

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
April 6, 2023

Board members in attendance: [President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Jade Hart, Chris Casey, Elisabeth Hepworth, Rafael Jacobo, Susie McDermott (in person); [Vice President] Monica Challenger, Hassan Selim (via Zoom)

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

Others: Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library; Marissa Payne, *The Gazette* (via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order
 - Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: March 2, 2023
 - Special Event Application

Ms. Hart moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. McDermott 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 continues to coordinate the quiet phase of capital campaign, and plan the May 5 Literary Vines fundraiser event. Tickets are now available, and invitations were mailed last week. During the event, the Programming Team will showcase library resources, focusing on technology and experiences.
 - The semi-annual joint Focus newsletter, produced by the Foundation and Friends, should be out April 16.
 - The Foundation will celebrate National Library Week in April with an additional t-shirt on their Raygun store. The community can purchase 'University of Cedar Rapids' shirts in honor of the library's 125th anniversary.
 - Mr. Twedt-Ball expressed thanks for the Literary Vines event, and he appreciates how the fundraiser has grown. Ms. Hart asked about the event's ticket sales. Ms. Tyler does not have a count at this time.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
 - The Friends hosted an amazing April Fools Day sale at the Cherry Building. They sold new books for \$1 each, garnering over \$2,000. The event was packed with constant traffic. Now, they are preparing for the big spring sale at the downtown library in May, followed by Farmers Market sales this summer.
- F. Board Education: Reinvigorating Active Service – Todd Simonson
 - Todd Simonson, the library's Public Service Manager, led a strategic planning committee to reinvigorate the active service model for patron interactions. The committee, made up of nine employees, represented all departments and both branches.
 - Active Service is meeting people wherever they are in the library to provide compassionate engagement and equitable access to services. When both buildings opened in 2013, following research and board support, the library adopted this model to meet patron needs, proactive behavior and safety intervention, and establish positive connection and relationship building.

Mr. Elges joined the meeting at 4:11 pm.

- The library is re-focusing on active service again because the practice was halted due to challenges presented by COVID-19. In addition, we've had a large staff turnover, which was seen in many industries across the country during COVID, and many of the staff did not work with the active service model. We anticipate a significant increase in visitors to programs and with the summer reading program.
- All departments will have a refresher training during the professional development day on April 28. Staff will be surveyed to identify training needs. The Public Service leadership will collect data to monitor success. In addition, active service will be discussed regularly in staff meetings.
- Mr. Twedt-Ball asked what kind of data would be collected for this. To start, we'll observe active service in order to help inform data to collect; for example, observing staff making connections on the floor or leaving the desk. Ms. Schmidt noted we talked about balancing this the twice a year reference data collection, as required by the State Library of Iowa, to gauge if we're actively serving people. We're talking about new data points and old data points that may change due to the work. Ms. Casey asked if there are any particular areas or populations (such as young adult, Children's, etc.) that may have a greater need. Mr. Simonson thinks there is probably a different need. For example, Young Adult is a small portion of the building but active service will look different than second floor non-fiction.
- Ms. McDermott noted that the 1985 library had a central desk and people had to approach for assistance. Ms. Schmidt said the word 're-invigorate' was intentional in the strategic plan. Active Service was important to the board when it was adopted, and now it's time to use the model after challenges from COVID. This philosophy will be incorporated into the westside library design.

G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
 - The committee met on March 28, and reviewed a new statistics dashboard, which will be discussed later in the agenda. Ms. Schmidt noted that the new dashboard would not have happened without feedback from the committee.
- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Hepworth reported for Ms. Challenger and reviewed the February Finance memo as presented in the board packet. The library is projected to meet or exceed revenues and expenses are on track with the budget.
 - The City Council is scheduled to present and approve the FY24 budget on April 25. Following the budget hearing, the board will receive the final library budget amendment for approval in May.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - **Action:** Policy 4.03: Community Postings. The committee updated the policy to more accurately reflect the current framework, which includes what's allowed and timeframes. Mr. Elges agreed that the proposed draft policy is more robust.
The committee recommendation to approve Policy 4.03 as presented in the board packet carried with unanimous approval.
- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - The committee recently reviewed some more final drawings. Ms. Hart looks forward to showing these drawings to our community at the next public open house on May 1 from 4-6 pm in the Ladd Library Community Room. OPN Architects and library staff will present the project and gather more public feedback. The project will aim for LEED Gold or Platinum certification. OPN has completed the first set of massing drawings to go to the cost estimator. In a week, we should have the first pricing; depending on the outcome, we may need to alter the plans to stay within budget.

H. Library Director's Report.

- With assistance from the Advocacy Committee, the library has been evaluating ways to tell our story. The Director's Report, included in board packets, is sent out monthly and widely available. It can be an incredible advocacy piece, which we hadn't considered in the past. Mary Sharp, past trustee and committee chair, started this process, especially thinking about the 125th anniversary. In the past, the library had a separate sheet of statistics, that have changed over the years, and a narrative piece of the Director's Report. This new report combines both. The report's data is starting in FY23 so we can create a new baseline because previous data has not reliable. The graphs will change in future as we establish the baseline. Ms. Schmidt reviewed the new report.
- Ms. Hepworth expressed kudos to the staff and committee for this report. She feels it is a great report with lots of quantitative and qualitative information. Ms. Casey believes the data is really great for anyone to understand, and to use in advocacy efforts. With the new report, built in Power BI, the library can pull data quickly every month to share at any time. Mr. Elges complimented the document, noting it is much more readable and intuitive with combined data and narrative. Ms. Schmidt feels the library has made it through complex issues presented by COVID, and can now focus on being a library again.
- The library will be closed on Friday, April 28 for its semi-annual All Staff Professional Development day. Ms. Schmidt will send the schedule to trustees in case they'd like to attend. In the morning, OPN will provide feedback sessions for staff.

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 4:56 pm.

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