

February 12, 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Wednesday, February 12, 2020.

CALL TO ORDER

Eugene Griffin, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Members present: Eugene Griffin, Vice President; Mira Barbir; Jonathan H. Maks, MD; Magnolia Rivera-Pulex; and Richard Kong, Director

Staff present: Laura McGrath, Deputy Director; Devan Parkison, Data Analysis Coordinator; Blythe Trilling, Finance Manager

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

Visitors present: Josh Campanelli of Shales McNutt Construction

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no observers present

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 8, 2020

Dr. Maks made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barbir to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 8, 2020, subject to additions and/or corrections. There being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved unanimously and placed on file. The vote was 4 ayes and 0 nays.

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

Renovation Update

The first month of the renovation project is behind us. The demolition of the second floor and the future first floor staff workroom went very smoothly with Shales McNutt (SMC) overseeing each step of the process. Much of the second floor is already taking shape, and Andrew Berman Architect (ABA) visited twice in January to examine the progress and participate in discussions with contractors, SMC Project Manager Josh Campanelli, and SMC Site Superintendent Mike Glover. With the assistance of a technology consultant from engineering firm WMA, (a sub-consultant working with ABA), we are also making significant progress on plans related to telecommunications, audiovisual solutions, lighting controls, paging, and security systems. I plan to have recommendations for the security systems and AV equipment, respectively, during the March Board meeting. Josh Campanelli will provide a more detailed update on the renovation and answer questions during the February Board meeting.

Turning Point Town Hall

Turning Point will hold its 19th Annual Town Hall Meeting in the Petty Auditorium on Friday, February 28, from 9:30 to 11:30 am. I will be at the PLA National Conference that day, so will not be able to attend, but I encourage library trustees to participate if possible. The event always draws many community members who are interested in dialogue with local elected officials.

Information and Services for Voters

The library is working with community partners, such as Niles Township and the League of Women Voters, to offer resources and services to community members who will be voting in this year's elections. This includes hosting a candidate forum, offering voter registration in the library by trained staff, and engaging library patrons in civic labs. Staff also maintain a voter information page on our website at <https://skoki.library.info/resources/voter-information/>.

RAILS Partnership Grant with School District 69

We recently found out that RAILS accepted our application for a \$5,000 Partnership Grant. This grant, which was the result of a collaboration between Youth Services Manager Shelley Sutherland and staff from School District 69, will help us share our early literacy initiative, Grow a Reader, with Madison School. The funds will be used to encourage families to engage in early literacy practices through promotional videos featuring members of the community, a bilingual lending library, reading incentives, and group celebrations. The project deliverables will be shared with libraries, schools, and families across the state, so others can utilize them to enhance other "1000 Books Before Kindergarten" programs.

Library Staff Display at McCracken Middle School

Oliver McCracken Middle School recently worked with our young adult services (i.e., teen services) team, School Services Librarian Lorrie Hansen, and our Communications and Multimedia Engagement staff to create and install a special display designed to introduce students to our staff and relevant services and collections. This is part of an effort by the school to help students learn more about the resources available to them throughout the community.

ILA Board Appointment

I received an invitation from the Illinois Library Association (ILA) President, Molly Beestrum, to fill the remainder of a term for someone who is leaving the Board. My previous experience on the ILA Board would help me to step into the role quickly. Since the remainder of the term only goes through June 2020, and would only require attendance at two Board meetings (plus virtual participation), I accepted.

LIRA Executive Committee Appointment

LIRA (Libraries of Illinois Risk Agency), our group insurance pool, recently notified its members of an opening on the LIRA Executive Committee. I sent in my application and was notified last month that I was selected for the position. Participation in the LIRA Executive Committee will require periodic local meetings, but I believe it will be well worth the time because I will have an

opportunity to learn more about our insurance pool and, hopefully, make a positive impact that will benefit our library and other LIRA members.

PLA National Conference

Later this month, a group of library staff members will be traveling to Nashville, TN to attend the 2020 PLA (Public Library Association) National Conference. This conference, held every two years in different cities, is regarded by many in the field as the best continuing education opportunity for those working in public libraries. Deputy Director Laura McGrath served on the program planning committee and helped design this year's conference. In addition to many educational sessions, staff will have the opportunity to learn about new products and services offered by the large group of exhibitors at the conference.

Mr. Kong informed the Board that Mrs. Parrilli would be stepping down as a trustee later this year. Mr. Prosperi had requested that the Board think about whether they would like to post the position again or choose from the finalists from the last trustee selection process.

Mr. Kong also shared an article in which ALA's new executive director, Tracie Hall, mentioned the library as a model for what it means for libraries to reflect their communities

BILLS

The trustees asked for and received clarification about some of the paid bills for the month.

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

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

The roll call vote for approval was 4 ayes and 0 nays; the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION #2

The trustees asked for and received clarification about the pay application.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APPROVE CONSTRUCTION PAY APPLICATION #2, SUBJECT TO
AUDIT.

The roll call vote for approval was 4 ayes and 0 nays; the motion passed unanimously.

YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGETARY STATUS

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked for and received information about the nature of the research line in the budget.

The Board noted the year-to-date budgetary status.

BALANCE SHEET FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDING FROM 5/1/19 THRU 1/31/20

The Board noted the balance sheet.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statement; Statistics Report; Reports; Gifts; Personnel)

Ms. Barbir asked about the potential to increase promotion of electronic resources in order to increase circulation. Mr. Kong said he would suggest it to the Communications and Multimedia Engagement Department. She also asked a question about how many e-resource users the library has. She asked that that metric be added to the statistics being tracked over time.

Mr. Griffin asked about any progress analyzing the bookmobile data and ways to increase engagement. Mr. Kong explained that the Community Engagement department is working on plans and he has invited Nancy Kim Phillips to make a presentation to the Board in the spring when they are planning to roll out some of the new changes. Ms. Parkison commented that she is also working on a way to calculate gate count on the bookmobile.

Dr. Maks made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barbir:

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

1. STATISTICS REPORT;
2. REPORTS;
3. GIFTS: \$200 FROM EVELYN MARKS SIEGEL IN APPRECIATION FOR AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES; \$100 FROM SKOKIE LIONS CLUB IN SUPPORT OF SUMMER READING PROGRAM;
4. PERSONNEL: HIRES: MICHELLE KHUU, PART-TIME EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SPECIALIST, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 3, 2020; RICK SAWDON, PART-TIME PROGRAM ASSISTANT, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 28, 2020; DEPARTURES: BEN EGGLER, PART-TIME EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SPECIALIST, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 3, 2020; JEORGE GARCIA, PART-TIME EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SPECIALIST, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 31, 2020; MUNEEBA ZEHRA, PART-TIME MATERIALS HANDLER, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 14, 2020; PROMOTION: JIMMY GONZALEZ-VICKER, FULL-TIME EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING LEAD, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 10, 2020.

The motion passed unanimously. There were 4 ayes and 0 nays.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE FROM SHALES MCNUTT CONSTRUCTION

The Board toured the second floor with Mr. Campanelli and received a construction update.

APPROVAL OF AWARD OF BID FOR SIGNAGE

On January 31, 2020, the library held a public bid opening of bids for signage for the renovated spaces. Vendors were invited to bid on signage based on designs from graphic designer Neil Donnelly, who is working with Andrew Berman Architect (ABA) on the library's project. The request for proposals covered the manufacturing and installation of different sign types, including signage for individual rooms, collection areas, and directional/wayfinding throughout the public spaces.

We received four bids. The bids from both Axe Signs + Wayfinding and Poblocki Sign Company were incomplete and thus not responsive. The bid from Design Communications LTD (DCL) totaled \$317,222 (using a composite polymer made of recycled plastic for some signage) and \$282,357 (using standard acrylic as an alternate to the composite polymer, where applicable). The lowest bid came from ASI Signage for \$262,487.12 (with composite polymer) and \$239,451.12 (with standard acrylic). The project budget included \$250,000 set aside for signage.

ASI is familiar with our library and spaces since they provided much of the current signage that we have in the building. We have an established relationship with them, and it is an added benefit that they are a local company in Chicago. Upon Board approval, Mr. Donnelly and ABA would work closely with ASI Signage to test samples of the signage and plan for the manufacturing and installation of signage throughout each phase of the renovation.

Mr. Kong recommended that the Board approve the proposal (attached) from ASI Signage, with standard acrylic alternates for the composite polymer material as indicated in the bid documents, for a total cost of \$239,451.12.

Dr. Maks asked a question about why the decision was made to go with the acrylic versus the composite polymer. Mr. Kong explained that he factored the cost and design to make the decision.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE PROPOSAL FROM ASI SIGNAGE AS PRESENTED, WITH STANDARD ACRYLIC ALTERNATES FOR THE COMPOSITE POLYMER MATERIAL AS INDICATED IN THE BID DOCUMENTS, FOR A TOTAL COST OF \$239,451.12.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 4 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC COMPUTERS PURCHASE

Board approval was requested for the purchase of 36 computers, with accompanying monitors and stands, to replace current public computers. The Information Technology (IT) department is asking for a capital expenditure of \$40,148.44 for this purchase. The current public computers were purchased in 2013. At seven years old, it is time to replace them. Additionally, new computers would complement a newly renovated computer commons.

Competitive quotes were obtained from Dell, HP (\$43,845), and Lenovo (\$47,485). With an Intel CPU released in 2019, 8GB of RAM, and a solid-state hard drive, these computers will easily provide 5-7 years of service. Furthermore, 24" monitors will provide a larger screen viewing area than the current 22" monitors.

In addition to the best price, the Dell offering has a clean PC integration. The computer mounts behind the monitor, and a cover plate hides and protects access to the computer ports. A power and network cable will come down the back to provide power and data. The only noticeable cables from the user perspective will be the keyboard and mouse.

A few of the old computers will be retained for use as kiosks or to fill other needs. The remaining old computers can be offered to local non-profit community partners as a donation or responsibly recycled.

Mr. Kong recommended Board approval of the purchase of 36 Dell computers, with accompanying accessories, at a cost of \$40,148.44.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF 36 DELL COMPUTERS, WITH ACCOMPANYING ACCESSORIES, AT A TOTAL COST OF \$40,148.44.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 4 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF INN-REACH

The library's subscription to INN-Reach is up for renewal and we would like to renew for one year effective February 1, 2020.

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

As of October 2019, the full LINKin catalog included 2,021,290 titles with 649,597 of those items unique to individual libraries. This fiscal year we have averaged nearly 2000 LINKin transactions per month. It is a valuable service that is well-used and well-liked by patrons, and its ease of use improves the way patrons are able to access materials.

Mr. Kong recommended that the Board approve a one-year renewal of INN-Reach for \$27,869.86.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE A ONE-YEAR RENEWAL OF INN-REACH FOR A TOTAL COST OF \$27,869.86.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 4 ayes and 0 nays.

PROJECTED FY 2020-2021 BUDGET

Last month, Mr. Kong presented the Board with a first look at the projected operating budget for FY 2020-2021. A copy of the projected budget for FY 2020-2021 was provided to the Board (no changes were made from the budget presented last month), including estimates for anticipated revenues and expenditures. Mr. Kong will provide another revision of the projected budget in March, and will ask the Board to approve the final budget in April.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has issued final figures for 2019 for wages and salaries for state and local government workers, and the increase for the year is 2.9%. The salary line as proposed allows for a combined merit and cost of labor increase of 3.1% for staff who are eligible. The March Board agenda will include a recommendation for the Board to consider a cost of labor and merit increase for staff. This will allow Mr. Kong to present the final proposed budget to the Board in April.

Approval of the budget is not required until April.

There was brief reminder regarding the Board's decision over the past two years to approve a 0% tax levy increase. Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked a question about the structure and organization of the budget.

The Board noted the budget.

UPDATE OF ANTICIPATED CAPITAL PROJECTS

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

The repairs to the exterior south courtyard brick wall and the installation of the vertical platform lift in the Petty Auditorium were the two major capital expenses during the past six months. Later this year, the library plans to take on the following capital projects to coincide with the opening of newly renovated spaces:

- Replace the public adult computers (pending Board approval this month)
- Replace the Bibliotheca equipment (approved by Board in 2019)
- Upgrade and expand the security systems (i.e., access control, intrusion detection, video surveillance)
- Upgrade and expand AV/Technology for the 1st and 2nd floors
- Order custom book displays
- Refurbish and upgrade two cooling towers

A number of larger projects related to the interior spaces and courtyards were not included because they may be folded into the renovation project that began in January.

Looking ahead over the next five years, Mr. Kong anticipates that both the lower roof and upper roof will need to be replaced. In addition, the library may consider a major repaving project for the parking lot and driveways once the renovation project is completed. Several technology upgrades will also be needed over the next several years as indicated on the spreadsheet.

Another updated list of anticipated capital projects will be provided in August 2020 as the Board considers the 2020 tax levy. The complete capital asset study is available through the Board's Dropbox, and can be viewed at any time. No board action is needed at this time. This update is for informational and planning purposes only.

Ms. Barbir asked where the funds for a potential roof replacement would come from. Mr. Kong explained they would come from the library's reserves.

The Board noted the update.

APPROVAL OF REVISED BORROWING POLICY

After operating for a year under the revised borrowing policy approved in early 2019, which included the elimination of overdue fines for youth materials, we are ready to recommend a further revision to the policy that would eliminate overdue fines on all library materials.

In recent years, there has been a growing movement in public libraries across the country to eliminate overdue fines. In a *Chicago Tribune* story from October 29, 2019, PLA President Ramiro Salazar noted that "roughly 475 public libraries are now fine free, 200 libraries are partially fine free, and about 15 libraries are currently in the process of going fine free." In the Chicagoland area alone, many libraries have either approved a fine free policy or are planning to do so in the upcoming months, including Chicago Public Library, Ela Area Public Library, Indian Trails Public Library, Lake Forest Library, Morton Grove Public Library, Niles-Maine District Library, Northbrook Public Library, Oak Park Public Library, and Vernon Area Public Library.

Eliminating overdue fines aligns with the library's core organizational values of community (centering our efforts on the lives of people in our community) and compassion (taking action that is rooted in equity and respect for human dignity). It also supports our strategic priorities of building a resilient, engaged, and inclusive community. According to demographic data, many residents in Skokie experience serious financial challenges (7% of the households in Skokie have incomes below the poverty line), and we know that fines can be a significant barrier to library access. We want everyone in Skokie to use library resources fully without fear of negative financial impact.

This year we observed that eliminating overdue fines for youth materials did not cause a dramatic increase in the number of users with overdue items on their accounts. In April 2019, before the

elimination of overdue fines on youth materials, 11.09% of the youth materials that were checked out were overdue. At the end of November 2019, 11.06% of the youth materials that were checked out were overdue. This has also been the case at libraries that have gone completely fine free. Most report that they still have approximately the same rate of timely returns. We also learned that blocking further use of a library card once an item has been overdue for a set length of time was incentive enough for most people to return their items in a timely fashion. Our current policy is to block cards when an item reaches 21 days overdue, with no additional check outs permitted until the item is renewed or returned. Charges for lost or damaged items are still assessed, and accounts with more than \$30 in lost materials are sent to Unique Management to initiate further reminders to return materials. With a recent upgrade to our ILS, we will soon be able to offer automatic renewals for eligible items which should help cut down on the number of items that are overdue. We are also working to revise our reminder notices that go out to patrons when an item is due soon or becomes overdue so that they are easier to read.

If the policy is approved, library staff will waive existing overdue fines from adult materials, but leave fees on accounts for lost and damaged items. This would result in 14,486 library cards being cleared of overdue fines.

Elimination of overdue fines on all materials would result in a reduction of revenue of approximately \$30,000 per year, which is a small fraction of our entire budget. This potential loss in revenue for next year has already been factored into the proposed FY 2021 operating budget.

Two additional minor changes to the borrowing policy are proposed:

- **The elimination of the limit on the number of items a Skokie cardholder can place on hold.** Patrons with lengthy reserve lists are often power users of the library's collection, so allowing them to place more items on reserve will encourage greater use of the collection.
- **The elimination of the limit on the number of DVDs a cardholder can have checked out at one time.** Our DVD collection is quite large and circulation has been tapering off, so we can still offer a robust collection on the shelves while lifting the limit on the number of DVDs a patron can check out.

Mr. Kong recommended that the Board approve the revised borrowing policy.

Ms. Barbir asked about the process for reminding patrons if they have overdue items on their account. Ms. McGrath explained the process for recovering overdue items through the series of notifications sent to patrons.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked about the policy of locking patrons' cards when they do not return items after they are 21 days overdue. There was discussion among the Board.

Mr. Griffin asked about the potential of using cloud services for video games.

Mr. Kong emphasized the limitations placed on reciprocal borrowers versus Skokie cardholders.

Ms. Rivera-Pulex asked about the size of our technology equipment collection.

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

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 4 ayes and 0 nays.

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

RAILS Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, January 17, 2020

Burr Ridge Service Center

The following are highlights from the January 17, 2020, RAILS Board of Directors meeting's supporting documents and recorded video conference.

Financial Report: Mr. Jim Kregor reported that the unassigned General Fund total cash and investment balance ending December 31, 2019, was \$16,900,000, covering 18 months of operation. RAILS received the final installments from the FY2019 Area and Per Capital Grant, totaling \$3,217,500. He mentioned that as of January 1, RAILS received 35.6% of the FY2020 funding.

Executive Director Report: Deirdre Brennan stated that she and RAILS and Heartland staff members have met with the Illinois State Library and Laboratory for Applied Spatial Analysis to initiate new studies on increasing efficiency and decreasing costs on routes and deliveries throughout the state. She will report on the final results at a later meeting.

In her Board Report, Ms. Brennan announced that the Certification for Membership process began January 2, 2020, and ends March 31, 2020. She felt that the process will go more smoothly because it is more streamlined with the use of L2 and the existing data readily available through the Illinois State Library.

Census Project Manager, Amy de la Fuente, updated the Board on the 2020 Census Project. With 74 days to go until the official start of the Census on April 1, she and RAILS staff have been involved with 23 sub-recipients (as part of the \$750,000 state grant) in the planning and organizing to reach out to as many groups of people as possible. The sub-recipients, including libraries, social service agencies, and non-profit organizations, are especially focusing on the underserved populations.

Ms. Brennan introduced Monica Harris, RAILS new Associate Executive Director, who presented to the Board her professional biography and library experience.

Ms. Brennan presented her half-year Executive Director progress report on her goals for 2020. Of the thirteen goals listed, she highlighted working with the Illinois State Library for increased funding, implementing changes to the delivery system, assisting libraries with complying with the minimum wage mandate, and studying and employing equity, diversity, and inclusion practices within RAILS.

Next meeting: Friday, February 12, 2020, at Burr Ridge Service Center

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

There were no comments from the trustees.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:18 pm a motion was made by Ms. Rivera-Pulex, seconded by Ms. Barbir to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen Parrilli, Secretary