

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board of Trustees Meeting

August 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

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

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Alicia De La Cruz (arrived at 7:14 p.m.), Irene Hoffman, Rebecca Nathanson, Ashley Lapin Olian, Rob Olian, Carol Wolfe, Peter Zotos

Members Absent:

Others Present: Catherine Lambrecht, Patricia Babcock McGraw, Rob Rotering, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith, Kim Stone

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Basofin moved and Trustee Biederman seconded a motion to approve the July 18, 2023 regular meeting minutes, July 2023 Bill List, and July 2023 Financial Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Basofin, Biederman, 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 how much she enjoys attending the library board meetings. She expressed concerns about an addition of a kitchen in the expansion, the purchase of an electric vehicle, and the focus on the youth area and lack of attention to the adult area in the expansion. Lastly, Ms. Lambrecht spoke about protecting children from R-rated or non-age-appropriate materials in the collection.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Wolfe's report included the following:

- President Wolfe and Director Smith met with Historical Society members Jackie Eilers and Catherine Lambrecht, Historical Society Archivist Nancy Webster, and Erin Jason, Assistant City Manager, on July 31. Following the meeting, the Historical Society removed their items from the Library. President Wolfe, Director Smith, and Assistant City Manager Jason will be attending a meeting with the entire Historical Society soon.
- Director Smith and Trustee Basofin will present the 2024 budget to the City Council on Aug. 21.
- The Mayor will read a proclamation drafted by the Library board in recognition of Banned Books Week at the City Council meeting on Sept. 11.
- President Wolfe shared that there will be a discussion on reporting and statistics for the strategic plan next month. Director Smith will send out information to trustees this month to prepare for the discussion. The information will also be helpful to the staff when working on the new 2025 Strategic Plan.
- The Violins of Hope program is returning to the Library tomorrow evening. President Wolfe invited everyone to attend this wonderful program.
- Trustee Zotos questioned whether there was documentation of the archival materials removed from the Library. Director Smith reported that collaborative documentation was done between the archivists of the Historical Society, the Assistant City Manager, and Library staff.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith referred to the 2nd quarter strategic activity report, the narrative report and the year-to-date statistics included in the packet. Two supplemental statistical reports were also included this month: a comparison of 2022 Illinois public library annual report data for the closest neighboring libraries and the comparison of seasonal door counts.
- A new payroll accounting associate, Shelly McDaniel, started last Monday.
- A full-time archivist, Bridget Lerette, will be starting soon.

Alicia de la Cruz arrived at 7:14 p.m.

- Trustee Biederman asked how comparisons with other libraries influence decisions, whether budgetary or otherwise. Director Smith's main takeaway is that the expenditure per capita is very affordable for a library our size in our area. She also thinks there's an opportunity to slowly scale up the collection expenditure to better support an aging collection. Another comparison of value is community engagement. For example, the Northbrook Library often exceeds circulation of 1,000,000 per year and has 50% of the population holding a library card. Highland Park has 32% of the population holding a library card. It could be the result of card sharing in one household or it could be community engagement.
- Trustee Olian questioned the context of some of the comparison data; he highlighted some odd anomalies. Trustee Zotos suggested that the Board decide which data points are most important and relevant to the mission of the Library.
- Trustee Basofin asked if this data presents an opportunity for a new Communications Manager. Director Smith replied that there are many opportunities to step-up communications.
- Trustee Hoffman asked if it would be worthwhile to look at a couple of libraries as peers for comparisons and whether this data would present aspirational data for future years. Director Smith reported there are many ways to look at the data. In terms of peer aspirations, she recommends looking at Northbrook, which has a similar population.
- Councilwoman Stone suggested offering a library card signup station when the Mayor meets with 3rd graders at City Hall every year.
- Assistant Director Rositas-Sheftel gave a report on outreach. She reported that the Library is aligning participation in outreach events with the strategic plan. It is a great opportunity to connect, engage, and issue library cards. Library staff will be attending 10 different events this year with an emphasis on reaching out to the Latinx community and the schools.
- Trustee Biederman asked about the patron that refused to leave the Library. The police were called and the patron, who was suspended previously for six months, was suspended for one year.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Trustee Hoffman reported that the Committee met to review and discuss the donor wall and gift policies. A potential donor met with Director Smith and Trustee Hoffman, and raised a question about what would happen when the donor wall was filled. Director Smith asked the architects to consider designing a new donor wall in the upcoming expansion. The Committee will be reviewing and revising the two donor policies as well as procedures and documentation. In addition, they are establishing a baseline of donors who have given \$500 or more in the last 10 years. The Committee will be looking at different ways to increase the stewarding of donors and different types of recognition. A page on the website will be developed to recognize smaller donations. An annual mail appeal and gala fundraiser were discussed. Trustee Hoffman commented that a gala could coordinate with either the kickoff or the celebration of the expansion. President Wolfe commended trustee Hoffman on her hard work and progress on development thus far this year.

ARCHITECTURAL LIAISONS

President Wolfe reported that she attended a meeting with the architects, Director Smith, and Trustee Olian last week. The architects provided more detail on the concept, and discussed feasibility and costs. They are looking into a parking study. Trustee Olian reported the next step will be guidance on how to move some areas around without adding staff and ensuring service lines are all appropriate. The project is still 7,000 square feet within the current budget.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Lapin Olian moved and Trustee Basofin seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. President Wolfe, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 7:50 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, Ashley Lapin-Olian