

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Board of Trustees Meeting - VIRTUAL  
April 13, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

**Members Present:** Rich Basofin, Joel Hurwitz, Rudy Juarez, Barbara Mazur, Rob Olian, Bill Ott, Nancy Sawle-Knobloch, Carol Wolfe

**Members Absent:** Erik Anderson

**Others Present:** Jake Diamond, Dan Kaufman, Pamela Siegel, Heidi Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Mr. Hurwitz moved and Ms. Sawle-Knobloch seconded a motion to approve the March 9, 2021 minutes, March 2021 Bill List, and the March 2021 Financial Reports on the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ayes: Basofin, Hurwitz, Juarez, Mazur, Olian, Ott, Sawle-Knobloch, Wolfe

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Basofin's report included the following:

- The Committees have been active and will be sharing reports.
- He and Director Smith will be attending the quarterly governmental partner meeting tomorrow.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Director Smith's report included the following:

- Director Smith thanked Councilman Kaufman for sharing the Library report at the City Council meeting. The report focused on first quarter 2021 initiatives including pandemic responses to the community, facility and compensation assessments in preparation for budgeting, and a strategic planning update.
- Director Smith highlighted an innovative programming model the Library initiated during the pandemic. By partnering with other libraries, the Library was able to present virtual programs with prominent speakers and authors. These programs would have been much more difficult to achieve if held on-site at one library and would have been fee prohibitive. The first event, held in November 2020 with leading anti-racist voice Dr. Ibram X Kendi, brought in an audience of 6,000. Additional events featured Dr. Eve L. Ewing, award-winner and sociologist of education, and #1 New York Times bestselling author, Harlan Koben. Additional multi-library events have taken place or are planned for the upcoming months. Some hybrid opportunities may be offered in the fall as well.
- The 2021 Neighborhood meetings of the City of Highland Park, North Shore School District 112, Township High School District 113, Park District of Highland Park, Highland Park Public Library, Moraine Township, Lake County and other governments serving Highland Park are beginning this

- week. The public is invited to give input and feedback. The meetings are scheduled for April 15, 11 am, May 3, 5:30 pm, and May 19, 5:30 pm.
- Director Smith will get back to the Board with book sales numbers and the number of Highland Park residents who attended the virtual events.
- Library staff met with representatives of the City and the Historical Society to discuss the opportunity to reach out to the community for valuable donations to the collection. This also kick started a conversation about the three-way relationship between those entities and the Library and the previous MOU.
- Director Smith reached out to former director, Jane Conway, and had a great conversation with her about facility planning.

#### REPORT OF THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Ms. Sawle-Knobloch reported the Committee met last month. The first item discussed was the Library parking lot. The City is resurfacing another parking lot and offered to add the library parking lot to the contract. The Library is waiting for the estimate. The second item discussed was the elevator. Lastly, the Library is in the process of redoing a building assessment. The staff is putting together a list of previously identified building needs for consideration in strategic and budget planning.

Director Smith reported that if the City adds the Library to their contract, it will be outside of the normal bidding process and would not need to go out for bid with the Board's approval of waiving the process.

#### REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL POLICIES COMMITTEE

Mr. Hurwitz reported the Committee met last month. There were two main items of consideration. The first was the Director's evaluation which will be done at year end. Director Smith put together a draft of 2021 director goals as well as a draft evaluation. Mr. Hurwitz welcomes any comments from the board. The second item discussed was Employee Assistance. This past year has been very challenging for the mental health and well-being of the employees. Currently, the Library does not offer in-person mental health assistance. The City has recently contracted with two providers. The first provider, LifeWorks, charges 69 cents per employee per month. The second provider is Family Service of Lake County, which charges a fee based on usage with a cap of \$11,000. The Committee recommends offering LifeWorks, the less expensive option, not to exceed \$700 per year.

**Mr. Hurwitz moved and Mr. Olian seconded a motion to approve additional Employee Assistance Program with Life Works not to exceed \$700 per year. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ayes: Basofin, Hurwitz, Juarez, Mazur, Olian, Ott, Sawle-Knobloch, Wolfe

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Ms. Mazur reported the Committee met to review three things. The first item discussed was the responsibilities of the Committee. It was suggested the Community Relations and Development Committee take over the advocacy roll from the Operations and Policies Committee and they graciously accepted. Legislation affecting libraries will be reviewed by the Committee and then be presented to the full Board. The second item discussed was fundraising by the Friends and the Library. Director Smith and Mr. Ott will meet with the Friends to clarify the roles of each group and make the differences clear to the public.

The last item was current and future fundraising. Prior to the pandemic, a naming campaign and brochure were in process. Director Smith will review the past goals and actions and will meet with the Committee in early June.

Mr. Juarez noted it was a good idea to discuss how to cultivate the current donors at their next meeting. Ms. Sawle-Knobloch suggested thought be given to how to develop an easy bequest program.

#### OTHER COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

None

#### OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Director Smith discussed a proposal from consultant Amanda Standefer for a strategic plan update. Ms. Standefer recommended three options. The first one, Extending the Plan, is the path of least resistance and would involve working with the team to develop new plans for the following year. Option two, the Refresh Plan, would include going back to the community and consulting with them. The third option, Redoing the Plan, would be a complete redo. Director Smith recommends going with Option Two, the Refresh Plan, with Standerfer Consulting.

Mr. Juarez and Mr. Ott agreed the Refresh sounds right and stated the importance of understanding how the pandemic has changed the behaviors of patrons and their needs. Director Smith would like to leave the time-line open for the refresh plan. The Refresh Plan could be one year or three years based on the information and discussions.

**Mr. Juarez moved and Ms. Wolfe seconded a motion to approve a Strategic Plan update with Standefer Consulting for a cost not to exceed \$7,000. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ayes: Basofin, Hurwitz, Juarez, Mazur, Olian, Ott, Sawle-Knobloch, Wolfe

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

President Basofin acknowledged Councilman Kaufman for his liaison role with the library. Mr. Olian also recognized him for his attendance and thoughtful input.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Wolfe moved and Mr. Hurwitz seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. President Basofin, presiding, adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Pamela Siegel