

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
February 4, 2021

Board members in attendance: [President] Jade Hart, [Vice President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Monica Challenger, Mary Sharp, Randy Ramlo, Hassan Selim, Susie McDermott

Absent: Rafael Jacobo

Staff in attendance: [Library Director] Dara Schmidt, Patrick Duggan, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Jessica Link, Todd Simonson, Jessica Musil, Trevor Hanel

Others: Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

A. Call to Order

- Ms. Hart called the meeting to order at 4 pm.
- This electronic meeting of the Library Board of Trustees is being held because meeting in person is impossible and impractical due to concerns for the health and safety for Library trustees, staff, and community members presented by COVID-19. An electronic meeting is allowed by Iowa Code Section 21.8 and Governor Reynolds proclamations of emergency disaster. All trustees and staff are joining from home. This meeting is also live on the Library's Facebook page.

B. Consent Agenda – **Action**

- Minutes: Jan. 7, 2021

Ms. Sharp motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Challenger seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.

C. Public Comments and Communications

- There being none, the meeting continued.

D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler

- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) had its largest month of new enrollments for past year. Due to the pandemic, most registrations are submitted online so we can't attribute an enrollment partner source. We have a new partner in the ARC of East Central Iowa. In January, we have 5,559 children enrolled, which accounts for 61% of the eligible population.
- The Rooted in Reading fundraising program is preparing for its first public appeal. The fundraiser, which benefits DPIL and gives donors three trees, will start with an appeal for pre-orders with a public campaign in March.
- The year-end appeal met its goal.
- Ms. Sharp asked if Ms. Tyler's efforts to retrieve undelivered DPIL books was successful. Ms. Tyler noted that she attempted a method to collect undelivered books from the post office but has not made progress toward a solution at this time.
- Ms. Challenger asked if the DPIL program misses any particular type of student or household. We cannot track this. However, through our school district partnership, we can cross reference DPIL participants to school data. However, due to the current school year's rocky start, we don't have recent data. We can compare zip code data and understand income based on students who receive free or reduced lunches. Previous data indicates that the lowest enrollee demographic is young black boys.

Mr. Selim joined the meeting at 4:09 pm.

Ms. Tyler hopes to better identify and fill the demographic gap to better understand who we are missing and take measures to improve outreach and enrollment.

E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- The Friends will host a book lovers grab bag sale on Feb. 13. Patrons can select three different genres (poetry, romance or mystery/adventure) for this pre-order sale.
- At the time of the meeting, the Cedar Rapids Farmers Market schedule for the 2021 season has not yet been released. Ms. Slappey is hopeful that the Friends can host sales on the downtown library's plaza on those Saturdays. The Friends are hopeful for Saturday fall sales and have not yet set a date for the large November sale. All details will be based on COVID conditions.

F. Board Education: Ancestry.com Resource Overview – Erin Horst

- Since 2012, the Library offers a limited Ancestry.com resource. Previously, it was only available in the library but is now accessible at home due to the pandemic. The library edition has a few limitations than a paid personal version. Library Edition versus personal. The library edition is an excellent place to start with genealogy research.
- Usage has increased in last year, which could be due to the pandemic and better accessibility. In FY19, we had approximately 10,000 uses; FY20 increased to 18,000; and we are already at 10,000 for FY21 with about four months remaining in the fiscal year.
- Ms. Horst provided a demonstration on what type of information is accessible and how to use the product using screenshots from the database.
- Ms. Sharp asked if we can anticipate access at home to remain in the long-term. Ms. Horst noted there is no indication at this time and it is hard to predict based on Ancestry.com's business model with personal accounts. She is hopeful.
- Mr. Wilding asked if we have a connection with Genealogical Society of Linn County. We have a limited connection with the society. On occasion, they use our resources and we refer patrons to them.
- Ms. Hart asked about downloading and printing family records found in the database. Through the library edition, users can access templates and individual historical documents, such as census pages.

G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Randy Ramlo, Committee Chair
 - Mr. Ramlo reviewed Ms. Schmidt's Finance Memo and December 2020's financial statement. Nothing is out of the ordinary for this point of the fiscal year.
 - Ms. Sharp asked why computer services spending appears to be so high. Ms. Schmidt noted that contract payments are due at the beginning of the year so the account line item looks imbalanced for a majority of the year. However, by the end of the fiscal year, it settles and remains close to the budgeted amount.
 - **Action:** County Contract for Library Services, FY21
 - The Library has received its annual contract to provide services for unincorporated Linn County residents. The amount payable to the Library is \$84,054.11. The final amount, which varies amongst the 11 Linn County libraries, is calculated with a pre-determined formula for Linn Country resident uses, and then paid accordingly.
 - Ms. Sharp asked if this amount is separate from usage contracts with neighboring cities. Ms. Schmidt confirmed that yes, Linn County funds are separate from our library service contracts with Robins and Alburnett. Contracts are similar but have different income sources.

The motion to accept the County Contract for Library Services for FY21 carried unanimously.

- Personnel and Policy Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - The State Library of Iowa has updated their trustees manual. Ms. Schmidt and Mr. Twedt-Ball will review and bring some of those ideas to the full board in the future; for example, the manual has a tool to evaluate the board’s effectiveness.
- Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Sharp thanked board members for participating in City Council member conversations. We have received good feedback and felt the conversations were positive.
 - We will have some new services soon and look forward to advocacy efforts to raise awareness. These services include the launch of the mobile technology to go vehicle and circulating Chromebooks.
 - Ms. Hart asked if there was anything of interest from the City Council conversations to share. In general, conversations indicated strong support of the Library and council members expressed praise of the Library’s community support during the pandemic.

H. Library Director’s Report

- The City budget hearing is on Monday, Feb. 8. When it is available, Ms. Schmidt will email the Zoom link so trustees can attend to show support as availability allows. The City will present the Library’s budget within the overall City’s budget package. Finance Director Casey Drew, will present the details and at the end allow Ms. Schmidt to provide a quick discussion of the budget proposal.
- On Monday, Feb. 1, both buildings opened to the public for grab and go service. So far, it is not super busy but we serve a steady stream of patrons throughout open hours. It was tremendous to welcome patrons again including many families to select their own books.
- The Library, Friends, and Foundation worked with a consultant to better define the goals and working relationship. The goal was to better support all organizations and their respective but intertwined work. A report has been developed and Ms. Schmidt will bring more details at the March meeting.
- Community Relations is planning a virtual version of the Community Expo – it is an important event for us and our community, and we wish to continue offering this.
- Ms. Schmidt has been advocating on a state level to classify public service staff as vaccine eligible. According to the CDC guidelines, library staff are in phase 1c classification; however, Iowa does not have a 1c classification so government employees and library staff are not specified at this time. At the City level, if vaccines were allowed from the state, the City vaccine distribution committee supports this prioritization.
- The Chromebooks have finally arrived and the IT team are preparing the computers for circulation. Each Chromebook will come with its on hotspot, which are separate from our other circulating hotspots. The goal is to start circulation sometime in March.
- The library received a Giacoletto Foundation grant for the mobile technology van. A wrap has been designed and we’re anticipating a ramp and shelving to be installed in the van. The goal is to be on the road and doing programs this Spring.
- Ms. Sharp asked if the board can help advocate for COVID vaccines for library workers. Ms. Schmidt will forward contact information and a template letter. She believes this is our only option right now as the state does not have no open meetings regarding this.

I. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

J. New Business

- There being no new business, the meeting continued.

K. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, March 4, 2021, at 4 pm, via Zoom.