

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of Virtual Meeting
November 24, 2020

Sue Henke called the meeting of the Duluth Library Board to order at 4:30 on November 24, 2020.

Members Present: Sue Henke, Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl, Lizzy Luoma, Alex Strelow, Neil Glazman, Stephen Welsh

Also Present: Carla Powers, Arik Forsman, Jim Filby Williams

Public Attendees: Dennis McManus

Absent: David Sperl

Review and approve agenda

Motion by Foshay moved, seconded by Strelow, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously with raised hands.

Public comments: None submitted prior to meeting.

Review and approve minutes from October 27, 2020

Motion by Ramsland, seconded by Glazman to approve minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously with raised hands.

Library Manager's report

Powers reported an uptick in number of patrons using public computers by appointment. Curbside has seen an increase as well. The previous average of 164 unique users per day has risen to 168 per day. Roughly 15 to 20 of the daily users are new to the service. A new pickup window has been installed to help serve curbside patrons in the winter months. Grab and go service will not begin until Covid cases fall in our region. Returns have increased, and staff is planning to begin accepting returns at the branches in January 2021. All but three of the Library Technicians have now been called back to work. The library is still down approximately 15 FTEs due to retirements, resignations, and layoffs.

Every Child Ready Duluth report

The ECRD Strategic Plan is nearly completed and will be posted online soon. Sue Schumacher will speak about ECRD at the Northern Lights Interagency Council (a collaborative of organizations and school districts that serve the needs of students with disabilities) in January. Powers would like to find a way to make use of the library branches to support ISD 709 in the future, when the school district and the City allow for more in-person use of buildings again.

Old Business

Restoring in-person services

The first priority is bringing people back on staff in order to support more services. The first service expected to expand would be accepting returns at branches. Once all permanent staff have been called back, then temporary non-bargaining unit staff can return. Powers reported that she and the library supervisors are considering changes to the org chart. With the large number of vacant positions, this is a logical time to look at potentially aligning staff differently or reassigning positions to another function. In response to a question about the priority of filling various positions, Powers replied that the Librarian II in charge of system administration would be one of the top priorities. Adding Saturday curbside pickup hours is under discussion.

Special meeting in December

The consensus is that the board should wait and see if this is necessary. Henke and Powers will confer early next month and make a decision.

Ongoing Business/Advocacy

Board decided to revisit this in January, advocating that any vacant positions remain with the library and be filled.

Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Next regular meeting: January 26, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. via WebEx.