

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**January 5, 2023**

**Board members in attendance:** [President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Jade Hart, Chris Casey, Jeremy Elges, Elisabeth Hepworth (all in person); [Vice President] Monica Challenger, Rafael Jacobo, Susan McDermott, (all via Zoom)

**Unable to attend:** Hassan Selim

**Staff in attendance:** Dara Schmidt, Amber McNamara, Jessica Musil (in person); Patrick Duggan, Jessica Link (all via Zoom)

**Others:** Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; and Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library (in person)

- A. Call to Order
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: December 1, 2022  
*Ms. Hart moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Casey seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*
- C. Public Comments and Communications
  - There being none, the meeting continued
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
  - The Foundation experienced a busy December – staff are preparing for the capital campaign casebook in addition to wrapping up year-end gifts. The year-end appeal performed well.
  - Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) enrollment is lagging a bit. Library staff plan to reach out to enrollment partners to improve enrollment, and re-engage a social media campaign.
  - A new shirt will be added to the Raygun store – Books Build Better Brains, which was originally created as a library staff t-shirt. Select shirts will now be available for kids.
  - On January 21, the Foundation and Library will host a birthday party with activities and cookies for Dolly Parton, from 10 am-noon. The event also corresponds with the five-year anniversary of DPIL in Cedar Rapids and the 300,000th book mailed. Ms. Hepworth asked if we had enrollment data on percentage of the eligible population. We average 62-63% of eligible population enrolled. One in 10 children under the age of five in the United States are enrolled nationwide. Five years ago, only 12 communities had DPIL and now are 40 in Iowa alone. Ms. Challenger asked if there are any obvious gaps in our area for enrollment. As of today, no. In the past, we did a comparison study with the Cedar Rapids Community School District. At that time, the gap was young black males, which we made a concerted effort with outreach partners that serve the population. The data showed high enrollments for children with an Individualized Education Program (IEPs) or free and reduced lunches. It’s time to revisit the data, specifically now that we’re post-pandemic with children back in physical school buildings for at least one year. We are not able to get data for kids ages 0-3. Ms. Schmidt will bring results from an updated report after we get new data. Ms. Challenger asked where the enrollments come from. We have four partners with the highest return.
  - Stay Home and Read Book Ball is February 26 and mailings will go out at the beginning of February.

E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- The Friends will sell children’s books at Dolly Parton’s Birthday Party on January 21. The Friends will also be present at the Cedar Rapids Comic Con on February 5; they gifted a comic book collection and plan to sell it at the event.
- In February, Friends will send out a membership mailing.
- On April 1, the Friends will host an April Fools Sale at the Cherry Building, final time to be determined. A bookstore at Williamsburg outlet mall closed – the inventory was passed on to the Friends. These books are brand new and will be sold for \$1. In May, Friends will host another big sale at the downtown library, similar to the fall sale. Friends continue to sell books online; December 2022 was the best month so far.

F. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
  - There being nothing to discuss, the meeting continued.
- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Challenger reviewed the November Finance memo, which is 40% through the year. We have received 46% of revenues and have spent 41% of expenditures. Ms. Challenger noted that we project over spending electricity but this is a common issue and not just the library.
  - **Action:** FY24 Budget
    - Ms. Challenger shared highlights from the FY24 budget request, which is a \$7.2 million budget. Besides expected annual personal services increases, the library has asked for the following increases to cover rising costs of existing services:
      - \$100,000 for materials, using CIP funding.
      - \$30,000 for electricity to match spending over several years.
      - \$10,843 for seasonal employees to maintain competitive wages. This increase is coming from Refresh Savings the City calculates off open positions and removes from budget every fall.
    - The budget will not include an additional request for \$100,000 to support vendor work with at-risk youth this year to maintain a flat city budget. Some changes in the budget worksheets are cost neutral – as existing funds are shifting between account lines.
    - Mr. Twedt-Ball appreciates the increases in wages for seasonal staff as well as keeping within a 4% overall increase considering inflation. He thanked Ms. Schmidt and the committee for presenting the conservative budget. Ms. Casey praised the library leadership for the fiscally responsible budget, and building relationships with the City to maintain the budget.
    - The board is approving the multiple funds: 151 operations funds, 7010 library grants, and 316 capital improvements. Following the vote, the budget will go to City Council for approval in February.

*The committee recommendation to approve the FY24 budget, as presented in the board packet, carried with unanimous approval.*

- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - **Action:** Policy Review. Ms. McDermott reviewed the following policies.
    - 4.04: Environmental Policy. The committee is not recommending any changes to this policy.
    - 4.05: Non-Smoking Policy. The non-smoking policy was last revised in 2020 and there are no changes at this time.
    - 5.00: Foundation and Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library. The policy has no recommended changes.
    - 5.01: Volunteer Policy. The changes for this policy are purely to update formatting. The content otherwise remains the same.

- 5.02: Support Group Fundraising. A discussion was held on the name of this policy and if it accurately reflects the content. The committee will discuss and bring a recommendation at the February meeting.

*The committee recommendation to approve the above policies, with exception to 5.02, as presented in the board packet carried with unanimous approval.*

- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
  - The committee has no action but many things have been happening with committee meetings. On Wednesday, January 25 from 11 am-1 pm, OPN Architects will host the first public engagement session for the new westside project. Trustees are welcome to attend the open house feedback session but are not required. An online form will be available for those who can't attend and we're working with OPN and partners to capture feedback from those who may not attend. The feedback form will be translated into Spanish, French, and Swahili. The hope is to get input to inform the design choices at this early stage.

#### G. Library Director's Report.

- The library is sending nine staff and one trustee to the American Library Association (ALA) conference LiblearnX. The conference, hosted in New Orleans, is from January 26-30. At the conference, we will attend an event in the library's honor to celebrate the Jerry Klein Community Impact award, and receive the award check. Sometime in February and March, we will host a community party to celebrate with citizens. As the schedule is confirmed, details will be shared.
- Ms. Schmidt shared that the library's budget will go to City Council in February. Typically, the library will attend and present on the budget request. When final dates are scheduled, trustees will be invited to attend.
- Ms. Schmidt and Ms. McNamara are currently evaluating the statistics in the board packet. The current report is in response to COVID and how it has impacted service levels. However, it no longer makes sense to tell our story. The goal is to meld outcomes and outputs with great stories. Ms. Hepworth noted the Advocacy Committee discussed updated data visuals and is looking forward to a new way to share the library story.
- The library recently released Vega, which is an improved method for patron navigation in the library catalogue with the current vendor. Vega allows patrons to view a single item and the different iterations of that book (such as print, large print, digital, etc.) without having to find the specific item type. It cleans up the browsing interface. This feature was one of the desired options when we switched to a new catalogue system. However, the feature wasn't quite ready at the time of roll-out.

#### H. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

#### I. New Business

- There being no new business, the meeting continued.

#### J. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

**The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 4 pm in the Conference Room, Downtown Library**