

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
July 11, 2024

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

Board members unable to attend: Rafael Jacobo

Staff in attendance: Dara Schmidt, Amber McNamara, Erin Horst, Jessica Musil, Patrick Duggan, Todd Simonson, Wes Shirley, Jessica Link (in person)

Others: Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

A. Call to Order

- Mr. Twedt-Ball called the meeting to order at 4 pm. Mr. Twedt-Ball reflected on his time with the trustees. When he was recruited, he felt he understood libraries but never thought of them in a larger systemic construct. Ms. Schmidt gave him a copy of *Palaces for the People* to understand how libraries impact communities. He served on the Personnel and Policy committee and got a deeper understanding of the thoughtful structures to uphold libraries. He got to know the library teams, their work, and the respect this library commands at national conferences. Mr. Twedt-Ball noted it's not an easy time to be a trustee and yet they are vanguards of a sacred institution. He feels like this group helps to elevate the library, and can help move toward big dreams for the community. He personally thanked Ms. Schmidt for her leadership and opportunities.

B. Nominating Committee – Susie McDermott

- **Action:** Slate of Officers FY25
 - Monica Challenger (President) & Jeremy Elges (Vice President). Ms. McDermott shared the Slate of Officers for the upcoming fiscal year. The committee made the recommendation as they believe the trustees are positioned well to have Ms. Challenger as President and Mr. Elges as Vice President. They will bring a lot to the table for the library, especially as we move into the new library campaign. *The committee's recommendation for the Slate of Officers carried with unanimous approval.*
- Passing of the Gavel to new President. Mr. Twedt-Ball officially passed the gavel to the new board President Monica Challenger. She shared that feels honored to be President, especially under Mr. Twedt-Ball's mentorship. She is especially honored as she is the first African American President to serve this library.
- Recognition of Clint Twedt-Ball, President. Ms. Challenger shared praise for Mr. Twedt-Ball who started his tenure with the library in 2016. As a compassionate leader, he served on the Advocacy Committee and as chair of Personnel and Policy before being elected as Vice President alongside then-President Jade Hart. Mr. Twedt-Ball was elected President and also served to help shape the future of the Westside Library project. His contributions and advocacy as a trustee will be missed as his term ends as President and trustee. In recognition of his service, Ms. Schmidt presented him with a chair in Whipple Auditorium with his name engraved in the plate to honor his trustee service and a photo collage spelling CLINT, the letters of which are photos from around the library, to recognize his presidency.

Mr. Twedt-Ball exited the meeting at 4:12 pm.

- Welcome of Ana McClain, New Trustee. Ms. Challenger welcomed the newly elected trustee, Ms. McClain. Those present introduced themselves and their respective roles with the library and trustees. She moved to Cedar Rapids in 2012, and with her husband owns Lion Bridge Brewery. Ms. McClain and her family are avid library users and is happy to serve on the board.
- C. Consent Agenda – **Action**
- Minutes:
 - June 6, 2024
 - June 20, 2024
 - Special Event Application
- Ms. Hart moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. McClain seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*
- D. Public Comments and Communications
- There being none, the meeting continued
- E. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
- Ms. Tyler reported. She recently returned from American Library Association (ALA) conference in San Diego. She presented on how to use library stories to influence and impact community members; in addition, she shared our Advocacy Toolkit.
 - The Foundation accepted and signed a purchase agreement for the other parcel of land. The buyer has six months due diligence period and two opportunities to extend their timeline for decision-making. In the interim, the land remains on the market and the buyer is confidential until the deal is complete.
 - The Foundation sent an appeal for the Westside Library campaign to 1,300 households, which has garnered donations in the first few days. They will also host two upcoming events – trustees will receive invitations. First, a reception to honor former trustee and Foundation member Chuck Cebuhar, instrumental in building the 1985 library, and receive a donation for the new library campaign. And second, a campaign donor reception is August 15 to honor donors who have given so far. Ms. Schmidt will provide updates on the project at the event and we'll have a save the date for the groundbreaking event.
- F. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
- Ms. Slappey reported on Friends sales practices. The Friends, in addition to sales within the library buildings and at Farmers Markets, also sells books online with a dedicated team of Friends volunteers.
- G. Board Education: Service Enterprise – Jessica Link
- The library was recently re-accredited as a Service Enterprise organization. The certification is awarded to organizations that strategically leverage volunteers to achieve operational efficiency and greater social impact. The certification is beneficial for us as it allows us to use the research-based tools to improve our program. The program has three domains – Impact and Outcomes, Establishing the Foundation, and Best Practices in Volunteer Engagement – along with four characteristics each.
 - The library's volunteer program was launched in 2013 and we were initially accredited in 2015 with re-accreditations in 2021 and 2024. Our overall score is 94%, with all domains rated higher than 91%. Ms. Link highlighted one of the characteristics under Establishing the Foundation: Leadership Involvement, which was awarded 97%. This specifically has two criteria for board involvement.
 - The volunteer program has several upcoming goals. Ms. Link plans to continue building an online and self-paced orientation; develop opportunities at the Westside Library; engage more volunteers to expand the Books by Delivery program; and shift volunteer onboarding from open door to role-specific opportunities.
 - Ms. Casey asked about volunteer turnover. This depends on the role – some volunteers are highly dedicated and trained, such as holds hunters, and less likely to turnover. Other

roles, like adopt a shelf program, have a higher turnover. Ms. Link is looking to find a right-size investment and faster training for those higher turnover roles. Regardless of role, we wish to create advocates with any volunteer. Ms. Challenger asked about volunteer recruitment methods. Currently, recruitment is paused as we build capacity. In general, recruitment is very passive as our community seeks us. When we recruit, we use the website as well as Volunteer Match and Volunteer Now through United Way. The buildings and staff interactions are also passive recruitment tools.

H. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Rafael Jacobo, Committee Chair
 - The committee did not meet in June and there is no report at this time.
- Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Challenger presented the May 2024 financials. We're in a good position as we move toward the final month of the fiscal year. Finances are strong and are reviewed regularly by the board committee and the City Finance department to ensure we are within budget. Ms. Schmidt reminded everyone that we won't get June financials for next meeting. The City will take several weeks to confirm numbers to ensure accuracy. Ms. McClain asked how the library tracks financials regularly if reports are two months behind in board packets. The library has many predictable expenses such as personal services for salaries and benefits as well as contracted vendor fees. The Materials department spends the most and they can track their spending day-to-day while purchasing new materials. City Finance has several layers of checks and balances to ensure we remain within budget.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - **Action:** 5.01: Volunteer Policy. This policy, which upholds the importance of volunteers and their roles, had a minor wording edit to clarify that volunteers do enrich library services.
 - **Action:** 6.01: Staff Endorsement. The committee did not recommend any changes at this time.
 - **Action:** 6.02: Human Resources Authority. The committee re-affirmed this policy. *The committee recommendation to approve the reviewed policies as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.*
- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - **Action:** Resolution to Formally Accept Transfer of Land Ownership. This resolution is the library formal acceptance of land ownership from the Foundation to the Library. At the July 23 meeting, City Council will also vote and accept the gift and transfer ownership. At the June meeting, the Library Foundation board voted to gift the land. Ms. Tyler shared how this gift will continue to support the community for generations, as it will be built in one of two HUD development zones to build affordable housing within the City. The zones are based on census tracts and the current Ladd Library property is no longer in one of those zones. Ms. Schmidt noted that the formal acceptance of the land is a culmination of an incredible gift from the Library Foundation. Ms. Challenger thanked library leadership, trustees, Ms. Tyler, and Ms. Slappey for their efforts to develop this project for our community.
 - The Foundation has a warranty deed for Parcel A. A final plat will be filed and following approval, the land can be re-zoned. The new cross street, which will be built and the library's address, will be called Sandberg Lane.
 - Ms. Schmidt reported that Jason Stancliffe, City Facilities Manager, will work with the library as project manager to help coordinate City services and contractor needs for this build. Building Services and the ADA team have approved designs and we anticipate bid approval will go to City Council on July 23 to then release the bid.

The committee recommendation to approve the resolution to formally accept Parcel A for the Westside Library project as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.

- I. Library Director's Report
 - Ms. Schmidt reported that while the new library project moves forward, there has been several new people in City leadership positions. She is building relationships and has started routine meetings with the City Finance Director.
 - Ms. Hart asked about the hotspot program, which ended June 30. A majority of the Metro Library Network (MLN) devices were lost or stolen regularly. Materials Manager Erin Horst and Technology Solutions Supervisor Patrick Duggan analyzed data about how the hotspots were being used and also researched needs to fund a sustainable program. Data showed the hotspots were not being used by those who needed it and were routinely checked out by those who did not live in Cedar Rapids. It would also cost approximately \$200,000 to maintain the program including replacing the lost or stolen devices. There is momentum behind a federal program to impact the populations who need a hotspot.
- 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 5:19 pm.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, August 1, 2024, at 4 pm in the Conference Room, Downtown Library