

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
January 4, 2024

Board members in attendance: [Vice President] Monica Challenger, Jade Hart, Chris Casey, Susie McDermott, Jeremy Elges, Elisabeth Hepworth, Rafael Jacobo (in person); Hassan Selim (via Zoom)

Board members unable to attend: [President] Clint Twedt-Ball

Staff in attendance: Dara Schmidt, Kevin Delecki, Erin Horst, Amber McNamara, Jessica Musil (in person); Jessica Link, Patrick Duggan (via Zoom)

Others: Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Foundation of the Cedar Rapids Public Library; Libby Slappey, Presidents, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library (via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order
 - Ms. Challenger called the meeting to order at 4 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: December 7, 2023

Ms. McDermott moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Hart seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.
- C. Public Comments and Communications
 - There being none, the meeting continued
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
 - On January 25 from 4-6 pm, the Foundation will host a formal Big Dreams public campaign launch party at Ladd Library. The full building will be open, and staff will be stationed around, so guests can learn more about the library and Opportunity Center. The Foundation has seen a significant jump with incoming gifts and pledges for the new project including invitations to be considered for grants.
 - The Foundation will host a birthday party for Dolly Parton on Saturday, January 20. The event, which also celebrates Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, will feature singing “Happy Birthday”, story time, a dance party, and donated cookies for guests.

Mr. Elges joined the meeting at 4:04 pm.

- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
 - The Friends Board is excited to support the Westside Library Project and committed \$250,000.
 - The Friends have two sales coming up in January and February. They will host a children’s books sale during Dolly Parton’s birthday party event. On Saturday, February 17, they will sell romance books in conjunction with an author event at the downtown library.

Mr. Selim joined the meeting via Zoom at 4:07 pm.

- F. Library Board Committee Reports
 - Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
 - Mr. Jacobo reported. He reminded trustees that the official unveiling of the Advocacy Toolkit will take place after the board meeting in Beems Auditorium.
- G. Library Board Committee Reports
 - Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Challenger reported on November 2023 financials. The expenses and revenues remain on target. Expenses paid at the beginning of the year continue

to even out as the fiscal year progresses. Ms. Challenger noted that the library started to charge again for printing and we have exceeded budgeted revenues. She also shared that the Sales of Inventory line item may look off. The library gives away inexpensive wired ear buds for use at the computers. These are helpful to reduce behavior issues or no need to clean shared earbuds.

- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair.
 - **Action:** 1.05 Statement on Labeling. The committee reviewed this longstanding policy, which was first adopted by ALA in 1951. It describes how library's should label their books to find a genre and not show a preference or opinion. In addition, labels would not indicate a rating of some kind. The committee did not have any recommended changes.
 - **Action:** 1.05a Labels and Rating Systems. This policy complements Policy 1.05, elaborating further on neutrality in labels and rating systems. The committee did not recommend any changes.
 - **Action:** 1.06 Statement of Ethics. The committee felt the statement of ethics remains valid and did not recommend changes.

The committee recommendation to approve the reviewed policies as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.

- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Hart reported that the committee met with OPN Architects to discuss strategies to keep the library project within budget. This is especially important as we are getting closer to preparing construction documents for bid. Construction documents have to be locked in at or under budget. The committee decided that the best choice is to slightly reduce square footage by removing the far end classroom. The committee felt even with reductions – the project still had three times as many meeting spaces than the current Ladd Library – this choice didn't reduce services or resources. Construction documents have to be locked in at or under budget. Ms. Schmidt anticipates having updated documents by the end of February; from there, we can host a final open house. Mr. Jacobo asked if there is a possibility for future expansion of the library building. Ms. Schmidt said yes, the library is positioned to allow for potential additions on the east side of the building. The building will still be over 40,000 square feet.

H. Library Director's Report

- The FY25 budget is not yet complete and Ms. Schmidt anticipates it'll be ready for the February board meeting. However, if timelines do not align, we may have to call a special meeting in mid-February. Due to state-level changes, Cities and Counties are taking their time to move forward with heavily vetted numbers.
- Ms. Schmidt gave a preview of two upcoming big picture discussions for board education. First, Public Service Manager Todd Simonson will discuss the service navigator partnership, which has been successful. As the City and County try to align more with Housing First model, we want to complement resources available in the community. Second, we're starting to see changes in circulation patterns following November's collection move at the downtown library. The Materials team is trying to find baseline in their circulation data, which has been difficult with the pandemic and shifts in publishing and popular reader trends.
- In January, the strategic plan will transition a bit as some initiatives are ending and others are beginning. Five years ago, in order to develop a more diverse collection, it was labor intensive. Now, vendors have products available to do the analysis. We selected Baker & Taylor for a subscription model. Our data has been sent in and we're waiting for reports and modeling on our full collection. Materials Manager Erin Horst expects work will start in adult fiction. For right person right time connections, a leadership team is discussing the summer reading program and how to bring its focus on what's important in our community. The team feels it's important to get back to basics with literacy due to

learning loss with the pandemic. The core summer reading experience will not change but the importance of the dares will be reduced. More information will be presented as the plan is adapted.

- The Gingerbread House Contest was very popular again this year. It has been a successful partnership, which also receives great media coverage. Approximately 130 kits were given out with 41 submitted entries. The contest concluded with almost 10,000 votes, which is similar last year's contest.
- 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 4:49 pm.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 4 pm in the Conference Room, Downtown Library