

## **Tuesday, August 30, 2022**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Library Trustees of the Village of Oak Park held on Tuesday, August 30, 2022 on the Zoom virtual platform. President Fruth called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Foss took the roll as acting secretary.

Present: Library Trustees Bloom, Burns, Fairfax, Foss, Fruth, Rogers.

Absent: Chakraborty.

Also attending virtually: Interim Executive Director Lori Pulliam; Director of Communications Jodi Kolo; Director of Collections, Director of Finance Jeremy Andrykowski; Director of Collections Leigh Tarullo; Manager of Collections and Bibliographic Services Barbara Fitzgerald; library staff members Claire and Linda Ivey-Miller; community members Peggy Conlon-Madigan and OP.

### **2. Decision to Conduct a Virtual Meeting (Action)**

Burns motioned to approve, Bloom seconded. Vote: all yes.

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

Burns said she would abstain if all minutes were approved as a packet since she was absent from the July 26 meeting.

Foss moved to approve all sets of minutes together. Rogers seconded.

Bloom said she would abstain if all the minutes were approved as a packet since she was absent from the August 1 and 2 meetings.

Fruth asked Foss to withdraw his motion so the board could approve meeting minutes individually and not have abstentions invalidate the vote.

Bloom moved to approve the July 26 meeting minutes. Rogers seconded. Foss took the roll call vote.

**July 26 Virtual Regular Meeting Minutes**—Votes to approve: Bloom, Fairfax, Foss, Fruth, Rogers. Burns abstained.

Rogers moved to approve the August 1 meeting minutes. Burns seconded. Foss took the roll call vote.

**August 1 Virtual Special Meeting Minutes**—Votes to approve: Burns, Fairfax, Foss, Fruth, Rogers. Bloom abstained.

Burns moved to approve the August 2 meeting minutes. Rogers seconded. Foss took the roll call vote.

**August 2 Virtual Special Meeting Minutes**—Votes to approve: Foss, Fruth, Rogers, Burns, Fairfax. Votes yes: Bloom abstained.

Foss moved to approve the August 8 & 15 meeting minutes. Burns seconded. Foss took the roll call vote.

**August 8 & 15 Virtual Special Meeting Minutes**—Votes to approve: Bloom, Foss, Fruth, Rogers, Burns, Fairfax.

#### **4. Public Comments**

Fruth read an email he received from Linda Ivey Miller that read:

"I work as a library assistant at the Maze Branch and at the Main Library. I wrote the attached "letter" last October after we stopped providing the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal at the branches. I did so in an attempt to collect my thoughts and to politely express my frustration with the decision. Thank you for considering my opinion."

October 5, 2021

Martyn,

Thank you for providing Barb's response to the patron who asked what happened to the NYT and The Wall Street Journal at Maze. While I agree that digital access from anywhere using your library card is convenient, and that searching for a specific article is most efficiently done online, can we acknowledge that there are a few things that are not addressed in this response?

First, one of the great benefits for patrons who utilize the branches is walking to a library location in their neighborhood, sitting down and reading not one, but two or three newspapers.

Second, reading the paper online is not the same experience as reading a paper spread out before you. It just isn't. At the minimum, a printed paper gives one a much better sense, in a glance, of its contents than an online paper. Additionally, reading a printed paper does a better job of luring you to sections and articles you might otherwise not consider.

A gentleman came into Maze last week and asked for the magazines. I remembered him from pre-pandemic days when he would walk to the library with his dog, sit outside in the garden and read magazines. Alex and I told him we no longer had magazines. As he was leaving he said, "well, it's been great knowing you," indicating that he probably would not be back. I'm not sure that what he has lost can be measured, but it is a loss none-the-less.

I acknowledge that printed magazines and newspapers are a dying breed and will someday only be available online. I hope that public libraries' decisions to stop carrying them don't hasten that reality.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Ivey Miller  
cc: Barbara Fitzgerald  
Addendum, 8/21/22

If we truly are going to be "A Library for Everyone,"  
let's strive to empower every voice in our community  
let's share information, services and opportunities with all of our patrons  
And finally, no one needs and I don't hear anyone asking for more screen time in  
their life.

Fruth invited other guests to make a public comment at this time. Rory O'Neill raised a hand in Zoom first, and made his public comment, which he said was also emailed to Fruth before the meeting. O'Neill read the following:

My reason for speaking to you tonight is to respectfully offer an experienced assessment of the status of the cleaning taking place at the 3 branches of our Library.

In particular I will be talking about our floors.

I will repeatedly use the word "Serviced"

Serviced means (by contract) that the floors will be stripped once and sealed twice in the contract year.

I present these facts.

1. The cork floor in the Dole branch has not been serviced in 3 years.
2. The hard surface flooring at the Maze branch has not been serviced in three years.

As for the Main branch.

3. The Eco-surface floors on the staff side of the Main branch have not been serviced in 3 years.
4. The book sorting room on the first floor, which is the most heavily trafficked area of our library, has not been serviced in 3 years.
5. The staff offices on all floors has not been serviced in 3 years.
6. The floors on elevators #2 and #3 have not been serviced in 3 years.
7. The terrazzo floors in all the restrooms (both public and staff) have not been serviced in 3 years.
8. The Eco-surface flooring on the 3rd floor public side was serviced last January and resulted in extensive damage that (among other problems)

knocked out data and communications on that floor. I placed a stop work order to show Alpha officials the damage and was promised that the problems would be corrected and not repeated. The sealant placed was done only once and is completely inadequate. There has been no further work on that floor.

9. The Eco-surface flooring on the 2nd floor was stripped (and only stripped) this past June and the same extensive damages that took place on the 3rd floor in January were repeated. As of this meeting the 2nd floor has no sealant at all in spite of the terms of the contract.

10. The 1st floor Eco-surface has not been serviced over the past contract year.

I have pointed out 10 facts here but could go on and on.

Director of Operations Jeremy Andrykowski will verify these facts.

This is now the second consecutive cleaning contract that has ended in complete and undeniable failure. Our once beautiful library's are now showing the effects of neglect.

We had a dedicated reliable contractor who for 16 years did a wonderful job for our library. The decision to part ways with him was made against my experienced advice.

I advise you as strongly as I can, to not underestimate this situation. You can expect the cost of a contract to bring us up to acceptable standards to increase significantly.

I will Email these facts to board president Matt Furth. I respectfully request that he share them with the other members of the library board of trustees.

Fruth invited Peggy Conlon-Madigan to share her public comment.

Conlon-Madigan said signed petitions titled "older adult equity at Oak Park Public Library" were delivered today to the interim executive director and that the undersigned petitioned the library to continue to provide print newspapers including, but not limited to, The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post.

## **5. Trustee Comments and Calendar**

No trustee comments.

## **6. Staff Reports**

### **a. Strategic Priorities: Engagement, Learning, Stewardship, and Anti-racism**

Pulliam said Fitzgerald and Tarullo were at the meeting to answer questions related to newspapers and digital resources.

Fitzgerald answered questions about physical space, print costs, her experience talking with patrons and evaluating digital use, as well as what additional library new resources had been added.

Fruth said as a reminder to help alleviate confusion that the board sets policy and approves a budget. Professional staff define practice and procedures. Fruth said he also wanted to be sure that the library was not creating but following the curve.

Fitzgerald said her team watches how the community uses materials. She said everyone still can come in and read newspapers. She said format and platform changes can be hard but are also inevitable and enable the library to better leverage the collection budget.

On a new topic, Burns asked about expanding staff bee keeping knowledge to the community.

Andrykowski said this training was for staff, but he could reach out about it.

Fruth suggested a collaboration with the park district and/or village on it.

Burns said she would take it to iGov's next meeting.

#### **b. Library Core Use Statistics**

Fairfax said she noted a drop in program attendance from June to July.

Pulliam said this is typical.

#### **c. Additions and Terminations Report**

#### **d. Staff Changes Report**

Bloom asked about changes related to Operations, Facilities and Technology.

Fruth said he had spoken with Pulliam, and suggested for more context that trustees speak with Pulliam directly outside of this meeting.

### **7. Financial Reports**

Andrykowski said the library is preparing approaches on how to cover expenses if Cook County property tax distribution payments are delayed. Andrykowski said more information will be brought to the board at a future meeting.

#### **a. July 2022 Financial Report**

#### **b. July 2022 Disbursements Resolution**

Burns moved to approve disbursements. Bloom seconded.

Votes: All yes.

### **8. Additional Reports**

**a. Intergovernmental Committee (IGov)**

Burns said the group covered its hosting of a September 24 community sustainability forum at Oak Park and River Forest High School and will review the Village of Oak Park's new Climate Action Plan. Burns said the group also talked about hosting a spring forum. Burns said in the past, the spring forum has covered the upcoming election cycle and tips on how to serve on a village board.

**b. Council of Governments (CoG)**

Fruth said CoG did not meet.

**c. ILA Legislation and Advocacy**

Fruth said his term on this committee has ended.

**D. PlanIt Green**

Foss said he believes the library can learn from peer organizations on ways to find and secure future grant funding.

**d. Friends of the Library**

Pulliam said Friends' book fair profit was \$17,000 which was double what they did at the high school, mostly because of reduced expenses related to hosting at the library.

Rogers said she would serve as the library board representative for the Friends.

**e. Library Employment Report**

No comments.

**9. Unfinished business**

**a.Executive Director Search**

Fruth said trustees have conducted 3 virtual/Zoom interviews with candidates and are no longer working with (The Blackberry Collection formerly RGW Consulting) on the search.

Trustee discussion recapped steps taken to date and offered ideas on how to best conclude the process.

Pulliam suggested, and Fruth agreed to add a closed session to the meeting to continue the hiring discussion.

**b.By-law for Reimbursement of Child Care Expenses for Board Meeting Attendance**

Tabled.

**10. New business**

**a. Draft 1: Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

**i. Compensation analysis**

Treece presented data and a draft employment budget line recommendation. He said estimates were based on the annual review of internal and external library compensation data. To achieve a more equitable pay grade distribution across the library, Treece said his estimates reflect an average increase of 5.9%.

Trustees asked more questions, then requested additional recommendations (at 7% and 8% scenarios) to compare and review before the September regular meeting.

**ii. Financial spreadsheets**

Andrykowski presented a draft 2023 operating budget that would levy an operating budget increase of 5% when compared to 2022. He discussed background and rationale for increases and decreases in certain areas and specific line items.

**b. Closed session**

Foss motioned to move to a closed session. Rogers seconded.

Vote: all yes.

Trustees moved into closed session.

**11. Adjournment**

Trustees returned from closed session, and Fruth adjourned the meeting at 8:13 pm.