

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of Virtual Meeting
June 23, 2020

Call to Order: Matt Rosendahl called the meeting of the Duluth Library Board to order at 4:37 on June 23, 2020.

Members Present: Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl, Neil Glazman, Betty Ramsland, and Sue Henke. Lizzy Luoma joined at 5:00 pm. David Sperl joined at 5:10.

Also Present: Carla Powers (Library Manager), Arik Forsman (City Council), Jim Filby Williams (Director of Property, Parks and Libraries)

Absent: Stephen Welsh

Review and approve Agenda

Motion by Glazman, seconded by Foshay, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Used this time for introductions. This was Councilor Arik Forsman's first meeting as the City Council liaison.

Review and approve minutes from February 25, 2020.

Motion by Henke, seconded by Glazman, to approve the minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager's Report (Powers)

Powers reviewed her written report and answered questions. The layoffs of Library Technicians remain in effect. Two librarians chose to retire in April. With a hiring freeze in effect, these positions cannot be filled at present. The library is doing lots of online programming. Curbside pickup service recently moved to unscheduled pickups. At present there are 22 people on staff. The library lost 16 part-time staff in the first round of layoffs, and 25 library technicians in the second round. The layoffs are temporary according to the city, but the budget forecast is very uncertain so it's unclear when staff will be able to return. The book budget has not been affected, but staff that previously ordered materials is currently laid off.

Friends Report (Ramsland)

Book sale will not take place this year, and donations are not being accepted at this time. Everything is currently on hold. The Friends recently approved a \$10,000 contribution to the library via email.

Foundation Report (Rosendahl)

The Foundation has continued to meet and do its fundraising work despite the pandemic. The Foundation secured a Paycheck Protection Program grant to keep all staff employed. Library Giving day exceeded the goal by raising more than \$20,000. The Foundation's major focus has been keeping Every Child Ready Duluth afloat.

Old Business

Every Child Ready Duluth Update:

The library technician that was funded by the Foundation was laid off in April. The librarian continues to work on Every Child Ready but it's much harder without a tech. The Foundation is currently funding an independent contractor part-time position. The ECRD technician on layoff status applied for it and has been hired in that capacity until she is called back to her technician position. She began work last week.

The library decided to postpone its AmeriCorps Vista position until next year, given current circumstances.

The ECRD "Brain Trust," which is a group of community leaders with expertise in the area of early literacy, continues to work on strategic planning with revised structure. The focus of ECRD has shifted from in-person outreach to getting giveaway books and early literacy information into the hands of children and caregivers.

New Business

Annual Report

Motion by Sperl, seconded by Ramsland, to approve the library's 2019 annual report as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Restoring library staffing levels and services

Due to staffing reductions there is no capacity for increased services without calling back more staff. There is still a lot of uncertainty about what opening up would entail. The current focus is the Main Library rather than the branches, because Main has the most comprehensive collection and provides the best access for people who do not arrive by car. The primary focus is restoring computer access and continuing curbside pickup. The Superior Public Library is currently offering in-person access by appointment and this model is being explored for use in Duluth. Powers has submitted a proposal to city administration to use unanticipated retirement savings to call back a few staff in order to make curbside pickup and returns more sustainable.

Advocacy

Sue Henke will follow up with Carla about getting some information that would help board members highlight what is going on at the library. Matt Rosendahl will outline a strategy and points of contact at the city and on council.

July Special meeting

We will meet again virtually Tuesday July 28.

Election of Officers

Matt Rosendahl's term as Chair is up; Sue Henke has volunteered to be Chair. Betty Ramsland has volunteered to serve as Vice Chair. Michelle Foshay has offered to continue her term as Secretary.

Motion by Sperl, seconded by Luoma, to approve this slate of officers. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Next meeting: July 28, 2020 at 4:30 p.m., on WebEx.