

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
Dec. 5, 2019

Board members in attendance: [President] Matthew Wilding, [Vice President] Jade Hart, Clint Twedt-Ball, Harriet Kalinsky, Hassan Selim, Mary Sharp, Monica Challenger

Board members unable to attend: Randy Ramlo, Susie McDermott

Staff in attendance: [Library Director] Dara Schmidt, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Kevin Delecki, Todd Simonson, Aaron Bock, Patrick Duggan, Jessica Musil

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

- A. Call to Order
 - Mr. Wilding called the meeting to order at 4 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: Nov. 7, 2019

Ms. Hart motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Kalinsky seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.
- C. Public Comments and Communications
 - There being none, the meeting continued.
- D. **Action:** Resolution in thanks of Mystic Tat2
 - Mystic Tat2, in conjunction with the Library Foundation, offered a fundraiser to benefit Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. This popular tattoo fundraiser, which has raised over \$4,000, was extended another month. The owners will be present at the January meeting for recognition.

Ms. Challenger motioned to accept the resolution of thanks recognizing Mystic Tat2. Ms. Sharp seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.
- E. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
 - The Foundation continues to receive commitments from corporate donors. This year, donations from individuals is down. Ms. Tyler will continue to monitor and next year, she may make changes to improve individual donations.
 - The Foundation ran its online giving campaign for Giving Tuesday.
- F. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
 - The Friends board will conduct a strategic planning retreat in January to continue meeting the Library’s needs.
- G. Board Education: Fines and Fees Report – Erin Horst and Aaron Bock
 - Erin Horst, Materials Manager, and Aaron Bock, Materials Project Supervisor, presented the Cedar Rapids Public Library’s research and recommendations for fines as a part of the strategic plan. The full research and recommendation report is included in the packet.
 - The committee was made up of Erin; Aaron; Jill Martinez, Automation Librarian; Kristine Olsen, Materials Librarian; and Jessica Musil, Administrative Assistant. This team researched – including interviews other libraries and data analysis within our own library system – and wrote the report, which recommends the elimination of fines for late materials.
 - The research and report concludes that overdue fines do not work; are not aligned with our mission, vision, and values; and can have multiple negative effects.

- In interviews with similar-sized fine free libraries, the staff reported they did not experience an increase in late materials. Some experienced quicker returns while most libraries experienced increased circulation and visits.
- The Library wishes to break down barriers and serve our community equitably. We have over 16,000 blocked cards, which disproportionately impact low-income residents in Cedar Rapids.
- In an internal study, Library staff have over 300 conversations about fines a week, equating to roughly 16,000 conversations a year, which is a drain on staff and patrons. In addition, Library staff spend up to \$57,000 a year to collect and reconcile approximately \$78,000 in overdue fines.
- The report also makes recommendations for a new procedure for materials return, such as increased due date notifications, blocking accounts for late materials, damage fees, and more. A new procedure using the recommendations will be discussed and approved by Metro Library Network (MLN) partners for final implementation.

H. Library Board Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Randy Ramlo, Committee Chair
 - **Action:** Library Concession Agreement
 - The Library has a new five-year contract with SWRV LLC, doing business as The Greyhound Café, which begins in January 2020. This contract includes an initial two-year term with three one-year renewals. Ms. Schmidt noted the changes including:
 - 1.3a. The timeframe to notify the Library of an intention to renew was changed from 90 to 60 days.
 - 5.5.a. This section has an addition, which allows the Library to close the space when necessary for repairs and upgrades.
 - 6.2. The Catering Fee shall be paid annually instead of monthly.
 - 6.3. This new clause formalizes rent reduction in cases of closures for necessary repairs and upgrades.

The motion to accept and allow Ms. Schmidt to sign the Library's Concession Agreement with SWRV LLC, dba The Greyhound Café, was carried with unanimous approval.

- Ms. Schmidt noted that financials are normal for this time of the year and she expects to present the FY21 budget to the board at the January meeting.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - **Action:** 3.03 Fines and Fees
 - Mr. Twedt-Ball praised the staff committee for the development of the research and recommendations report. The document, with leadership guidance from Ms. Schmidt and Mr. Wilding, helped the Personnel and Policy committee make the recommended changes to the Fines and Fees Policy, which is also included in the board packet.
 - The board discussed the policy change, which is planned to take effect with the new fiscal year on July 1, 2020. Ms. Sharp and Ms. Kalinsky both expressed their initial hesitance with the idea, especially based on their own personal experience and history. Both commended the Library research team for presenting information in a clear and complete manner that allowed them to make an informed decision.
 - Following approval, Ms. Schmidt noted that the Library will monitor and regularly report the effects of the policy, specifically highlighting materials return, circulation, and door counts. She will present a budget that accounts for this new policy.

- Adoption of the policy change allows for Ms. Schmidt to make procedural changes with MLN partners. Once the procedure changes are determined, she will share those with the board.
- Mr. Twedt-Ball noted in full transparency that some trustees do have fines. This policy change does not give the trustees powers to eliminate any outstanding fines and thereby wiping their own fines. MLN will make a determination on potentially clearing past fines. He urged any trustees with fines to pay those fines prior to the July 1 start date.

The motion to accept Policy 3.03 as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.

- Advocacy Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - Trustees will receive an email to sign up for City Council member conversations regarding the Library budget. This annual conversation is particularly important with the elimination of overdue fines. Ms. Schmidt will have packets and talking points for trustees.
- I. Library Director’s Report
- The Library will start its second year of the current strategic plan; this will be discussed at the January meeting.
 - The City is completing its Wage Review Process for non-bargaining employees. Ms. Schmidt has meetings with City Leadership to understand impacts to the Library.
 - Library Administrative Assistant Jessica Musil won one of 15 scholarships to attend the Public Library Association (PLA) Conference in Nashville, TN, this February. She will join other staff representing the Library at this bi-annual conference.
 - The Library has two retiring employees this month: Materials Processor Donald Troester and Design and Marketing Specialist Amy Ackman retired after 35 and 40 years, respectively.
 - The downtown library was selected one of two libraries – one urban and one rural – with a grant from Linn County Public Health. The grant allows us to have a 30 hour a week position as a pilot project in the Library to provide support and programming for specific health topics. This position fits well within the strategic plan.
- J. Old Business
- There being no old business, the meeting continued.
- K. New Business
- January Meeting Date
 - The routine meeting is on Thursday, Jan. 2. As we will discuss and vote on the budget, Ms. Schmidt offered moving the board meeting on Thursday, Jan. 9 to accommodate holiday schedules. Board members present stated they can attend on the originally scheduled date, which would establish quorum. The board meeting will remain on Jan. 2.
- L. Adjournment
- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2020, at 4 pm in the Conference Room at the Downtown Library.