

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
November 4, 2021

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

Unable to attend: Hassan Selim, Jeremy Elges

Staff in attendance: [Library Director] Dara Schmidt and Jessica Musil (in person); Patrick Duggan, Amber McNamara, and Todd Simonson (all via Zoom)

Others: Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library (via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order
 - Ms. Hart called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: October 7, 2021
 - Special Event Application

Ms. Sharp 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. Library Board Committee Reports
 - Finance Committee – Monica Challenger
 - Ms. Challenger may need to leave the meeting early; to accommodate her schedule, the Finance Committee report was moved up in the agenda.
 - The September financials show we have received 22% of revenues with 16% of budget spent. At this time, we are slightly behind but funds received, we will be on target.
 - **Action:** Janitorial Contract. FBG has provided janitorial services for the last five years. The Library is happy with services and the contracted staff. The City released a request for bid and FBG was the only respondent; however, the City and Finance Committee reviewed the proposal and feel comfortable recommending FBG. The contract does include an overall increase to reflect current hiring and pay practices. FBG, and similar companies, are increasing starting salaries for employees and offering bonuses to attract and keep workers. Ms. Sharp has noticed litter around the front entrance and would like to ensure this is within the scope of work. Ms. Schmidt said the scope of work mainly addresses the interior cleaning. However, a day porter conducts exterior walks to pick up trash. Though sometimes, litter may seem worse depending on visiting times and weather conditions. In addition, the Library's new building maintenance worker is also providing exterior clean-up on a regular basis.

The motion to accept the janitorial contract as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.
- E. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
 - Ms. Schmidt reported for Ms. Tyler. This month, the Foundation has received grants from local organizations as well as awaiting news on pending applications.
 - As a reminder, if you received a mailed donor survey, Ms. Tyler would appreciate return of this regardless of the printed deadline on the letter.
- F. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- Starting this weekend, the Friends are moving their Saturday sales inside the Downtown Library. Members are also preparing for the Very Cherry Sale on the first Saturday in December at the Cherry Building.
 - As promised, the Friends developed a document outlining their book donation acceptance practices. This is posted on the Library's website.
 - The organization is also celebrating their 50th anniversary.
- G. Board Education: Understanding the Social Wellbeing Impacts of the Nation's Libraries and Museums: IMLS Report – Amber McNamara
- In 2016, the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) partnered with Reinvestment Fund to document how libraries and museums engage with communities. Specifically, the study reviewed library and museum impacts to social inclusion and well-being in 24 select cities across the United States.
 - The study found that the presence and usage of public libraries and museums to be positively associated with multiple dimensions of social well-being: community health, school effectiveness, institutional connection, and cultural opportunity. Libraries and museums were also shown to more effectively impact well-being due to their broad networks and partnerships within communities.
 - Ms. McNamara also shared the key implications for library leaders and staff as well as funders and policy makers.
 - Ms. McDermott asked how we will use the report's information. IMLS is trying to show concrete data on why libraries are important. This will help in advocacy as we tell our story and we can defend reasoning behind decisions. Ms. Schmidt also feels this information could be a good advocacy messaging for supporting organizations and donors. Ms. Sharp believes this is helpful research to advocate for the west side library project and wondered about the report's response to literacy. The study doesn't necessarily address literacy – it avoids strategy – and instead is a broader study on how libraries meet the community's needs.
 - Mr. Wilding noted the report did a good job of correlating social well-being and use of libraries; however, he couldn't find causation between a library's creation to meet these gaps. This report doesn't have much for causation – it is mostly correlative.
 - Mr. Wilding asked if the Library could do anything better. Ms. McNamara feels our leadership team aligns with the report and that we're already doing well at most of the recommendations. One area of improvement is evaluation and assessment, as it is critical for continuous improve. Ms. Hart asked how we use data in decision-making. Strategically, we need both outputs and outcomes to fully understand successes and opportunities. Outcomes would show how collection diversity has impacted users versus outputs that indicate circulation. Ms. Schmidt shared that IMLS and the Public Library Association (PLA) are reviewing standardized data collection, which this report recommends.
 - Mr. Twedt-Ball shared he finds the library's role in social inclusion and exclusion to be interesting. Libraries do a good job at social tolerance while staff are good at inclusion. He hopes that the new west side library project can be designed with intentional social inclusion.
- H. Library Board Committee Reports
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - State Library of Iowa, Trustees Handbook Discussion: Chapter 15.
 - The chapter explores Intellectual Freedom, which is a keystone issue for libraries. A library houses many ideas and viewpoints for anyone to access though that doesn't mean those ideas are part of our institution's view. Conceptually, it is a broad responsibility that we make easily accessible.
 - In defense of intellectual freedom, it's important to note it is not the idea of that material we're defending. Rather it is the idea that people should

have access to any material. Libraries are experiencing an increase in intellectual freedom challenges recently, which we'll bring as a board education topic in the coming months. Ms. Hart noted at its core, a library's role is to uphold the 4th Amendment of the Constitution.

- **Action:** Policy 1.01 ByLaws
 - Ms. McDermott highlighted the suggested changes:
 - Adding public spokesperson to the board president's role to reflect the reality.
 - Examples of electronic participation seemed outdated and the sentence was updated to include participation through 'any real-time means of communication.'
 - A discussion was held on the wording for Article III, Section 5 – specifically the phrase 'impossible to attend'. The committee will review and bring a recommendation to a future meeting.
 - Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Sharp reminded the board that trustees will meet with City Council members sometime in January/February to discuss the library's community impact and budget.
 - Westside Project Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Schmidt reported for Clint. Since the last trustees meeting, the committee met with the architects to review a rough concept of the potential west side library and affirm the concept aligns with stakeholder conversations. Ms. Schmidt is hopeful that MSR will present their report in January.
- I. Library Director's Report
- The Library received approximately \$45,000 from an IMLS ARPA grant. This grant, starting Nov. 1, gives us one year expand the Mobile Technology Lab's impact with workforce development and adult supports. Funds will be used to purchase additional technology, printers, and tables for pop-up computer labs to participate in job fairs for resume writing and printing on the spot. Other goals will be developed.
 - The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art is no longer able to house the Zerzanek Collection, where it has stayed since the flood. Ms. Schmidt will work with the Personnel and Policy committee to review the policy as we move toward taking over the collection. It will take time to prepare for this transition so the Library is fully equipped to continue the preservation and care of the collection. Ms. Schmidt will update the board as the transition continues.
 - Ms. Schmidt highlighted the great stories in the board packet.
 - Mr. Wilding asked about the current library card procedure. Ms. Schmidt shared the current procedure, which includes tiered access based on ability to show an ID and proof of address. This change occurred several years ago to allow instant but limited access while also lowering our risk for material loss.
- J. Old Business
- There being no old business, the meeting continued.
- K. New Business
- Ms. Sharp asked about the Marion Public Library's proposed changes to their board. A discussion was held on term limits. Ms. Hart suggested that Personnel and Policy could review and bring back key points to the board for consideration as appropriate.
- L. Adjournment
- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 pm

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, December 2, 2021, at 4 pm, in Conference Room, Downtown Library