

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of September 28, 2021 meeting

Sue Henke called the meeting to order at 4:36

Members Present: Neil Glazman, Sue Henke, Stephen Welsh, Betty Ramsland, Matt Rosendahl, Alex Strelow, Lizzy Luoma

Also Present: Jim Filby Williams, Debbi Rasmussen (public attendee)

Absent: David Sperl, Michelle Foshay,

Review and approve agenda - Ramsland moved to approve, Glazman second. Motion approved by unanimous show of hands.

There were no public comments received in advance of meeting

Motion by Ramsland, seconded by Strelow, to approve minutes of August 24, 2021 meeting. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

Reports

Library Manager's Report. Powers noted that the outreach event in her report was the first time that staff used the mobile circulation software. Henke asked about the staff workshop on Sept. 29, and Powers reported that it came out of the organizational culture work of the library and is an opportunity to talk about the effects of the last 18 months. Report accepted as submitted.

Foundation update on Learning & Libations. \$29,000 raised. Thank you to Duluth Public Library supporters and Duluth Foundation board members!

Friends of the Library. Ramsland provided a verbal report with input from Powers. Marcia Semerau remains as chair of the Friends. The group has 192 members; between May 2020 and September 2021 the Friends gave \$30,000 to the library. The group received a grant for \$400 from the Minnesota Association of Library Friends for curbside crafts at DPL. The recent outdoor used book sale helped drive traffic to the library on the first Saturday the building was open. The Littlest Holiday Book Sale will be held at Mt. Royal at the beginning of December.

Old Business

Update on services and staffing. New hours started after Labor Day. Library visits are increasing, especially at branches. One day last week Mt. Royal surpassed the Main Library in use. The hiring process for two Librarian 1 positions (one for adult and one for youth) is wrapping up. A hiring panel did interviews recently and made offers to two top candidates who will start November 1. There has been more turnover in library technicians, with three resignations. New hires will be selected from current civil service list. The process for filling three supervisor positions has gotten underway. The application period closes on Monday, Oct. 4. That will leave one final vacancy to fill by the end of the year.

Update on library security. DPL is exploring a potential partnership with the Greater Downtown Council's Clean and Safe team. Powers and Filby Williams met with Kristi Stokes of the Greater Downtown Council and Scott Jenkins of Clean and Safe to explore how the library might fund a couple of part time positions or a full time position to be stationed at the Main Library. Powers is encouraged by this potential opportunity. The next step is to follow up with Greater Downtown Council with a proposal that includes the library's behavior policy.

Strategic planning - No updates.

New Business

2022 fee schedule. There were a few changes proposed by the library's leadership team. One is a slight increase in the fee for research assistance service to cover the basic costs of staff time and materials. This service is primarily used by people who are out of town, especially looking for genealogy research. The first half hour is free, and the library reserves the right to charge for use of the service beyond that. There also was an increase proposed for a deposit card. This type of card allows someone who is in town temporarily to provide a deposit, check out up to four items, and have the deposit returned once the items come back to the library. The leadership team proposed raising the fee for a deposit card from \$50 to \$65, to better reflect the replacement cost of items if they are not returned to the library. Motion by Ramsland, seconded by Luoma, to approve the fee increases as proposed. Motion approved unanimously by show of hands.

Additional item: library chair check-in meetings. The library board has been meeting online for 18 months. As the chair, Henke suggested setting up a half-hour meeting with each board member to talk one on one. Henke is interested in getting suggestions and feedback to improve board members' experience on the library board. She sees it as an opportunity as board chair to get the "pulse" of the board.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy. The library advocacy team, which includes representatives from the foundation, friends, and library board, plans to meet soon. The group will discuss what the team wants to accomplish. Henke asked about the 2022 budget process and timeline. Filby Williams stated that the budget that the Mayor has presented to the city council is a status quo budget for all departments. There is sufficient funding in 2022 to continue all programs and services at their current levels. The city is looking ahead to a very challenging 2023 budget cycle, and is working now to avoid the necessity of layoffs anywhere in the city.

Henke asked about the mayor's support of the main facility. With \$58 million in federal aid and the federal infrastructure bill that is being debated, it appears that other aspects of public funding are being supported by federal investment. Henke asked if those investments "free up" funding that could be used for the library. Filby Williams stated that CAO Schuchman and Mayor Larson might be better situated to address that question.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:30.