

Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
August 1, 2024

Board members in attendance: [President] Monica Challenger, [Vice President] Jeremy Elges, Jade Hart, Chris Casey, Susie McDermott, Elisabeth Hepworth, Ana McClain (in person); Rafael Jacobo (via Zoom)

Board members unable to attend: Hassan Selim

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

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

- A. Call to Order
 - Ms. Challenger called the meeting to order at 4 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes:
 - July 11, 2024
 - July 17, 2024

Ms. Casey moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Hepworth seconded. The action 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 been working through process for the additional parcel's sale. In addition, they team sent an appeal for the Westside Library project in July, which has raised over \$55,000.
 - The Foundation recently hosted a special event for Chuck Cebuhar. He essentially founded the Library Foundation with the purpose to fund the 1985 library. He was honored by an anonymous donor to name a space for him at the new library. The reception honored Mr. Cebuhar, his contributions, and his work to mentor others. The event was special for his family and friends. Ms. Tyler found out that he died on Monday this week, days after the event on last Wednesday.
 - On Thursday, August 15, the Foundation will host a campaign donor reception. The next event is the Van Vechten Brunch in September; invitations will be mailed in two weeks.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
 - Ms. Slappey reported and brought sample donations to show the different types of materials the Friends receive – a planner from 1947, which matches the 2024 calendar, and includes train schedules printed in the front.
 - Friends are finishing up the summer with two more market sales. They've consistently been making \$2,000 for each sale. The Friends continue to get large scale donations and use the Cherry Building space to accept these.
- F. Board Education: Fiscal Year Comparisons – Dara Schmidt
 - Typically, we report end of year numbers in October in the Annual Report, as we wait for finalized financial data. Now that information reporting is improved, we can view fiscal year comparisons easily. In addition, we've had almost clean data in FY23 to start making better comparisons between years.
 - Ms. Schmidt highlighted specific areas of the comparison report. The library has a significant increase in number of programs as well as attendees. In FY23, the programming team brought back the large-scale program teams since COVID caused us

to scale back. The team also increased their outreach efforts; for example, they do bi-weekly outreach to Cedar River and Johnson Steam Academy classrooms including materials for check-out and literacy activities and helping City View students with public speaking skills and more.

- Last year, circulation started to level off. However, the Materials team is looking for creative ways to bring materials to people. For example, during a high attendance event, they will pull specific related items for program attendees and over the summer, we created displays specifically with high popularity items. Data indicates that physical circulation has improved downtown after items were moved last year.
- Database use has also improved – video streaming increased during the pandemic and popularity has not waned. Digital circulation – both ebooks and digital audiobooks – increased. National conversation around digital equity is on the rise as libraries pay significantly more and key stakeholders are trying to shift the dynamic. Ms. McClain asked about the control of digital resource use. Each vendor has their own rules about how the resource can be used. Most of ours are based on zip code, and only those living in a Cedar Rapids zip code has access. Some libraries pay a higher platform fee to open up digital access to anyone.
- Physical visits continue to improve. We're not quite at pre-pandemic numbers though Ms. Schmidt doesn't believe it's realistic any more to compare data to pre-2020 data as people's habits are different.
- This data includes cardholder information, specifically highlighting active cards and total cards. An active card indicates the cardholder has used the card in the last year. Records are purged every three years though we stopped in the pandemic to not inadvertently cut off access. This process re-started this year to explain the reduction. In addition, we stopped offering library cards to Cedar Rapids Community School District students per the district's request. Ms. Schmidt noted that while actual cards decreased from FY23 to 24, the active cards increased. Ms. Hepworth appreciated the information on the card holder information. She's also grateful that even if we can't give students cards any more that we're still in the school districts. The library continues regular tours and ensure our storytimes and early outreach mirrors the school curriculum to improve kindergarten readiness.
- The remaining data also shows steady increases: PC uses and virtual visits, which are website visits; volunteer hours; meeting room use for both reservations and attendees.

G. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Elisabeth Hepworth, Committee Chair
 - The committee did not meet in July. Ms. Hepworth noted she is thrilled to serve as the new chair and be a champion for the library in this way.
- Finance Committee – Chris Casey, Committee Chair
 - There as no financial report for discussion as June information is not available yet. Ms. Casey looks forward to serving as the new chair.
- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - Ms. McDermott shared the committee did not meet in July but they will continue to facilitate policy review in the next year as required by accreditation.
- Westside Project Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Schmidt shared that the project continues to clear hurdles to move forward, such as accepting the land and transferring ownership to the City, the final plat was accepted, and the general contractor bid documents were released. At this time, groundbreaking is set in October and a final date will be announced as we finalize the City and County leadership schedules.

H. Library Director's Report

- Ms. Schmidt reported that the Westside Library's general contractor bid opportunity closes on August 14 and she expects to have a general contractor up in September. The board will vote on the lowest bidder before it goes to City Council. Ms. Schmidt continues

to build relationships with City leaders as the project unfolds. Most recently, Facilities Manager Jason Stancliffe has agreed to be our project manager to help facilitate needs from the City's side of operations as well as monitor contractors and their progress.

- 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 4:51 pm.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 4 pm in the Community Room, Ladd Library