

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of Virtual Meeting
September 22, 2020

Call to Order: Betty Ramsland called the meeting of the Duluth Library Board to order at 4:30 on September 22, 2020.

Members Present: Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl, Neil Glazman, David Sperl, Betty Ramsland, Stephen Welsh, Lizzy Luoma

Also Present: Library Manager Carla Powers; Director of Property, Parks & Libraries Jim Filby Williams

Absent: Sue Henke

Virtual Attendees: Bridgit Maruska, Brittne Hildr, Carly Madden, Carrie Boberg, Dennis McManus, Em Ryme, Gina Temple, Kim Adams, Leah Blackwell, Lynn S., Sarah Proudfit

Review and approve agenda

Motion by Foshay, seconded by Sperl, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comments: None submitted prior to meeting.

Review and approve minutes from August 25

Motion by Glazman, seconded by Sperl, to approve minutes as drafted. Motion approved unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager's Report

Three staff are being called back as of September 28 to keep up with the current workload. This is not because of an increase in service.

Facility Planning began prior to COVID and continues as the building will need infrastructure updates. A cost benefit analysis is underway.

Every Child Ready Duluth Report

The ECRD Brain Trust is a small group of experts and professionals in the community who are guiding the initiative. The ECRD team currently is looking for a representative from the business community to serve as a liaison. Sue Schumacher will provide more information about the business representative's role to Neil and Michelle, as requested.

It has been a challenge to connect with schools because of how busy staff and teachers have been with planning for learning in hybrid and distance models. Opportunities exist for library to support this work.

Friends Report

Ramsland reported that the Friends currently have \$12,000 in funds. The group is looking for ideas to raise money, as they were unable to do the book sale this year due to COVID.

Old Business

Restoring in-person services

Powers and Filby Williams are working on a plan for reopening for in-person service safely, consistent with a proposal prepared for the advocacy group led by Sue Henke. The first step will be opening up for use of computers by appointment at Main. Following that, library plans to open up for collection access by appointment.

Powers has proposed equipping the library's van with a mobile hotspot and taking it out to neighborhoods that have limited access to the internet. Powers is working with the Duluth Digital Inclusion Partnership to decide whether and how this would fit into other local initiatives.

A future goal is to restore service to homebound patrons and the jail.

Computer center access by appointment would require calling back 3 FTEs. Another 5.5 FTEs would be needed to provide collection access by appointment. The proposal is to bring back the rest of the staff as of January 2021 and open the branches for in-person service by appointment.

Filby Williams said that the Mayor and CAO will review the proposal in early October. He said the City's budgetary outlook had been grim until somewhat recently, and so reopening wasn't on table. Now that the situation has changed, new plans are being put together as quickly as possible.

The board discussed ongoing advocacy to urge Mayor to move forward with reopening plans.

New Business

New Board Member

Two applications have been filed, and the Mayor is expected to make an appointment soon.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Michelle will connect with Sue to give an overview of discussion and plot next steps.

The meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, October 27 at 4:30 p.m. via WebEx.