

Duluth Public Library Board Minutes February 28, 2023

Present: Michelle Foshay, Susan Henke, Lori Steinbach, Stephen Welsh, Bill Arezzo

Also in attendance: Councilor Noah Hobbs, Carla Powers, Jim Filby Williams, Debbi Rasmussen

Not Present: Matt Rosendahl, David Sperl, Betty Ramsland, Lizzy Luoma

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 PM

Review and approval of agenda

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Steinbach, to approve the minutes as drafted. Approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the January 24, 2023 meeting

Correction made to spelling of Bill Arezzo's name.

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Steinbach, to approve the minutes with this correction. Approved unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager

- The new Person in Charge service model is working well and appreciated by staff.
- The library is very close to being fully staffed.
 - Librarian II position for Technical Services has been filled after being vacant for two years. Candidate's starting date is April 10.
 - A vacant .5 Library Technician position will remain unfilled. The .5 FTE was temporarily reassigned to another department. Filby Williams estimates it will be six months before the position is returned to the Library.

Old Business

Recruitment of Board Member

Sue Henke will be reappointed for a second term.

There will be one vacancy beginning with the April meeting. David Sperl's term is ending and he is not seeking reappointment. The application is now active on the City of Duluth's website. Library PR staff will assist in publicizing the opportunity.

Safety Update

- Concerning incidences have increased in recent months at downtown facility. Police presence is an effective deterrent but unsustainable at level required. Two 4-hour, randomly scheduled shifts per week for off-duty police will be added.
- High priority is adding a second Safety Specialist. At least .5 FTE is required to cover open hours and provide some crossover with the full-time Safety Specialist.
- Suggestion was made to consider a volunteer position as a host - similar to downhill ski areas.

- The final report from the security assessment will be brought to the Library Board for approval at the March meeting. Filby Williams also hopes to bring it to City Council for approval. It is important to raise awareness of the significant security challenges facing the downtown library and the staff efforts to address the challenges. Support and resources are needed to implement recommendations from the assessment.

Strategic Plan

- Focus groups and interviews have been completed with key stakeholders. Big takeaways:
 - There is general support to build off of 2016 strategic plan rather than embarking on a new direction at this time.
 - Priority issues included hours/staffing; safety; more diversity within the ranks of staff; more significant engagement with Duluth's diverse communities

Facility

- At last night's meeting, the City Council approved contracts for Community Engagement (NEOO) and Facility planning (MSR/LHB). Next step is a kick-off meeting.

New Business

Art Exhibit Policy

Revisions to the current policy would address how to handle more permanent displays and gifts to the library. Also added is a standard statement for how concerns expressed about items in the collection would be handled. It is very similar to the policy on addressing concerns about the collection.

Motion by Henke, seconded by Arezzo, to approve the policy as revised. Approved unanimously.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

No advocacy issues were identified at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 5:38 PM