

Minutes for December 17, 2024, Regular Board of Library Trustees Meeting

1. Call to order and roll

President Fruth called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and took roll.

Present: Madhurima Chakraborty, Maya Ganguly, Kristina Rogers, Virginia Bloom, Matthew Fruth

Absent: Susanne Fairfax, Theodore Foss

A quorum was established at this meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

November 19, 2024 Regular Meeting

Motion to amend the meeting minutes to include discussion on staff demographics and turnover. To be approved at the next regular meeting, January 28, 2025.

Moved by Bloom. Seconded by Ganguly. Approved by all present.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments received by email or writing for this meeting.

4. ED Search Update

Chakraborty provided an update on the Executive Director search process, reporting from Koya on the search, launching on October 8. Koya spoke from 23 job sources about the position, receiving 42 potential candidates expressing interest with 31 ultimately sending in applications. Koya began scheduling interviews, with the intent of considering applications submitted as the posting is open. As the applications got narrowed down, the search committee reviewed 8 potential candidates, with reviewing applications in depth at their meeting on December 20. Discussed were the timeline of conducting interviews, bearing in mind the upcoming holidays with the committee deciding on conducting interviews between January 13 and January 23. 6 candidates will be interviewed within that week, with interviews lasting for an hour each.

Koya will be hosting staff office hours virtually on January 7, with a community office hour held on January 8. Koya sent out an online survey where submissions are anonymous with the aim to capture feedback to compile a report to share back with the search committee. The search committee will have a meeting on January 24 where they will review candidates and make considerations for who to have in the second round. Chakraborty discussed that herself and the search committee will be deciding on who from the interviews will advance on to the second

round, with the plan for the entire board of trustees to decide on who will move on to the final interviews, noting that the schedule and timeline is advancing quickly. The posted salary range for the position was discussed, noting on the market feedback that was shared among the board based on size of: employees, budget, and population. The board aims to vote on the salary range at the next regular meeting.

5. Staff Survey Update

Fruth discussed the staff survey update, where himself and Bloom had a meeting with Holistic, the vendor and received a draft of the survey. Both met with the Co-Interim Directors, and the Director of Finance and Human Resources to discuss the draft survey, addressing changes in wording and nuances to be made, with the intent of the survey coming from the board of trustees and not an ask from leadership. Discussed was the goal of the results of the survey, explaining that it is to provide information to the incoming Executive Director and guide that person to leading the library and leadership while being clear that the aim for complete participation is what they are looking for. The board discussed an evaluation for the new Executive Director, containing a rubric to assess and provide guidance feedback, with discussion on how frequent the evaluations will be, noting every quarter. with the possibility of having several through the year quarterly and aligned with staff taking their quarterly survey.

6. Board Goals

The board discussed several goals for themselves to achieve, including a self-evaluation of themselves to hold accountable for the goals they will set forth as a board. Overall goals discussed were attending library programs, attending all meetings, setting expectations and clear understandings collectively as a library board, and board development opportunities such as attending conferences, webinars, etc. Discussed were key values such as clarity, transparency, and expectations and setting forth guardrails in place. Specific goals relating to the onboarding of new members were also discussed and to be created in timing of the election of new officers.

7. Board Development

a. OMA and modern intricacies related to OMA

Fruth discussed his findings of documents on several websites relating to Open Meetings Act (OMA) with the goal for the board to all learn more OMA and to be on the same page. Fruth also discussed an opportunity for the board to learn more about OMA from an attorney, such as a webinar or an in-person meeting, noting a cost that will be associated with this potential option. Discussed were other resources to access the information related to OMA specifically a RAILS webinar training relating to OMA. Discussed were equity and anti-racism training to be conducted in conjunction with OMA training for new board members as part of an onboarding process. Discussed were board meeting quorums and what constitutes a quorum at a meeting, noting the importance of a quorum when it comes to representation and decision making.

b. Board-staff leadership

The board discussed the alignment of the strategic priorities set forth from the board, and ways to hold the Executive Director accountable if the alignment is not met. Mentioned is leadership to have the continued conversations on staff retention for staff identifying as BIPOC with the intent on communicating with the board to provide feedback. The board discussed the start of establishing guidelines when it comes to communication between themselves, the Executive Director, and staff/leadership. The board plans to review external resources and documents to set a clear plan of how communication should be set between themselves, the Executive Director, and staff.

c. Board role, responsibilities, policies

The board reviewed handbooks and guides from other libraries and governing bodies such as the Village of Oak Park and the Park District of Oak Park, with the objective to gather information that can inspire them to include and create a handbook. Suggested were the formation of several subcommittees, containing 4 board members where one committee designated for creating a handbook for the trustees while providing feedback and updates while another committee to be tasked with refining the board bylaws. Discussed were the creation of several committees, including an ad-hoc committee to tackle several things. Rogers proposed to be involved with this subcommittee, along with Fruth (with it being open to any other members to join) to form a handbook highlighting the board roles, responsibilities, and policies. The board discussed the critical questions and concerns that they receive from community members and how to navigate communication with that to the new Executive Director, noting the importance of having that communication, while also emphasizing the context and intent of any questions is to get an answer or clarification.

d. Equity and anti-racism training

The board discussed looking into resources on equity and anti-racism training, with the mention of Koya providing an anti-bias training and will plan to ask staff of any internal training relating to equity and anti-racism with the intent that the board can then complete the same training in alignment. The board plans to identify next steps relating to equity and anti-racism training, to be discussed at the next regular meeting. Chakraborty, who is on the Executive Search Committee, took the anti-bias training offered from Koya and mentioned a takeaway from the anti-bias training about assessing the candidates to think of a candidate not as if they will fit into the institution but what they can add and bring to the institution, with the intent on seeking that out in communication to the new Executive Director.

8. Adjournment

Fruth adjourned the meeting at 8:44 pm.