

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**October 7, 2021**

**Board members in attendance:** [President] Jade Hart (in person); [Vice President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Susie McDermott, Matt Wilding, Rafael Jacobo, Mary Sharp, Jeremy Elges, and Monica Challenger (all via Zoom)

**Unable to attend:** Hassan Selim

**Staff in attendance:** [Library Director] Dara Schmidt and Jessica Musil (in person); Patrick Duggan, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Kevin Delecki, Todd Simonson, and 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 (both via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order
  - Ms. Hart called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: September 2, 2021
  - Mr. Jacobo motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. McDermott seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.*
- C. Public Comments and Communications
  - There being none, the meeting continued
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
  - Ms. Tyler is wrapping up Fall Focus newsletter, and expects it to be mailed by the month's end.
  - Dolly Patron's Imagination Library (DPIL) had good month of new enrollments: September closed with 5,400 enrollees and now has 3,035 grads. By the end of December, we will have mailed over 215,000 books to kids in Cedar Rapids. Consistently, enrollments remain at around 65% of eligible population enrolled. Most affiliates plateau at 60% after four years. Our program took two years and has remained at 65% for the last 18 months. We still have goal of 80% enrollment, which is a driver of the upcoming DPIL enrollment campaign.
  - The Foundation's Finance Committee is in the process of releasing an investment services RFP which was last done in 2016.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
  - The Friends continue to clean up their inventory with a re-established relationship with North Cedar Recycling and the Baker & Taylor Sustainable Shelves program. The Friends receive many donations that are not suitable for resale for various reasons.
  - In Focus newsletter, the Friends included an article and picture of Basement Books, which will debut a new look at the Very Cherry Open House in December.
- F. Board Education: Access Strategic Plan Update – Erin Horst and Kevin Delecki
  - Access is one of the three main pillars of the strategic plan. Ms. Horst's committee specifically worked on the *Evaluate tactics to Facilitate Access* initiative.
    - *Highlight current self-serve opportunities.* This tactic became a necessity due to COVID. Staff acted quickly to develop process for curbside holds pick-up and accessible databases from home. New self-serve functions are possible with the new ILS Polaris and will increase with the upcoming release of Vega – the patron interface of Polaris.
    - *24/7 Automated Branch and Mobile Service.* To increase access across the City, the committee reviewed and researched product types and best placement. Using feedback from other libraries and data, we are not currently recommending these. Instead, we will investigate other more feasibly mobile options to improve

access. The team specifically looked at impacting the 52402 zip code region as most users tend to use Marion or Hiawatha public libraries for their library services.

- Under Access, Mr. Delecki's committee focused on *Expand programming and services for seniors, and children with attention and learning differences*.
  - *Children*. Parents and caregivers may come to the library following a diagnosis or questions and concerns about their child. The Library will connect individuals to local experts, such as the Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA). The collection will also be reviewed and purchases made to aid parents/caregivers as well as children. In an effort to aid browsing, the child care area of collection will be organized by topics, such as anxiety, autism, ADHD, etc. The Library will also seek training and certification through KultureCity to be more inclusive of children and adults with sensory differences.
- Ms. Hart thanked the committees for the information and research, and asked how long the committees worked. Both committees worked simultaneously through the spring and summer months.
- Ms. McDermott asked about the usage data and if it was visits or materials circulated from the MLN libraries. The data shows actual visits with checked-out materials from a physical location different than the user's home library.
- Mr. Twedt-Ball asked Erin to define the ultimate goal to target the users in the 52402 zip code. In general, most zip codes are served by the downtown or Ladd libraries. The 52402 area presents a different challenge in Cedar Rapids library engagement when they are closer in proximity to the Marion and Hiawatha libraries.
- Mr. Elges wondered if he catalogue could provide digital shelf browsing by allowing users to select a book and find what's on the shelf nearby. Ms. Horst is not sure if this is available but will investigate possibilities.

Ms. Hart welcomed Jeremy Elges to the board. He was appointed to succeed Randy Ramlo's term.

#### G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger
  - Ms. Schmidt reported on August financials. Everything is as it should be at this time of the year, even though some line items will look high due to contracted bills due early in the fiscal year.
  - The FY21 budget was presented, and while it may change with the upcoming City audit, the Library underspent the budget by \$1,686.80
  - Ms. Schmidt is working on the FY23 budget and believes it will be ready for board approval at the January 2022 board meeting.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - State Library of Iowa, Trustees Handbook Discussion: Chapter 13.
    - This chapter specifically addresses legal aspects of serving on the board. Ms. McDermott highlighted portions of the chapter.
    - Iowa Code allows a City's ability to establish a library and defines power for the City and the Library's governance with the board. Municipal code further defines responsibilities.
    - Regular board meetings are open public meetings with agendas published in advance. And while it is public, the meeting's purpose is for the board to conduct business. The public can watch or provide public comment. Nothing can be acted upon without appropriate notice and posting ahead of the meeting.
    - The Library must contend with two conflicting parts of Iowa code: patron record confidentiality and open records. We have a robust confidentiality policy, which is reviewed every three years. It is important to understand,

parents are liable for their children's actions; however, the public library does not have an age limit for privacy. Our library maintains that records are confidential for all users regardless of age though parents may be responsible to return materials, or pay for loss or damage. At the time of card sign-up, we notify parents how they can access their child's account; otherwise, information on borrowing is confidential unless charged for an item. Ms. McDermott asked the age children can be alone in the library. The Unattended Child Policy sets the age at 10, which is consistent with other city services, such as public transportation. We don't ask for ages so long as the child follows the behavior policy. Ms. McDermott also asked about school library cards, which are digital and not physical. The library card number is made up of the child's student ID number so they can figure it out. Certainly, the child can ask for a different card and/or card number if they feel there is a privacy concern.

- In general, the board must consider gender balance. Trustees were urged to read on Board Liability, and to remember as we go into the holiday session that trustees must follow the Iowa Gift Law, which states individuals can't accept anything for personal use with a value of over \$3.
- Ms. Sharp wondered if we have a policy for who can speak on the board's behalf, as the Cedar Rapids school district's board president was recently in the media. Policy 3.00 designates the Library Director as the official spokesperson. However, the board president can share information; we will review Policy 3.00 in the next year and can make changes. A discussion was held on the importance of a board communicating the same message and that board presidents should facilitate listening to all voices.

- **Action:** Policy 1.00 Mission Statement

- The committee has not recommended any changes from the last revision in May 2018. Ms. Schmidt noted that even if the committee does not have changes, we still have to review/re-affirm all board policies every three years for accreditation. This process has already started and trustees can expect to see more. There was no discussion of the policy.

*The motion to accept Policy 1.00 carried with unanimous approval*

- Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Sharp met with all candidates for the upcoming City Council election. She provided information on the Library's budget, mission, and goals. The Library will celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in early 2022. A team is developing ideas for a community celebration.
- Westside Project Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
  - **Action:** MSR Contract.
    - The Library released an RFP for an architect to put concept behind a new permanent library facility on Cedar Rapids' west side. Ladd Library is a rental and a new facility creates many exciting opportunities to impact the community. Ms. Schmidt reviewed the project's scope of work.
    - Although this contract is under \$50,000 and Ms. Schmidt could sign it without board approval, she believes it is an important first step in a multi-year project and would like to proceed with the full board's approval.
    - Mr. Wilding asked if other parts of this project would need City approval or responsibility. This initial concept is library-focused even though it would ultimately be in a multi-use facility. The final project will include a 45,000 square foot library and will add other features, such as partner space, which will bring other stakeholders in the future. However, this

contract is to solely serve the library. The Westside Library Project committee includes Library staff and trustees, Foundation, Friends, City, and County representatives. This group reviewed and evaluated the proposals.

- Mr. Wilding asked which funding line item would pay for this contract Ms. Schmidt intends to use funds in the Contract Services line item.
- Ms. Sharp asked if the contract obligates us to use this architect at the time of construction. The Library has the option to use MSR or another company at that stage of the project.
- Ms. McDermott encouraged trustees to visit MSR's website and to view samples of their work.

*The motion to accept the contract with MSR as presented in the board packet carried with unanimous approval*

- The project will proceed rather quickly. MSR plans to visit the library on Oct. 11-12 and host conversations with stakeholders to develop preliminary designs. The goal is to submit designs by the end of December.

#### H. Library Director's Report

- Ms. Schmidt has been busy with FY23 budget preparations and the Westside Library Project this past month.
- The Library has also finished its FY21 annual report, which is included in the board packet and will be posted online. Ms. Schmidt highlighted the visual timeline of services of how services changed in response to COVID conditions. The report is also full of articles that detail the Library's major initiatives and projects that impacted our community's access, inclusion, and literacy efforts. The final two pages contains a snapshot of library services and patron usage including materials circulation, computer use, and program attendance.
- Mr. Wilding asked if the Library's WiFi is accessible in Greene Square. The park, along with the downtown area, is served by free WiFi through ImOn. Our WiFi is accessible outside the building but just on the property. Ladd's WiFi was improved to allow access in the parking lot. People continue to use personal devices in their cars while parked.
- Mr. Jacobo asked if we have an estimate of the community organizations the Library partners with, and if so, can it be added to the report in future. We have a running list – Ms. Schmidt believes it is around 150; she will review the list and update it.

#### I. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

#### J. New Business

- There being no new business, the meeting continued.

#### K. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm

**The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, November 4, 2021, at 4 pm, in Beems Auditorium, Downtown Library**