

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: October 27, 2020

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

Introductions and welcome new board member

Review and approve agenda

Public comments received in advance of meeting

Approve minutes of September 22 meeting

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Every Child Ready Duluth Report – Powers

Foundation Report – Rosendahl

Friends Report – Ramsland

Old Business

Restoring in-person services

New Business

Strategic planning

Collection development policy

2021 fee schedule

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: November 24, 2020, at 4:30 p.m. via WebEx.

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.

Manager's Report to Library Board October 2020

Employee Callbacks. Two more groups of Library Technicians are being called back in order to restore more in-person services at the Main Library. On Oct. 26 five individuals (3.5 FTE) will return to work to support Computer Center use by appointment. On Nov. 2 another eight people (7 FTE) will come back as we prepare to open Main for collection access by appointment, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Nov. 17. After this second round of callbacks, three Library Technicians (2.5 FTE) as well as 15 temps who had worked 13 hours per week (5.5 FTE) will remain laid off. In addition, six full-time positions currently are vacant.

Facility Planning. This project has progressed toward cost estimates. The goal is to provide another option and updated cost information to City administration by the end of the year.

Returns. On Monday, Oct. 5 overdue notifications were turned on and the library began accepting returns at Main 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In the early days of COVID we had told patrons to keep their items due to concerns around disease transmission via library books. When we first began curbside pickup in April there were approximately 58,000 items still checked out since before the pandemic. That number is now down to fewer than 13,000. We are continuing to quarantine returns for 72 hours before checking them in.

Curbside Pickup Update. Staff is still making incremental improvements to this service. New height-adjustable desks with dual monitors were installed this month in order to make the workstations more comfortable and ergonomic. This is important because staff work six-hour shifts doing curbside. We are awaiting the arrival of our new sliding window, which will allow us to move curbside away from the Superior Street entrance. This is particularly important as we prepare to welcome the public back into the building.

Goosechase. This month we launched a new virtual scavenger hunt program using an app called Goosechase. Individuals and groups use the app to post photos of themselves doing various "challenges" that staff have laid out. Our first challenge invited participants to do a wide range of activities, including reading books together, photographing the biggest rock they could find, and taking a picture of their favorite place in Duluth.

Space Reconfiguration. As we prepare to welcome the public back into the Main Library for limited services, library and city facilities staff have been making adjustments to our public space. Plexiglass has been installed at the public computers in the computer center and at many of the public desks. A staffing point has been set up in the Michigan Street lobby, where patrons will arrive for their computer appointments. Much of the public furniture has been removed. Old, worn out and/or stained furniture has been disposed of. The remaining furniture will be stored or made inaccessible to the public.

Every Child Ready Duluth Update to Library Board October 2020

New Toys. ECRD staff is ordering new toys for check out, focusing on the birth to pre-k age range. Toys include board games, items for imaginative play, items that enhance fine and gross motor development, early STEM kits, storytelling kits and more. Staff also purchased some new items for library play spaces, focusing on large items such as new kitchen sets for the branches, a new train table for Mount Royal, a multi-purpose play station for Main and a reading hideaway space for each branch. The checkout toy collection will be rebranded, with staff developing cards to accompany each toy that explain what staff like about it, why it's good for kids, and how to use it for play. Checkout toys will be put into use right away. Play space items will be stored until they can be safely put into use.

New Display Cabinets. New display cabinets are being designed and created for the checkout toys to provide more space, better design for families to view items, and better storage for items behind the youth services desk.

Story Strolls. Story strolls took place this month at Lafayette, Lester, and Memorial Park. There will be three more in November at Cascade, Lincoln, and Washington Square.

Storytime Kits. The ECRD team is using some of its outreach funding to create storytime kits for childcare providers. Kits will include two books; a classroom set of egg shakers; and handouts with songs, rhymes, and storytime tips. The kits will be made available for childcare providers in Duluth. Staff is working with the Northland Foundation and Child Care Aware to get the word out and try to get as many kits as possible into the hands of childcare providers.

Dial-a-Story. This service went live last week and staff is working on getting flyers out in the community to advertise it. The stories and songs will be changed each month. Stories can be heard by calling 218-626-6500.

Strategic planning. The final draft of the ECRD strategic plan will be finalized next week. Next steps will be to work with the Brain Trust executive committee and Kate Noble from Colibi Consulting to create measurable actions to accompany each goal.

Free books and crafts to community. Staff is continuing its work to provide free materials to organizations that work with families most likely to be under-resourced, lower income, and vulnerable to the stress of the pandemic. New organizations that were added recently include the YWCA, Safe Haven, and the YMCA.

Baby and toddler storytimes. These programs have continued in a virtual format. Last March many publishers relaxed copyright restrictions to allow their books to be used for online storytimes. These permissions have now been extended through Dec. 31.

Duluth Library Foundation Report October 2020

This year's version of the Foundation's annual fundraiser - Learning and Libations At Home Edition - was held last month. The "event" lasted September 19-September 30, allowing people to view the video "The History All Around Us," on demand. This 30-minute documentary, created by Foundation staff with authors Tom Peacock and Tony Dierkins and videographer Dudley Edmondson, celebrated the history of this place and recognized Duluth's 150th anniversary. 15 new donors were added and the net income (profit) in 2020 was 85% of profit in 2019 - a smashing success given the challenges of the pandemic.

Due to term expiration, the Foundation will be seeking nominations for its board. We are hoping to bring in voices and perspectives not currently represented on the board and to invite individuals who are passionate about the library and fundraising to ensure a bright future for its services. If you have recommendations or questions about this, please contact Matt Rosendahl.

Submitted by Matt Rosendahl

Friends of the Library Report October 2020

The treasury is at \$12,000. An internal audit was completed. A new Treasurer and Membership coordinator were appointed. Discussion of composition of newsletter to be mailed in November with messages from Friends' president, and Carla, plus request for 2021 member dues and donations with bullet points emphasizing programs that Friends fund. Carla updated Friends on limited opening of library for computer use, reinstatement of some employees, plus plans for November and onward.

Submitted by Betty Ramsland