

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 21, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

President Olian, presiding, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Alicia De La Cruz, Irene Hoffman, Rebecca Nathanson, Ashley Lapin Olian, Rob Olian, Carol Wolfe, Peter Zotos

Members Absent:

Others Present: Nora Gladstone, Catherine Lambrecht, Julia Nathanson, Cary Rositas-Sheftel, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith, Renata Smoler, Kim Stone

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Hoffman moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the December 18, 2024 regular meeting minutes, December 2024 Bill List, December 2024 Financial Reports, and the cancelling of the February 5, 2025 late opening. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, De La Cruz, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Olian's report included the following:

- He welcomed two new student liaisons, Nora Gladstone and Renata Smoler.
- President Olian shared that administration created a virtual board manual including rosters and policies.
- Regarding the ACLU letter, President Olian is preparing a response.
- After discussions with the attorney, a decision was made not to include red-line drafts of policies in the Board packet. Going forward, the board packet will include the proposed new policy with a narrative highlighting the significant changes.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith asked Dr. Rositas-Sheftel to speak about the Consulate of Mexico and the services they will be providing next month.
- Dr. Rositas-Sheftel reported that the Consulate visits different organizations and libraries with mobile units to provide free services including passports, birth certificates, matricula consular, and Mexican voting cards. When the Consulate visited the Library in 2023, they served over 500 patrons and issued more than 700 documents. The Consulate will be at the Library from February 4 to February 8. Workshops will be offered in Spanish on how to create an email and an account with the Mexican consulate to make appointments in collaboration with the Highwood Library and Community Center.

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISONS

President Olian reported that the expansion project should be approved at the City Council meeting next Monday. He shared that while the architects were working on another project, they found that the bids were coming in higher than expected. Both the architects and the owner's rep are reviewing the plans to identify areas of savings. The current plan is for bid documents to go out on February 26 and come back on March 26. There will be a special board meeting on April 1 to review the bids with the architect. Final approval by the board is slated for the April board meeting. The architectural liaisons and staff will meet with the architects one more time to review the design and finishes.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair Hoffman reported that the Committee continues to meet to look at giving levels and naming opportunities. They are going to tailor the ask to the level the donor is interested in. The Committee also discussed the board's role in advocacy and creating an elevator pitch. President Olian expressed how important it is for each trustee to feel comfortable giving an elevator pitch to anyone in the community. Time will be devoted to advocacy training at a future board meeting.

OPERATIONS & POLICIES COMMITTEE

Chair Zotos reported that the Committee is seeking approval of the Expenditure of Funds policy. The policy outlines the tools and processes for funds the Library is spending and the documentation of the spending. The Committee updated tiers for approvals by the Director and the Board, clarified the governance managing long term contracts, and the adherence to Illinois statutes on spending.

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Hoffman seconded a motion to approve the Expenditure of Funds Policy as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, De La Cruz, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Director Smith referred to the Strategic plan shared in November. The plan focuses on three strategic goals for the next three years: the expansion project with the completion on time and on budget; services for the community and the quality of services during the project; and improving the website and other electronic access points accessibility. A report on the previous strategic plan was also included in the Board packet.

Trustee Hoffman suggested adding a fundraising goal to the monthly report. Director Smith will add this to the budget section.

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the 2025-2027 Strategic Bridge Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, De La Cruz, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Director Smith shared that a letter was received from the ACLU in December concerning changes made to the Meeting Room Policy in October 2024. The policy changes were adopted to support providing meeting spaces to the public while managing liability and financial responsibility of the Library. The policy included discretionary provisions in which fees for security and/or certificate of insurance may be required on a case-to-case basis at the discretion of the Director. Many other libraries have similar policies. The Library reviewed the discretionary provisions of concern to ACLU and based on recent

events and follow-up with many resources, found the provisions could subject the Library to greater liability. The first option is that the Library could carry sole responsibility for security and insurance for all meetings. The second option would be for the Library to assign responsibility to the requestor based on a clear factor such as the room or the number of attendees for all bookings.

The Board discussed the options and decided to revise the policy to be in line with the first option described above. The policy will go back to the Operations and Policies Committee for further consideration at the February 4, 2025 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Lapin Olian seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. President Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, De La Cruz, Hoffman, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe, Zotos

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel

Reviewed by: Heidi Smith, Rebecca Nathanson

Approved: February 18, 2025