

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
February 18, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

President Olian, presiding, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Biederman moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve remote attendance for President Olian and Trustee Wolfe due to family matters. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Alicia De La Cruz, Irene Hoffman, Rebecca Nathanson, Ashley Lapin Olian, Rob Olian (remote), Carol Wolfe (remote), 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 Zotos seconded a motion to approve the January 21, 2025 regular meeting minutes, January 2025 Bill List, and the January 2025 Financial Reports. 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

Director Smith reported receiving an email from a resident concerned about the censorship of LGBTQ+ materials in the Library. She responded on behalf of the Board, outlining the Library's policies that uphold individuals' freedom to read and view materials. Dr. Rositas-Sheftel suggested that the resident may be referring to a Highland Park Library in another state.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Olian's report included the following:

- Due to the time required to interview all prequalified bidders, the bid documents may be issued later than originally planned. To ensure bidders have four weeks to respond and allow sufficient time for the construction advisor and architects to review the bids, President Olian recommended rescheduling the April 1 Special board Meeting to April 8. After polling the Board, it was agreed that all trustees would be available to attend the Special Board Meeting on April 8.
- President Olian reported that the City will resume the July 4th parade this year and is inviting participants, including the Library. He and Director Smith discussed the possibility that many people may not yet feel ready to return to a parade. President Olian encouraged trustees to share their thoughts with Director Smith on whether they or Library staff should participate. Alternatively, the Library could still have a presence at the celebration in Sunset Park.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith requested the Board's feedback on the new enhanced strategic plan included in the packet.

- Trustee Zotos asked what a technology interaction entails. Director Smith responded that technology interactions consist of tech support to patrons.
- Trustee Lapin Olian asked whether collection circulation should be compared to pre-pandemic figures from 2019. The Board agreed that including the 2019 data in the report would be beneficial. Director Smith will incorporate collection data from 2019 and 2020, providing a seven-year historical view.
- Trustee Hoffman inquired about including a fundraising goal in the bridge strategic plan. In response, Director Smith will add a draft fourth goal to the plan for the Board's consideration, and a chart will be incorporated into the report while the strategic plan revision is in process.

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISONS

President Olian reported that the architectural plans are complete and are being prepared to go out to bid. To ensure the bidding process is as smooth as possible, the advisor recommended the contractors be prequalified subject to the approval of a resolution. The Library is required to accept the bid of the lowest responsible bidder. Eleven firms have submitted applications and all will be interviewed. The Library's attorney recommended passing a resolution to confirm the Board's intent to prequalify bidders.

Trustee Biederman requested clarification on the general criteria for prequalification. President Olian explained that factors that may disqualify a bidder include unfavorable references, failure to comply with the Prevailing Wage Act, and lack of experience with projects exceeding \$2 million. Trustee Zotos inquired whether "lowest responsible bidder" is a legal term. President Olian confirmed that it is, and it refers to the lowest bidder who is capable of successfully completing the project.

President Olian moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-1 as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair Hoffman reported meeting with community advisors on fundraising, including Amy Kaufman, James Lynch, and Terri Olian. The feedback was generally positive, though some felt certain fundraising requests were overly ambitious, while others were considered appropriate. Suggestions for improvement included strengthening the ask by leveraging accessibility plans more effectively and incorporating quotes from parents and children rather than relying solely on prominent community figures. The advisors emphasized expanding outreach efforts, suggesting broader community engagement. They recommended hosting small group meetings of 10-20 people, including donors to the Friends of the Library. Other outreach targets included the Chamber of Commerce, Business Alliance, Park District, Rotary, and local school districts. These ideas are under consideration, and the team will determine how best to implement them.

Additionally, there was extensive discussion about the Board's role as advocates for the campaign. To equip board members with the necessary tools and information, they are exploring advocacy resources for the March meeting. Proposed materials include an elevator speech about the campaign, a one-page case statement, clarification of the Friends of the Library's role in fundraising, and an FAQ document. Board members are encouraged to submit any questions they would like addressed to either Chair Hoffman or Director Smith.

OPERATIONS & POLICIES COMMITTEE

Chair Zotos reported that the Committee is seeking approval for the revised Investment Policy. The approach is basic, centered around three core principles: financial goals, legal compliance, and adherence to the Illinois Public Funds Investment Act. The Committee worked with the attorney to ensure the policy is both clear and accurate.

Trustee Basofin moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the Investment 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

None

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Lapin Olian seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. President Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 7:48 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: March 18, 2025