

Duluth Public Library Board Meeting Minutes
February 27th, 2024

Present: Bill Arezzo, Lizzy Luoma, Jose Gonzalez, Ellen Hatfield, Lori Steinbach, Matt Rosendahl

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, Sally Larson (League of Women Voters) and City Councilor Azrin Awal

Absent: Sue Henke, Michelle Foshay, Betty Ramsland

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 PM by Matt Rosendahl, Chairing

Review and approval of agenda

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Luoma, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the January 23rd meeting

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Hatfield, to approve minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager

- West Duluth Reimagined will have a celebration on Monday March 11th with speakers and a ribbon cutting. Library Foundation will send out invites by e-mail and mail. Tours of the updated space will happen at 5:00 pm.
- Library staff are working with the city's IT staff to redesign the library's website. The main page and a few inside pages are already mocked up. Colors and branding will not change. The goal of the redesign is to make the site easier to navigate.
- A new Libby collection will be purchased with a portion of the Cirrus money that the City Council allocated to the library last fall. Duluth card holders will have priority for getting holds filled from this collection. If there are no Duluth holds, the items will be open to all Arrowhead Library System patrons. The new purchases will help with the long wait times for holds. They also will allow access to more titles and more of the popular items. Library staff can run reports to see which items are the most popular. Currently most of the funding for Libby comes from the Arrowhead System.
- With the plans for the Main Library building changing somewhat, community engagement about the building is on pause. Instead, DPL and the Duluth Library Foundation will use the remaining funds conduct a few focus groups to ask about library services. Focus group topics will include questions about barriers to library use, what type of free activities would be of interest, what makes a place feel welcoming, etc.
- Some great candidates have come forward for the .5 library technician position. The pool has been narrowed down to four. The job opening for .5 library safety specialist will be posted soon. Library is very close to being fully staffed.
- Mayor Reinert has been invited to be a special guest reader at the Wiggles for Littles program on April 13th. He accepted.

Foundation

- At the last meeting the Foundation Board discussed where to go now, considering the city administration's desire to move in a different direction than before. After discussion the board decided to support – as written – the new bonding request for \$300,000 to fund further planning and design. The board is requesting more interaction with the mayor and staff. The Library Foundation plans to be more visible in the city as a whole to promote the library.

- The Foundation recently hosted the Olga Walker Awards Ceremony and Author Event, which has become a way to bring big name authors to town. Three people were recognized at the event for their support of the Foundation.
- April 11th is Library Giving Day at the Depot from 4 pm – 8 pm.

Friends

- Book Sale will be held June 10th – 13th. This year the Friends hope to implement credit card processing using Square.
- Other upcoming events are the Friends Annual Meeting on May 21st from 4 pm – 5 pm in the Main Library Green Room, and Round-up for the Friends at the Whole Foods Co-op in August.

Old Business

Facility Update

- A bonding request for \$300,000 has been submitted to the state. Funding will be used to study ways in which housing can be added to the library site. At the request of library advocates, language has been added to clarify that the library project also will include Workforce Development and the Duluth Police Department's Behavioral Health Unit. Both of these organizations currently operate out of leased space.

Privacy Policy

- The changes and/or additions were incorporated from the last meeting.
- Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Hatfield, to approve new document as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Election of Officers

The election of officers will take place at next month's meeting. Both Michelle and Sue have finished their two-year terms for President and Vice President. We will need to elect new. Lori is willing to stay on as Secretary.

Usage Statistics

A board member pointed out that January 2024 library visits were more than twice the number recorded in 2023. Carla suspects there was an error in the spreadsheet formula. She will double check the attendance numbers and make sure they are correct for the next meeting. Library has not quite gotten back to the 2019 (pre-covid) number of visitors or check outs, but program attendance is up 123%.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Stay tuned!

Adjournment - 5:24 PM