

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
December 3, 2020

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

Staff in attendance: [Library Director] Dara Schmidt, Patrick Duggan, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Aaron Bock, 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 4:00 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: Nov. 5, 2020

Mr. Ramlo motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. McDermott seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.

C. Public Comments and Communications

- There being none, the meeting continued.

D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler

- The Foundation is selling Love my Library gift sets that include a blanket, mug, and faux leather gift book mark. One hundred gift boxes were put together – 60 sold in the first two weeks.
- King's Material is a challenge sponsor for Giving Tuesday. The organization will match up to \$1000 in donations to the Foundation.
- November was the third highest enrollment month for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL). At this time, we have 5,453 children enrolled.
- The year-end appeal is scheduled to arrive in mailboxes later this week or early next week. In addition, the Foundation is working on a spring fundraiser and other projects. More information will be forthcoming.
- Ms. Hart asked if we knew where the DPIL enrollments are coming from. Due to the pandemic, most enrollments are entered online so sources can't be tracked as they would have on paper forms.

E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- The Friends are continuing to pursue the Sustainable Shelves program with guidance from Materials Manager Erin Horst. The program, with book supplier Baker & Taylor, will purchase or recycle donated materials. The Friends are officially registered and should reduce inventory in a sustainable way soon enough.
- Volunteers Dwight Schroeder and Nick Wells have been listing books for sale on Amazon, which is the only source of income at this time. They have been selling individual books for a larger profit and finding success in this endeavor.

F. Board Education: Integrated Library System – Dara Schmidt, Erin Horst, and Aaron Bock

- Ms. Schmidt shared the history between the libraries within the Metro Library Network (MLN). The consortium allows the libraries to share resources, such as software, processes, and services, even though each library has its own board and staff. The agreement provides better library service to our respective communities.
- Toni Garvey Consulting developed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to improve efficiencies and cost-sharing. All three library boards will vote on the MOU this month, which is in the board packet. Mr. Ramlo asked if the MOU was flexible to address any future needs. Ms. Schmidt confirmed that the language will help the libraries address changes as needed.
- The MOU designates cost-sharing. The Integrated Library System (ILS) is the most expensive item. The MOU and ILS contract will run consecutive for five years so the libraries can have consistent levels of service with opportunity to change. Ms. Schmidt does not anticipate any drastic impacts to the cost-sharing formula. Ms. Sharp asked if the cost-sharing formulas be adjusted when the MOU expires. Ms. Schmidt noted that yes, it will be reviewed prior to the next MOU. One of the biggest changes for this MOU is having a consistent shared cost so the libraries can plan accordingly for their budgets.

Mr. Wilding joined the meeting at 4:19 pm.

Ms. Schmidt provided an overview of the cost-sharing charts for the next five years. The only change may be an increase of price for databases. Mr. Ramlo asked if there is any risk with entering into an agreement with Marion's pending leadership change. Ms. Schmidt feels comfortable because the MOU will be beneficial regardless of its leadership.

- Materials Manager Erin Horst and Materials Supervisor Aaron Bock introduced the basic functions of an ILS. This system holds data for library materials and patron accounts, which allows the day-to-day functions of library staff, such as accessing the catalog, checking out/in materials, and more.
- The MLN has had the same system, periodically upgraded, for the past 17 years. And while the current system works, it does not enhance patron experiences nor is it efficient. Purchasing best practice recommends re-evaluating contracts every five years.
- A committee, with representatives from the three libraries, met to determine priorities for a new product. The committee's highest priority was ease of use for both patrons and staff. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was released and the committee interviewed several ILS companies. There was an unanimous decision from all the libraries' representatives: Polaris from Innovative Interfaces, Inc. (III). Several videos were played highlighting a typical patron experience with the catalogue and the ease of use for a staff member assisting a patron.
- Ms. Hart asked if the upgrade to Polaris is better than current product. We believe it'll be much better than our current ILS and any upgrades is automatically included without additional cost.
- Mr. Jacobo questioned the system's stability and reliability. Mr. Bock noted that the system is cloud-based but includes a downloadable client to use in offline mode if we don't have Internet or power. We can also provide input and clients can vote to push an upgrade feature's timeline. Our current system is a downloaded client and any upgrades require us to manually each computer individually.
- Mr. Wilding asked if we own our data. Ms. Horst affirmed that all data – materials, patron, etc. – is ours, which is part of the privacy agreement. ILS companies only own the software. This allows us to extract our data from an old system to a new one.
- III's proposal allots about two to four hours of training for staff; our current system takes two weeks of training.
- Mr. Jacobo asked about the implementation timeframe and its impact to the library. Ms. Horst responded the system will go live by July – the transition is lengthy for data

movement, configuration, training, etc. Mr. Ramlo wondered if the anticipated increased efficiency could impact staffing. Ms. Schmidt doesn't believe it will change direct staffing but instead allow staff more time to focus on direct patron interactions, and also continue curbside and grab bag services post-pandemic.

G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Randy Ramlo, Committee Chair
 - Mr. Ramlo reviewed Ms. Schmidt's Finance Memo. There are no concerns at this time and expenses are within range for this time of year.
 - **Action:** Resolution – Memorandum of Understanding Metro Library Network FY22-26.
 - There was no further discussion of the resolution or MOU.
The motion to accept the resolution and the MOU as presented in the board packet carried unanimously.
 - **Action:** Resolution – ILS Contract Approval.
 - The final contract is not yet complete but in order for implementation to start immediately, it must be accepted in December. If Cedar Rapids approves the contract first, this will allow the other libraries to vote. Ms. Schmidt does not have any concerns but the resolution language guarantees we will only enter the contract after it has had vetting and approval by the Purchasing department and City Attorney. In addition, the contract is only valid if approved all MLN partners sign MOU. For these reasons, Ms. Schmidt is asking the board to approve the resolution instead of a contract.
 - The contract will be available for public record soon – right now, it's not because we're in the process. We can share the 165-page proposal with the trustees individually.
The motion to accept the ILS Contract Resolution as presented in the board packet carried unanimously.
 - **Action:** Janitorial Contract Renewal.
 - This is the last year of a five year contract and we will go for bid next year. Ms. Schmidt has no reason not to renew for the final year of the contract.
 - The annual price will not exceed the contracted amount, which did not increase. If we had to reduce hours and/or cleaning, we would pay less. With new cleaning protocols, they have been responsive.
The motion to accept the janitorial contract renewal, not to exceed \$161,768, carried unanimously.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - There being no report, the meeting continued.
- Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Sharp reported that Ms. McNamara will email information regarding curbside services and discussion points for student services.
 - At this time, we have five City Council members covered for City Leadership conversations and four open slots. Ms. Musil will send a reminder out but encouraged trustees to sign up.

H. Library Director's Report

- Since the last board meeting, we reduced services to curbside only in response to community spread. The community metrics have changed since we wrote the initial pandemic response plan. Library's senior managers chose metrics and information services to determine how we will move through the services. MS. Schmidt has concerns regarding reopening to the public in December, as she anticipates an uptick in community counts due to holiday gatherings.

- We made some changes to the curbside process, allowing same day appointments that have been well-received. CHOMP, for book delivery, used for the first time this week. In addition, we started chat services with over 40 uses without promoting the new service. Most questions are related to Grab Bag services and curbside holds.
 - Ms. Schmidt met recently with the library directors of ten largest Iowa libraries and all are still curbside only. She continues having conversations with peers and gauging what other libraries are doing in service response as a way to measure against other libraries and not necessarily local schools.
 - With changes with the Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD), we're unsure if the downtown library will be used as an Internet Hub. Even if we are closed to the public, we will allow the hub in Beems Auditorium because it is staffed by CRCSD and poses no safety risk to our staff. We are waiting to hear more from the district.
 - Ms. Schmidt provided an update to year three of the strategic plan. Mr. Wilding asked if there are any tentative plans for the next strategic plan. At this time, Ms. Schmidt will encourage we keep literacy, access, and inclusion, as they are strong pillars to continue focusing on, though trustees input on this is encourage. Ms. Schmidt believes, that what could be considered, year four will reframe what we missed due to the pandemic within the new normal and in year five, we would start planning a full consultant-focused plan.
- 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 5:26 pm

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021, at 4 pm, via Zoom.