

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**August 4, 2022**

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

**Unable to attend:** Jeremy Elges

**Staff in attendance:** Dara Schmidt and Jessica Musil (in person); Patrick Duggan, Todd Simonson, and Erin Horst (via Zoom)

**Others:** Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation (in person)

- A. Call to Order
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4 pm. He noted that it is a time of change and stress for the library with the recent electrical fire at the downtown library. Staff have adapted and found solutions to meet the community need. Speaking for the board, Mr. Twedt-Ball expressed thanks to Ms. Schmidt, library leadership, and staff, and encouraged the library teams to hang in there.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: July 7, 2022

*Ms. McDermott motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Hart 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 reported. The Foundation has ended its year on positively and exceeded the contributions budget. Ms. Tyler is thankful for donors and the community to support the Library Foundation and Library.
  - Two new team members joined the Foundation staff: Jess Netolicky as the Development Associate, and Amber Wieland as a shared administrative assist with Volunteer Services.
  - The Foundation is working through the land acquisition process and plan to close next week. In addition, the feasibility study is going well and Ms. Tyler expects to receive the report for the Foundation's September board meeting.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
  - Ms. Slappey was unable to attend. Ms. Tyler reported. With the downtown library's closure, the Friends canceled their Farmers Market sale on Saturday, August 6. Instead they will be part of the August 20 Farmers Market sale, as well as Farmers Market sales on September 17 and October 1. The Friends will also host the annual fall sale November 4-6 at the downtown library, and be part of the Very Cherry Sale in December.
- F. Board Education: PressReader – Erin Horst
  - The Library added PressReader as its newest resource with generous support for the next three years from the Foundation. This collection consists of thousands of newspapers and magazines including major titles. It can be difficult to acquire materials in different languages and this service allows access to several languages. Some pieces can be viewed in multiple languages or translated.

Mr. Selim joined the meeting at 4:16 pm.

- In the past month, we've had good reception with over 1,000 titles opened, and averaging about seven articles read for each title, so approximately 7,000 articles. Magazine consumption is moving from print to digital, especially as some magazines are ceasing physical distribution. Ms. Horst hopes we can continue this resource long-term, and will continue to monitor usage.
- Ms. Tyler asked if we could tell how many different languages are being accessed. With reporting tools available, we can only tell the most used languages, which are Spanish, French, and Chinese.
- Mr. Jacobo asked if there is a way to track how people are using accessibility features of PressReader. Only languages is tracked. Ms. Horst notes that downloading magazines and articles on devices can allow users to improve accessibility using device features.

#### G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Committee Assignments for FY23
  - Clint has been in contact with everyone about the assignments. Shared the committee roster make-up. Jessica/Dara will reach out to get regular meetings on the calendar.
- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
  - No report.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - No report.
- Westside Project Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
  - Five architects submitted RFPs for the library project. A committee scored their responses and we're waiting for compiled scores to come back to determine if the top two or three architects. Following this, we will schedule architect presentations and a special board meeting to vote on negotiating a contract with the recommended architect. We should also have a final feasibility report to help us understand how much money to raise, and for the architect firm to design, bid, and build.
  - Ms. Schmidt noted that after results are tabulated and finalists are selected, the Westside committee will develop a presentation scope for the architects. Each architect will present in an open public meeting prior to the full board's approval to negotiate a contract. In October, the board will vote to approve the contract.
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball encouraged people to engage and ask questions as the process unfolds for the board and the community.

#### H. Library Director's Report

- The summer reading program concluded last week. Final data will be compiled but we know participation has improved since 2020. Ladd Library graciously hosted the end of the summer celebration following downtown's unexpected closure.
- Following the electrical fire downtown, Ladd Library's usage has noticeably increased. In order to keep some services in the downtown area, staff opened a cooling center and computer lab in an old classroom at Madge Phillips Center. The space is available during regular library hours but closes at 6 pm during the week. Service Navigators are working out the center and around the park to check in with patrons. Downtown staff are either working from home or providing additional support at Ladd.

Ms. Casey joined the meeting at 4:32 pm.

- In total, it took about five minutes for the fire to start and be extinguished, and the building was evacuated. Restoration has started. However, cleaning or repairs around the fire site cannot be done without insurance investigation and/or approval. At this time, we don't have a re-open date. Cleaning will be extensive – while there was minimal fire and water damage, soot is all over the building. All materials and surfaces will need to be

cleaned. Clean-up has been prioritized based on returning to service. Ms. Schmidt is hopeful to re-open by September.

- Staff and Friends areas will be cleaned first with the hope of opening the sorter and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue entrance for holds pick-up. A small browsing collection will be curated as well using popular returned items and the new fiction books, after cleaning. The overall collection will not be available until cleaned. As work continues with the crews, we can re-add services. August is quiet for programming so public programs were not canceled. We had to cancel room reservations but people have been kind and understanding.
  - Ms. Schmidt feels good about the Library staff's ability to respond to disaster and crisis. In addition, she feels supported by the City as multiple departments are working through this. She highlighted thanks from the Assistant Fire Chief, as printed in the board packet.
  - Ms. Hepworth asked if this is an opportunity to promote the digital collections and resources. Yes, we are trying to highlight available services in social media and other avenues. Due to the pandemic, we created a page called Library at Home, to educate people on how to access the library without coming in.
  - Mr. Twedt-Ball asked about other ways to get physical materials to patrons. Chomp is still an option but it was rarely used. The Books by Mail program is part of the strategic plan to expand delivery service options, and will start again when staff can access the downtown library.
  - Trustees expressed thanks to Ms. Schmidt for keeping them informed, and thanks to the library staff for adapting to meet community need during this difficult time. Ms. Challenger thanked staff to ensure safety.
  - Staff committees will start forming for two strategic plan initiatives: support elementary age learning and literacy, and reinvigorating active service. Updates will be shared at a future board meeting.
- 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 4:52 pm.

**The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, September 1, 2022, at 4 pm in the Community Room, Ladd Library**