

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 19, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

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

Members Absent: Rich Basofin

Others Present: Julia Nathanson, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith, Jeff Stern, Kim Stone

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Basofin moved (on the consent agenda) and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to approve the February 20, 2024 regular meeting minutes, February Bill List, and the February Financial Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Historical Society member Jeff Stern shared his belief that the artifact collection would be stored in the Library after the upcoming expansion.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Olian's report included the following:

- President Olian reported the second part of "how to read the financials" will be moved to next month's meeting.
- A meeting between the Historical Society, City, and Library is scheduled for April 17.
- Director Smith will be discussing the possibility of folding some additional items into the expansion project with the architects.
- Neighborhood meetings are coming up. Trustee Nathanson will be attending the meeting at the Library on April 26. President Olian asked trustees to advise Director Smith if they can attend one of the two remaining meetings.
- President Olian referred to the Revenue and Expenditure Budget Comparison page in the packet. The Board discussed the language used in the comment section. Councilmember Stone suggested using the City's report. Trustee Wolfe suggested changing verbiage to "over and under" rather than "ahead and behind." Director Smith will adopt "over and under" next month and review the City's report.
- Trustee Zotos questioned the handwritten note at the bottom of the January 31 Balance Sheet in the packet. It was a correction following the auditor's review.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith's written report included highlights of the Illinois Public Library Annual report in the packet. The full report was emailed to all trustees last month. Trustee Biederman questioned what the State does with the information submitted by all the libraries. Director

Smith replied that it may be used for a cumulative state library report and the data is available to the public mid-year.

- Director Smith included a reminder about Board access to the Sharepoint Board folder. She will ask the IT Manager to resend the link to all trustees.
- Director Smith reported that the timing for developing a new strategic plan for 2025 to 2027 is not ideal since the expansion will be completed in 2026. She is proposing that an internal team create a bridge plan to extend the current plan through 2027. Staff will begin developing a bridge plan second quarter and share it with the Board third quarter for discussion.
- Director Smith referred to the Library Safety section of the monthly report. The numbers are higher than pre-pandemic. However, the staff has had more training and might be reporting more incidents due to increased reporting. She will continue to monitor the incidents.
- Director Smith shared a couple highlights from Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel's report: she was pleased to have a successful teen program with 10 teens participating and Diana Alvey, Social Services Coordinator, presented a training at the February All Staff meeting for staff on how to best connect patrons with her.

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISONS

Trustee Wolfe reported that the Expansion Design Preview presentation was great, despite having to move to a safe hallway due to the tornado. Director Smith, Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel, and the liaisons met with the architects to discuss feedback received in patron comments including the relocation of the sculpture, loss of green space on the west side, and the façade of the building. President Olian shared that the architects will be bringing material samples to the next meeting. The rendering software does not do justice to the look of the stone. Trustee Wolfe commended Director Smith for her diplomatic handling of patron comments and questions.

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Zotos reported that the Committee met with financial advisor, James Rachlin, to discuss best practices for financial plans. Mr. Rachlin recommended retaining 60% of the fund balance at the end of the year until proceeds (taxes) are received in the summer and fall. He also discussed keeping special reserve funds and general funds separate in budgeting and expenditures. Trustee Zotos asked Director Smith to share the presentation deck with the whole Board. President Olian added that Mr. Rachlin will share expertise and help with budgeting more expenses in the operating budget due to the expansion. Trustee Zotos affirmed Mr. Rachlin's suggestion to review and incorporate annual returns on investments.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Trustee Hoffman reported the Committee met to discuss naming opportunities and the donor wall. The Committee decided they would like to incorporate community gifts at a lower level along with the large naming opportunities. They are looking at creating a campaign donor wall with the understanding that it will not be forever. There was discussion on how to memorialize the current donor wall. Trustee Hoffman shared that there will be donor recognition on the website and some type of annual report in the future. At the next meeting, the Committee will review gift ranges and levels, and new naming opportunities as a result of the expansion.

OPERATIONS & POLICIES COMMITTEE

Trustee Zotos reported that the Committee clarified the inconsistencies in the Meeting Room Policy and it is ready for approval.

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Hoffman seconded a motion to approve Policy 401, Meeting Rooms for Community Use.

Trustee Wolfe suggested defining “Card” as Highland Park Library Card (“Card”) in number two of Regulations for Meeting Rooms 1-8. Card could then be used in subsequent citations in the policy.

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Hoffman seconded a motion to approve the Meeting Rooms for Community Use policy as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Trustee Zotos reported that the Committee spent time reviewing the Gift Policy but decided to wait to tie it together with the other policy the Development Committee is revising.

Trustee Hoffman requested a copy of the style guide.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Director Smith reported the Friends met to discuss the future of the Book Nook in the expansion. The goal of the meeting was to understand how the group would like to function in the future. The Friends envision success with the same number of shelves as now, preferably in a high traffic area, and would gladly take more space if available. They suggested the consideration of two book nooks, one for adults and one for youth. The annual book sale would be held in one or both meeting rooms as needed.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Wolfe seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. President Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Ayes: 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: April 16, 2024