

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: May 25, 2021

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

NOTICE: The Duluth Public Library Board will be holding a special meeting in August by other electronic means pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.021 in response to the COVID-19 emergency. Members of the Board will be participating through video conference. Due to the COVID-19 emergency and the closure of City facilities, public comment will not be taken in person. However, members of the public can monitor the meeting and provide public comment on agenda items through WebEx Events. Visit <https://duluthmn.gov/live-meeting> to access the meeting. The public is also encouraged to submit written comment to Library Manager Carla Powers prior to the meeting. Please include "Library Board Agenda" in the subject line, and include your name and address and the agenda item you are speaking to. Please note that all public comment is considered Public Data.

AGENDA

Call to order

Review and approve agenda

Public comments received in advance of meeting

Approve minutes of April 27, 2021 meeting

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

ECRD Report – Carmella Hatch

Friends Report – Ramsland

Foundation news (no written report) – Rosendahl

Old Business

Update on restoring services and staffing

New Business

June board meeting

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: June 22, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. in person or WebEx TBD.

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Draft Minutes April 27, 2021

Sue Henke called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Members present: Betty Ramsland, Sue Henke, Lizzy Luoma, Stephen Welsh, Matt Rosendahl, Alex Strelow, David Sperl

Also present: Carla Powers

Absent: Neil Glazman, Michelle Foshay

Review and approve agenda

Ramsland moved to approve, Welsh seconded. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

Approve minutes of March 23, 2021 meeting

Rosendahl moved to approve, Luoma seconded. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Conducting interviews this week to fill 7 library technician positions from a very large pool of candidates. After these positions are filled, the library will work to fill the Librarian 1 open positions.

ECRD Report – Carmella Hatch

Board members are excited about the arrival of the van.

Foundation Report – Rosendahl

Rosendahl and Powers added that the Sklaris Fund donation will be used to acquire virtual reality equipment and content. In the future, library staff hope this can be shared at programs and via the van.

Friends Report – Ramsland

Powers added to the report that yesterday some Friends board members are looking at an option for providing outside, “mini-booksales” in the next few months.

Old Business

Update on restoring services and staffing

Powers reported that Library Express began at the branches April 12, where there was a press event during National Library Week. It's been going well operating without appointments. The natural flow of people has been manageable. On average 40/day at West and 100/day at Mt Royal. There have not been waiting lines, and people have been following guidelines to move in and out of the building quickly without lingering. It is a little more staff intensive to provide service in this way because there is a host position where a staff member explains what library express is and explains COVID precautions. It helps people understand and be successful at using the service. Curbside use has reduced since the branches have been open for Library Express. Computer use is strong with 22 people per day. Approximately half of those users place a reservation; turnaways for drop-in use

are rare. One longer time slot has been offered for users who need more time. Research assistance has been approximately one appointment per day, which was expected because it requires background work to pull materials and prepare for the researcher. Board members reported great experiences, all at Mt Royal. There were people there, but people were naturally distanced and staff did a great job screening at the door and were mindful.

Powers said that if the traffic at the branches remains at this manageable level, staff will look into making computers available. Home library service remains the service that has not returned in any format. It is dependent on volunteers. There is some in-person, outdoor programming planned for summer.

New Business

Main Library recabling project

The contract for this project will go to the City Council soon. The Property and Facilities Management Division is managing this. The main library will receive new internet cable. City IT staff have been worried about a failure for years. 60% of the cost will be reimbursed by federal e-rate funding. The rest is funded through the city's capital improvement plan, not library budget. In order to do this project, the library needs to have two small rooms for networking equipment; this will displace Sue Schumacher and some of the ECRD staff who will have new offices constructed within a couple of weeks. Then the recabling will start in July due to e-rate stipulations for timing. It is unknown how disruptive this will be. Powers expects to have more details, including what the work will entail, and how long the project will last. The library will not be without internet for the duration of the project. The cabling will need to be in place for 5 years, or the city will need to reimburse e-rate funds.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

The advocacy group representing the Friends, Foundation, and Board met with Mayor Larson, CAO Shuchman, Powers, and Jim Filby-Williams. The tone of the meeting was positive and productive. The group tried to use the three principles of equity, sustainability, and community building outlined in the mayor's state of the city address in our presentation, in the hope that the library will be viewed as a trusted, valuable partner in her vision of the future of the city.

Welsh moved, Ramsland seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

Manager's Report to Library Board May 2021

Hiring Update. Offers have been made and accepted by our top six candidates to fill vacant library technician positions. The original plan was to hire four full-time and three half-time positions. However, the interview panel decided that the library would be better served by combining two of the half-time positions. Two of the new hires will start work on June 7, two on June 14 and the remaining two on June 21. Forms have been submitted requesting approval to fill two vacant librarian I positions.

Organizational Culture Project. After a challenging and eventful 2020, we are taking some time to assess and improve our workplace culture at the library. Jim and I engaged Employee Strategies, Inc. to guide this process. An assessment of our current culture began with an employee survey this week and will continue over the coming weeks with interviews and focus groups. When the assessment phase is complete in late June, I anticipate forming one or more action teams to continue the work.

Mt. Royal Art Project. This work is proceeding beautifully. The artist has created a draft of her work. The final installment will be printed on vinyl and mounted behind the service desk at the branch. Installation will take place in early June, and we hope to celebrate with a small media event.

Diversity Audits. Two of the librarians at DPL are embarking on projects to assess and improve our collections and programs in an effort to make sure they are inclusive and reflective of all people in the community. The selector for adult nonfiction is beginning by conducting a diversity audit as she orders new titles for this collection. She will make more of an effort to include new titles that benefit the lived experiences of everyone in Duluth, including marginalized communities, and she will track her progress. She also plans to formally assess portions of the existing collection. The youth services librarian in charge of programming is evaluating children's and teen programming and events through the same lens. Her assessment will include elements such as race and gender of presenter, whether presenter is an Own Voices presenter, accessibility for audience, developmental appropriateness, and topic/content of program. Diversity audits were part of the library's 2016-2020 strategic plan. A staff team has completed an audit of artwork at the libraries, which led to the rotating exhibit space at Main, the felt rug project at West Duluth and the new artwork being installed at Mt. Royal.

Port Cards. This month brought a big step forward in our agreement with ISD 709 for virtual library cards. The district has figured out how to make the Port Card agreement signable electronically. District staff plans to add it to the e-resource permission form that parents sign each year. This will have the effect of making the agreement act like an opt-out form, because it's rare for a parent not to sign it. Two years ago when the form was opt-out, nearly every student in the district had a Port Card. When the school district adopted an opt-in form last year, participation fell sharply.

Every Child Ready Duluth May 2021 Update

Here's what the team has been working on in the past month:

- **Planning for summer activities:**
 - We're **partnering with Parks** to provide a story time (9:30am-10am) and a story stroll (10am-12pm) Mondays June 14-August 23). We'll be giving away free books until 12pm and then leave the stroll up for the remainder of the day unstaffed for more to enjoy. Parks staff will provide an activity for kids during this time also.
 - **Increased diversity of give-away books**—we've purchased 65 new books written/illustrated by Native American authors and including Native American characters. We purchased these in response to our community partners expressing the need for Native American kids to see themselves represented in educational contexts. These books will be included in the giveaway books at story strolls and given to partner organizations.
 - **Outreach to child care providers**—We are working on sending out letters to child care providers in Duluth to inform them about our summer programs and to offer outreach storytimes at their settings. We are hoping outreach to child care providers will help increase their input and involvement in other ECRD activities
 - **Goosechase**—we are creating a scavenger hunt activity geared toward families with children 0-preK, in the Goosechase app and themed around nature play.
 - **Virtual storytimes:** We decided to continue Baby and Toddler storytimes through the summer, posting new videos every other week. More publishers extended their permissions and we have had enough regular viewings that we deemed it worthwhile.
 - **Dial-a-Story:** We're continuing to record picture book readings and favorite songs for the Dial-a-Story line
- **Evaluation:** We have a new contract coming soon with Kate Noble from Colibri. She has created a 20 month evaluation plan to evaluate the effectiveness of ECRD activities and overall coalition. We plan to continue working with her with ongoing evaluation after this first round, as well.
- **Action Teams:** We're continuing with Action Team meetings, honing in on priority activities we can work on in groups. We're planning to try to hold one meeting each month, starting in June, where we can use breakout feature in Zoom to work in our smaller groups and then report back to the whole group.
- **Little Library Go:** We have talked with Elite Graphics to inquire about the process and pricing for getting the van wrapped once we acquire it. We're starting to look into design ideas in the meantime.
- **Baby's First Books:** The start of this program (getting books and early literacy info to parents through the Universal Home Visiting nurse family partnerships) has been delayed until July, but we have been purchasing items for the kits and creating parent handouts. We hope to provide nurse training in-person in July.
- **Americorps Vista:** We have 2 applicants for our Americorps Vista position and we are working on a plan for completing interviews in the next month.

**Friends of the Library Report
May 2021**

Bank balance as of end of April 2021 is \$18,844. Memberships currently 177. Newsletter sent out first week in May to all members. Discussion on Sidewalk Days, and volunteers needed for the Friends' booth. This event is scheduled for July 7-8-9. Friends give away books and bookplates to children. A one-day book sale is scheduled for June 24th from 10am until 6pm on Michigan Street and the Main building garage.

Submitted by Betty Ramsland