

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
May 2, 2024

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

Board members unable to attend: [Vice President] Monica Challenger, Jade Hart

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

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

- A. Call to Order
 - Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: April 4, 2024

Ms. Casey 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. Board Education: Summer Reading – Kevin Delecki & Amber McNamara

Mr. Elges joined the meeting at 4:02 pm

- This year, the summer reading program looks a bit different. The Summer Reading Challenge is still designed for readers of all ages. However, the focus is on literacy and no longer includes activities for completion. The goal is to build a community of readers to encourage young readers as well as to read as much as possible. The simplified program is completed after reading 600 minutes – approximately 10 minutes a day for the summer – which can sustain reading levels from one school year to the next. We received feedback from various sources, such as schools, partners, patrons, and staff, to focus on literacy and make participation easy.
- This challenge is part of an umbrella program called Cedar Rapids Reads, which will be a year-round literacy program to include other challenges. Readers can participate and track reading through an app or a paper log. After reading 300 minutes, kids can get a free new book and adults will get a Friends Book Nook coupon. There are also prizes for each 600 minutes read and entry into grand prize drawings for various ages groups.
- The Programming Department will host about 375 events and programs throughout the summer including Mobile Technology Van park outreach, large-scale performances, weekly in-building programs, outreach to camps/daycares, Maker Room activities, and outreach to teens and adults.
- Ms. McNamara and the Community Relations team used data to create specific collateral to market specific target audiences. For example, a specific postcard will go to 11,000 households with children in Cedar Rapids, regardless if the household has a library card, or an email for those who primarily use digital materials. The library will target four key audience personas with a different marketing strategy for those particular groups.
- Mr. Elges loves the mindful and purposeful ways the library is seeking to remove obstacles and to offer various ways to participate. Mr. Selim asked if the summer reading logging app can be incorporated into the MLN catalogue app. Unfortunately, they are

produced by two different vendors. However, we can link Beanstack and our calendar in the MLN app to re-direct users to what they seek.

E. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler

- The Foundation hosted a successful Literary Vines event. It was made possible with silent auction donations and volunteers. Final contribution totals from the event are not yet available. Save the date for next year's event on April 18, 2025 at the downtown library.
- Parcel B was listed for sale – the remaining Parcel A is 15-acres and future home to the Westside Library and park. The Foundation has received interest for the purchase and is working through the process with a broker realtor's support. Next Thursday, May 9, 40 corporate volunteers will clean up the land as part of United Way Day of Caring.
- Fundraising and conversations continue for the capital campaign including a second Wise Women's Circle gathering this week. On the CRLibrary.org/BigDreams website, pledge forms are available as well as a way to request a speaker to learn about the project or campaign.

F. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey

- The Friends are also preparing for summer after having wrapped up a successful spring sale, which made over \$13,000 – an increase from last spring. On the last day, also known as Box Day, Friends partnered Midwest Books to Prisoners, Coe faculty and students to take books that will then be sent to incarcerated individuals. Books were also given to local retirement communities.
- Volunteers will participate in Farmers Markets again starting in May through the second August sale, and a special pop-up sale during the summer cat café adoption event. New volunteers have been working on cleaning up their storage areas.

G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
 - The committee has no action. The library was pleased that the legislative session ended without passing any public library-adverse bills.

H. Library Board Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Schmidt presented for Ms. Challenger on March 2024 financials. The revenues and expenses have evened out as the fiscal year concludes. Next year is a more challenging year for the City so the library plans to purchase new servers this fiscal year instead as we are under on our expenses.
 - **Action:** Purchase Order and Payment Approval – cost of subscription for circulation/cataloging software and services for the downtown and Ladd libraries. Payment in the amount of \$95,274 to iii Innovative.
 - This is year four of a five-year contract for the software. The trustees have previously approved the overall contract and this vote is to approve payment. Per purchasing best practice, a committee is being formed to review and develop a bid for an ILS system.
The committee recommendation to accept the contract, setup the purchase order, and schedule payment for \$95,274 to iii Innovative as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair.
 - **Action:** 3.01 Library Cards and Customer Privileges. This policy has to be approved in conjunction with the Metro Library Network. Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha directors have been meeting to discuss service for those outside of our libraries as well as card types we offer – Metro, Metro Lite, and Quick cards.

A Metro Card offers patrons with a proof of residency up to 99 physical items and digital items; a Quick card is for those without proof and limits liability to three items; and a Metro Lite card is obtainable with proof of residency but no more than 10 items checked out. It was designed for people to reduce their personal

liability, such as kids. We have distributed less than 100 cards over five years. The recommended policy change is to remove that card type.

In addition, the other major change is to offer a Quick Card to any person who can walk into the physical library. The library directors believe it's important to allow access as other libraries are under pressure from intellectual freedom challenges and financial issues. As a larger library system, the directors feel it is our responsibility to the surrounding library communities to allow people service even if it is limited.

- **Action:** 4.00 Library as Place. The committee reviewed this policy. There are no recommended changes or discussion.

The committee recommendation to approve the reviewed policies as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.

- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Schmidt reported for Ms. Hart.
 - **Action:** 4.04 Environmental Policy. The committee included a draft policy in the packet. When the policy was first written, it only included LEED for sustainability certification. Now there are more programs with varying costs. The committee wants to meet sustainability criteria without being held to one standard, especially if the fees for the certification process are cost prohibitive. The goal is to ensure the overall value of sustainable library facilities. The board discussed the wording of the final paragraph and agreed to simplify it with this revision: The library will consider sustainability certification eligibility for new library facilities.

The committee recommendation to approve the revised policy as discussed carried with unanimous approval.

Ms. Hepworth exited the meeting at 4:58 pm.

- **Action:** Resolution for Land Ownership Transfer. Ms. Schmidt was in a meeting right before the board met today. It provided clarification on the land transfer process and resolution language. At this time, the resolution's final paragraph language shall be updated to: Now, therefore, it be resolved by the Cedar Rapids Public Library Board of Trustees to pass a motion intending to request ownership of the land. Following this, the Foundation board will approve the land transfer and the library trustees will vote on another resolution to officially accept the land. From there, City Council will then have a resolution to accept the land as well. The Foundation plans to vote on the request in June, which will give more time to ensure transparency in the process and finalize behind the scenes work.

The committee recommendation to approve the revised Resolution for Land Ownership Transfer as discussed carried with unanimous approval.

I. Library Director's Report

- Ms. Schmidt formally recognized Meredith Crawford, Community Engagement Librarian, for her designation as a *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker for 2024. Ms. Crawford was one of 50 librarians selected for this prestigious honor in the Advocate category for her work in developing programs to support incarcerated teens in the Be Heard program. The award comes with a \$15,000 stipend.
- PLA Re-cap.
 - The Public Library Association (PLA) annual conference was held April 2-5 in Columbus, OH. The library was able to send six staff and trustee Monica Challenger to attend with approximately 7,500 library professionals. After each conference Ms. Schmidt asks staff to report on three things you learned, two things you want to learn more about, and one ah-a moment. Ms. Schmidt shared highlights from the reports.

- Twice a year, library leadership sends out an email with professional development suggestions and an application form so any staff member can make a case to participate. The application process is open to any staff member and senior managers further discuss and advocate for staff based on the opportunity, how it can benefit the staff member and library, and how it fits with the overall strategic plan. The budget is closely followed and dictates how many we can send. Opportunities to travel to and attend conferences are a great way to recognize our top third staff.
- Next month, Ms. Schmidt will share with the board the end of year two strategic initiatives as well as a preview of year three.
- J. Old Business
 - There being no old business, the meeting continued.
- K. New Business
 - There being no new business, the meeting continued.
- L. Adjournment
 - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 4 pm in the Community Room, Ladd Library