

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: June 22, 2021

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

NOTICE: The Duluth Public Library Board will be holding a special meeting in June 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 May 25, 2021 meeting

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Old Business

Update on services and staffing

New Business

August board meeting

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: August 24, 2021

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Draft Minutes May 25, 2021

Sue Henke called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

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

Also present: Library Manager Carla Powers, Property, Parks & Libraries Department Director Jim Filby Williams, City Councilor Arik Forsman

Absent: David Sperl

Review and approve agenda

Motion by Welsh, seconded by Ramsland, to approve the agenda as drafted. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

Public comments received in advance of meeting – none.

Approve minutes of April 27, 2021 meeting – Motion by Foshay, seconded by Glazman, to approve the minutes as presented. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers added the news that DPL has received four Minnesota state park passes for checkout. They go into circulation June 1. The passes check out for one week. At the end of the week they expire and do not need to be returned to the library. The state created the program with the intention of removing barriers to state parks and encouraging more people to enjoy them. The state awarded sets of passes to select public libraries based on proximity to state parks and local poverty levels. Funding for this program came from the Legacy Amendment.

ECRD Report – Accepted as submitted. Reports will be made about ECRD in person at board meetings quarterly in the future.

Friends Report – Ramsland reported that there will be a one-day mini book sale on Michigan Street in June. The Friends will also participate in Sidewalk Days and give away books to children.

Foundation news (no written report) – Rosendahl reported that Executive Director Patra Sevastiades is leaving her role, and the Foundation is searching for a new Executive Director.

Old Business

Update on restoring services and staffing – There will be an official announcement tomorrow that branches will reopen more fully Tuesday, June 1. Hours will remain as they currently are. Capacity limits will be dropped. The host station will go away. People will be free to come and go as they wish. Public computing will be available at the branches. Play areas for kids will not be available for the time being, as young children are not eligible for vaccination

yet. Main library will reopen one week later on June 7, to provide more time for curbside pickup to transition to a pickup window. The hours at Main will also remain the same as they are now. A greeter/concierge in the Superior Street lobby will help orient people to changes made in the building while it was closed, and make masks available if requested. For safety and comfort, and on the advice of the city safety officer, every other computer will be unavailable for the time being at main and at the branches. Similarly to the branches, the play area at main will be unavailable and much of the furniture will not be deployed. Masking: CDC, State of Minnesota, and City of Duluth have changed requirements about masks. In discussion with DPL staff, DPL management decided on a policy to encourage but not require mask use to help protect young children and unvaccinated people. Staff intend to model this policy by continuing to wear a mask. Hours of operation for the future are still under discussion. Because they are still so reduced and different from pre-pandemic, it is an opportunity to look at the hours of operation through a lens of equity and re-examine how well they work for everyone.

New Business

June board meeting - Still likely that City Council will remain virtual through the council break in mid-July. City staff support boards meeting outside in person. Powers noted that the library closes half an hour before the board meeting begins, which poses a challenge to public attendance and open meeting laws.

The June meeting will be held online, and Powers will investigate our options for meeting after the July break.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy - Henke inquired with Councilor Forsman and Filby Williams about the requests for building projects in the city using federal stimulus funds. Filby Williams reported that city officials are awaiting clarity on this issue from the federal government. Two weeks ago the city received its first written guidance on how the federal stimulus funds may be spent, however this was only preliminary and raised as many new questions as it answered old ones. There remains the possibility that some level of investment in a project at the main library would be an eligible, permissible use of federal stimulus funds. In that case the mayor may wish to prioritize a portion for this purpose.

Adjournment – Motion by Ramsland, seconded by Welsh, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Manager's Report to Library Board June 2021

Hiring Update. Six new library technicians are on board, getting trained, and doing great work already. Two of them started work on June 1, two more on June 7, and the remaining two on June 14. For most of them, the first month to six weeks will be spent learning the basics of circulation. Once they have this base of knowledge they will transition into their regular work areas. At this time I'm still awaiting final approval to fill two Librarian I vacancies. As soon as approval is granted the positions will be posted. This will leave us with one remaining vacancy, a Librarian II for adult services, which will be filled in the fall. We are also in the process of hiring a 13-hour delivery driver and filling the remainder of the library aide vacancies.

Mt. Royal Art Project. Installation has been delayed as the artist completes a few finishing touches, but the project will be complete by the end of June. A publicity plan for unveiling the new mural has been put together, and a media event will be held within a week or two of the installation.

Outreach Event. Last Tuesday, June 15, library staff were invited to table at the 4th Street Wellness Festival held at the Damiano Center. The event offered free haircuts, blood pressure screenings, covid vaccinations, SNAP sign-up, food, kids' art projects and more. The ECRD team gave out children's books and information about library events. Other staff answered questions about library services and gave out library-created brochures with information about how to access various social service resources in Duluth. Valuable community connections were made at the event.

Summer Events. Summer is in full swing at DPL! The summer reading program for all ages began June 1 and continues through the end of August. Storytimes and story strolls are taking place at Duluth parks all summer long. Eight Kaleidoscope performances will take place over four days in July and August. Band concerts on the plaza are scheduled for every Thursday evening from July 15 through August 12. As always, more information can be found at duluthlibrary.org.

Damage to Main Library Windows. In the early hours of Wednesday, June 16, a person on the sidewalk along Superior Street broke two windows near the book returns. Fortunately a witness called 911 right away and the police happened to be in the neighborhood. The person was arrested and is facing felony charges due to the extent of the damage. Replacing the windows will cost \$1400. The incident took place around 3 a.m. when no staff or library patrons were present.

Main Library Rearrangement and Construction. So far, patron feedback on the relocation of the adult fiction collection has been positive. New staff offices have been completed. City facilities staff are now working on construction of two closets to securely house computer networking equipment, as well as a small room for patrons to use for interviews, supervised visitations, Skyping, etc.