

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board of Trustees Meeting

June 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

President Wolfe, presiding, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

The Board approved remote attendance due to business matters for Trustee Olian.

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

Members Absent: Rich Basofin

Others Present: Nancy Kiernan, Catherine Lambrecht, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith, Kim Stone

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Wolfe made the following correction to the June 20, 2023 Agenda:

- Under consent agenda, “Approval of May 2023 Bill List and Approval of May 2023 Financial Reports,” change “motion from Rich Basofin, Treasurer” to “motion from Carol Wolfe, President.”

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve the May 16, 2023 regular meeting minutes, May 2023 Bill List, and May 2023 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

Catherine Lambrecht, community member and Historical Society Board member shared her concern about the change of the Cookin’ with Books program from hybrid to in-person. Next, she expressed how much she enjoys attending the Library Board meetings. She referred to a statistical presentation at a previous board meeting and questioned why the expansion is focused on the youth department when adult circulation is stronger than youth circulation. Ms. Lambrecht suggested delaying the expansion until more funding is available. Councilwoman Stone explained that the City has a 10-year capital improvement plan and each project is slotted into a specific year. Deferring a project does not mean more money. Finally, Ms. Lambrecht stated that the Historical Society requested that all Historical Society items at the Library were to be returned. She reported that no items have been received by the Historical Society yet.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Wolfe’s report included the following:

- President Wolfe introduced and welcomed Rob Biederman, a newly appointed trustee, who is filling a vacancy through December 2024.
- She gave an update on the removal of Historical Society materials from the Library. City, Library, and Historical Society representatives met to plan the transitions of materials. The Library has contracted with a former employee, Julia Johnas, to review documentation in preparation for the transition of materials.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith’s report included the following:

- Director Smith reported that the Library has transitioned hybrid programs back to in-person programs primarily due to an increased demand for in-person programs. Statistics show year-

to-date programs are up over 60% from last year. There is an overall resurgence in Library programs since the pandemic, specifically in-person programs. Director Smith shared that selection of format for programs is based on which format provides the most successful participant outcomes for that type of program. For example, discussions have been observed to be more fluid and inclusive in person.

- The Summer Reading program, “Find Your Voice,” started last Monday. During the month of July, an art panel will be displayed at the First Bank of Highland Park alongside a Highland Park Together Unidos panel from the Park District.
- Director Smith referred to the five-year chart of year-to-date door counts, page three of the report in the packet. Although the door counts have not yet returned to 2019 numbers, there is an increasing trend. In response to several questions, Director Smith will investigate and report back to the Board about the following: any patterns throughout the year for in-person visits; whether the decline in door counts was due to patrons switching to eBooks during the pandemic; and if it would be helpful to itemize Library of Things in the statistics.
- Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel gave an update about the social worker position. She reported that the Library has been approved as part of Loyola’s field agency to welcome interns from the social work master’s program. In addition, she will be interviewing a strong candidate for the part-time social worker position this week. Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel also shared that the Library has been providing private spaces for agencies to meet with patrons, especially those seeking housing. She commended staff for providing resources and services to patrons.
- In partnership with Highwood, the Mexican Mobile Consulate will be at the Library from July 25 to July 29. Passports will be issued onsite by appointment only. Mexican voting cards for Mexican elections as well as matricula consulars will also be issued. The next Caminando Juntos Facebook Live is on July 3. The Consulate of Community Affairs will share services offered to the people. The Consulate has been using space at the Library to meet with victims of the July 4th parade.
- Director Smith asked Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel to share the news of her new appointment as Vice Chair of the Latino Advisory Committee for Moraine Township.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Zotos reported that the Committee met to review and discuss the 2024 draft budget. He highlighted some of the operating expenses, including the salary line, the IMRF estimated increase, and the compensation strategy. Discussion continued about significant budget changes in regard to collections, supplies and services, programs, and Friends and gifts.

President Wolfe reported the draft budget will be presented to City Council in August and will be approved by the Board in December.

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISONS

Trustee Olian reported that the liaisons have been investigating the ways to manage the expansion project. He reviewed the different models: General Contractor, Construction Manager, Construction Manager at Risk, and Owner’s Representative.

Based on colleague conversations and interviews with various firms, the liaisons are proposing moving forward with a General Contractor and Owner’s Representative. The Owner’s Representative gives independent advice and will negotiate with the architects and the general contractor on behalf of the Library.

Trustee Olian stated they will hire CCS in the short term to get through the first phase of working with the architects and putting the concept out for bid. Once they confirm they are comfortable with the relationship, they will consider hiring the Owner’s Representative to execute the full project.

President Wolfe reported that she and Director Smith had a meeting at the Antioch Library with CCS and Studio GC. They were very impressed with how well CCS and Studio GC worked together, and how much the library staff felt they listened and addressed their needs. In addition, cost savings found by CCS was discussed several times.

Director Smith reported the CCS team members they connected with were very knowledgeable, very understanding of library operations, and were highly recommended. Director Smith recommends a contract with CCS to support the Library to complete the predesign phase. Studio GC, CCS, President Wolfe, Trustee Olian, and Director Smith will get together to move through the predesign phase of the project in a timely manner.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Director Smith reported that following the July 4th shooting, there was a greater need for HR support as well as recruiting opportunities. She moved forward with creating an agreement with HR Source for hourly onsite and virtual HR support. As a member of HR Source, support from their staff attorneys and other HR professionals are also included. Director Smith is recommending moving forward with a one-year contract at an hourly rate of \$115.00.

Trustee Biederman recommended revision of the agreement. Trustee Olian agreed. Director Smith will send the contract to the Library attorney for review. In the interim, the Library will proceed with HR Source with the current agreement.

Director Smith and Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel discussed the idea of hosting a small reception in partnership with the City for the Resource partners who they've been working with to provide support to the community since the July 4th shooting. Wine is being donated for the event. There is no date yet but Director Smith would like to get permission from the Board to serve alcohol. Trustee Olian asked if additional insurance is required. Director Smith will review this matter with the Library attorney.

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Zotos seconded a motion to approve an exception to the Meeting Room policy for serving alcohol. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays:

MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Zotos moved and Trustee Hoffman seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m. President Wolfe, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel

Reviewed by: Heidi Smith, Ashley Olian