

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**August 3, 2023**

**Board members in attendance:** [President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Elisabeth Hepworth, Susie McDermott, Jeremy Elges (in person); [Vice President] Monica Challenger, Jade Hart, Rafael Jacobo (via Zoom)

**Board members unable to attend:** Chris Casey, Hassan Selim

**Staff in attendance:** Dara Schmidt, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Kevin Delecki, Todd Simonson, Jessica Musil (in person)

**Others:** Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Foundation of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

- A. Call to Order
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: July 6, 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
  - The Foundation has been busy preparing for their annual audit as well as the capital campaign. Foundation staff and the library director continue to visit potential donors.
  - Dolly Patron’s Imagination Library (DPIIL) concluded the fiscal year with 5,500 children enrolled, which remains the typical monthly average. The program has graduated around 6,000 children. The Foundation board has also approved measures for financial stability for annual support, though regular donations will help keep the program active. Individual book prices increased from \$2.10 to \$2.20 to cover postage, which is approximately \$26 a year per child.
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball asked if the Foundation has a donor ask list before the public campaign and how far through the list have they gone through? Ms. Tyler reported they are about halfway through the list. They are focusing on a particular set of donors before asking others. They are waiting for answers from donors before moving forward.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
  - Ms. Schmidt reported for Ms. Slappey. This weekend, the Friends will host a sale at the Farmers Market. The Friends board welcomed four new members, and will host a planning session to on-board the new members.
- F. Board Education: Strategic Plan Update – Right Patron Right Time Connections Initiative – Amber McNamara
  - This initiative is about moving the library from “everything to everyone” to “right patron, right time” connections. The library offers a lot and it’s not feasible or effective to tell everyone with different communication strategies. The goal is to implement strategies and tools for intentional marketing. We want to understand our customers, who they are, what they need, and provide targeted messaging.
  - The library collects data on the various programs and their respective audiences. This information will help to determine the best marketing strategy and messaging to reach the various audiences. Ms. McNamara shared some examples of how we can reach difference auditions with email marketing, data analysis, and focus groups.

- This strategic initiative will not operate as other initiatives in the past. Most strategic planning work is done by committee but this work will be done primarily with the Community Relations team, pulling in others as needed.
- Ms. McNamara noted that any data the library collects does not correlate to specific patron data. It is incredibly important to the library to maintain patron privacy and individual data is not accessible through these data streams.
- Mr. Twedt-Ball asked if there are appropriate examples of sharing data between the Library and Foundation? Ms. Schmidt noted that because of privacy, we do share some high-level information to the Foundation and Friends, but we don't solicit donations through library emails.

Ms. Challenger joined the meeting via Zoom at 4:22 pm.

- Ms. Hepworth noted that we live in an age where data gathering is expected. She appreciates that libraries uphold the importance of information privacy and this data will solely improve library experience. Ms. Schmidt shared that Patron Point is a marketing tool for libraries with privacy at its core. Our library has been hesitant to delve into marketing beyond sending emails. This product will allow us to market in other ways.

#### G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
  - There being no discussion, the meeting continued.
- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
  - There being no discussion, the meeting continued.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - There being no discussion, the meeting continued.
- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
  - The committee recently met with OPN and other key stakeholders as an update to the process. As of the meeting, OPN reviewed cost estimates, which are a little bit over at the end of the Design Development phase. They are exploring options to meet the budget, and the trustee committee may need to make decisions in the future. OPN will pause until January as fundraising continues. January 2024 is slated for a community open house as well as beginning construction documents. Groundbreaking is estimated for September 2024 with grand opening in September 2026.
  - Ms. Schmidt talked through pictures showing the site and floor plans as well as design photos depicting the interior and exterior views of the library, and preliminary choices for various finishes.

#### H. Library Director's Report

- Ms. Schmidt thanked the trustees for their participation and advocacy of the summer reading program. Internally, staff are competing for minutes read and the top competition is fierce. Books by Mail (BBM) patrons were also included in the summer reading program and could participate without the use of a computer. They logged over 100,000 minutes.
- Materials Manager Erin Horst, along with Volunteer Supervisor Jessica Link, will pilot the next level of BBM with Books by Delivery. In collaboration with City, a volunteer for delivery and a patron have been paired to trial this opportunity with the hopes of expanding the program. Mr. Elges asked if the library has considered partnering with Meals on Wheels to distribute books. Several years ago, that's where this project started. At this time, the answer is no but we will continue to ask for a partnership as our BBM patrons also receive meal services.
- The director's report includes data that concludes a full fiscal year. We are in the process of double-checking numbers before they are final for both the annual report and annual survey.

- At the downtown library starting Monday, August 21, visitors will see that the Commons is partially cordoned off to accommodate the light's replacement following the July 2022 fire. The installation is expected to take several weeks. The City is assisting the library to pursue a warranty claim for the third-floor roof of the downtown building. Parts of the roof failed in July 2023, causing water to come into the hallway outside the LivingLearning Roof's entrance.
- I. Old Business
- **Action:** Contract Amendment No. 1: OPN Architects for Westside Library Project (original contract amount was \$1,272,100; total contract amount with this amendment is \$1,282,800).
    - OPN Architects requested an additional \$10,700 to their Westside Library project contract due to a volume of services increase. There being no discussion, Mr. Twedt-Ball called for a vote.  
*Mr. Elges moved to accept the increase of \$10,700 to the contract. Ms. Hepworth seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*
- 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, September 7, 2023, at 4 pm in the Community Room, Ladd Library**