery resumed June 2020.
- Procured PPE for staff.
- RFP process for future
- Current delivery operation: hybrid- in-house and outsourced deliveries. Libraries are serviced daily.

Next meeting: Friday, May 28, 2021, at **10 am** via Zoom. (Time change)

Agenda Items:

- 6-month review of closed-session minutes
- Approval of Area and Per-Capita Grant applications
- Update of Explore More Illinois Program
- Underboard development & state of the resource sharing in Illinois

Respectfully submitted,
Shabnam Mahmood

The Board noted the RAILS report.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

The trustees discussed potential library presence at this summer's farmers' markets.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:05 pm a motion was made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Ms. Winningham to adjourn the regular meeting. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Shabnam Mahmood, Board Secretary