

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Special Meeting
May 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Rich Basofin, Rob Biederman, Alicia De La Cruz, Rebecca Nathanson, Ashley Lapin Olian (remote), Rob Olian, Carol Wolfe

Members Absent: Irene Hoffman, Peter Zotos

Others Present: Cary Rositas-Sheftel, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

APPROVAL OF ALTERNATES FOR EXPANSION PROJECT

President Olian opened the meeting by explaining that it was called to discuss the possible addition of alternates to the expansion project. He asked Executive Director Smith to brief the Board on a recent call from City Manager Neukirch, who requested that the Library reconsider its construction plans to explore including the archives in the project. Since doing so would require drawing down the Library's special reserves, City Manager Neukirch polled City Councilmembers to learn that they would be supportive of providing a loan in the event of an emergency.

The cost of adding both the Archive and the Makerspace alternates is \$565,000, which would reduce the special reserve to approximately \$100,000. This estimate is based on preliminary assumptions and has not been finalized. Trustee Wolfe, in conversation with Director Smith, suggested considering only the Archive alternate, excluding the Makerspace.

President Olian emphasized that the City Council supports including the Archive into the project. As elected officials who oversee the Library Board, their position carries significant weight. He cautioned against separating the Archive and Makerspace into two projects, noting two key concerns: first, rebidding the Makerspace later would almost certainly increase costs; second, incorporating only the Archives at this stage would eliminate the four-person staff workroom on the upper level without a relocation plan. The workroom was originally intended to be moved downstairs as part of the Makerspace construction. He also pointed out that the current bid for the Archive is unusually low at \$165,000, strengthening the case for moving forward with both components at this time.

The Board reviewed and discussed 10-year financial projections for three scenarios to assess their long-term impact on the Library's operating budget and reserves: (1) proceeding with the current expansion plan without any alternates; (2) adding both the Archive and Makerspace components to the project; and (3) adding only the Archive. These projections were intended to help the Board evaluate the financial sustainability of each option and inform the decision-making process.

When asked her preference, Director Smith recommended adding the archive only, citing a financially conservative approach. Following this, President Olian conducted a poll among the Board members to gather their preferences regarding the various options presented.

President Olian moved and Trustee Basofin seconded a motion to approve Option 2, adding the Archive and the Makerspace. The motion passed with six votes in favor and one vote against.

Ayes: Basofin, De La Cruz, Nathanson, Lapin Olian, Olian, Wolfe

Nays: Biederman

MOTION CARRIED

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Wolfe moved and Trustee De La Cruz seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. President Olian, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel

Reviewed by: Heidi Smith, Rebecca Nathanson

Approved: June 17, 2025