

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of May 24, 2022 Meeting

Call to order: Chair Foshay called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Attendees: Bill Arezzo, Betty Ramsland, Michelle Foshay, Sue Henke, Alex Strelow, Steven Welsh, David Sperl, Matt Rosendahl

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, Jim Filby Williams

Public in attendance: Neil Glazman

Review and approve agenda: Motion by Henke, seconded by Arezzo, to approve the agenda as drafted. Approved by unanimous vote.

Approval of minutes: Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Ramsland, to approve the minutes of April 26, 2022 meeting. Approved by unanimous vote.

Reports

Library Manager's Report: Powers just completed two full days of online interviews for 16 candidates Librarian II candidates. Eight will move forward to second interviews in person. The temporary, 67-day staff additions will be a great source of assistance while completing all of the hiring processes. Sperl inquired about whether the hot-spots will be mentioned in the internet use policy. Powers responded that they fall under the policy, but they don't have the same implications about images viewed because they are intended to be used outside the library, usually at home. The circulation policy (length of loan, renewals, etc...) for the hot spots is being developed to be equitable and keep them available to as many people as possible. Cost for the devices and one year of service will be reimbursed 100 percent. After the first year the library will determine how many to continue providing based on use and cost of service.

Duluth Library Foundation Report: Rosendahl encouraged people to contact him if they wanted to belatedly purchase tickets to Olga Walker.

Friends of the Library Report: Ramsland reminded everyone that the library book sale is quickly approaching starting June 14, and that volunteers are still needed. Donations of items for the book sale are no longer being accepted. The friends gave \$28,000 to the library in the last fiscal year.

Old Business

Library security: Powers reported that library security work group has begun meeting. This group includes library staff of different positions from different locations, as well as Jim and Carla. This week the library issued an RFP for a security assessment of the main library that will be issued to 10-12 consultants and firms that do security work. The selected consultant will need to submit a report by September 1. Beginning this week off-duty police officers are working in the library on afternoons, with opportunities to cover shifts from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. On the first day of this arrangement, an officer escorted a patron out of the building who had previously been trespassed. At the city council meeting on May 23, the council approved the Library Safety Specialist position. When this position is filled, the

temporary measure of using off-duty police officers will end. Sperl asked if there are ever issues at branches, and Powers answered that there are fewer issues at the branches.

New Business

Architect presentation: Henke reported that the library presentation was focused on the library, and that the design was by no means finalized. The collections would almost entirely be located on the upper level, while the Superior street level would be a multi-purpose shared space in the middle (including computers), with library staff near the back and workforce development near the front (near Fifth Avenue W). The bottom level (Michigan Street) would be Workforce Development offices, a shared community/meeting space, and space for the Friends to sort donations for the book sale. One key design aspect was to expand the windows to increase the light on the Michigan and Superior Street levels. The main stairway would be relocated to create more available space in the center of the building.

Filby Williams reminded everyone that this study is not intended to be a final design for reconfiguration of the building and that it was an exercise with a much more modest and limited purpose: is there a way to accommodate both of these entities? He warned that it is not worth investing a lot of meaning in the drawings produced, and in fact the intention would be to erase the drawings and go forward with the lessons learned in this process. The final design process will start from scratch, beginning with consultation with community, board, and employees. He stated that there are sensible ways to pursue co-location, while noting that some reasonable compromises will be required. He added that we need to design the best possible arrangement, taking great care to not inadvertently let our desire for the perfect undermine the good. Ramsland shared her concerns that the architect was focused on expanding the windows for more light. Ramsland also expressed concern that the architect placed all of the collections and library services on the upper floor. Arezzo shared that he focused on the possibility, and did not fixate on the drawings. He wanted to see if this co-location is feasible and said he felt it might be. Powers shared that library staff had mixed reactions. Staff sees a philosophical mission alignment with workforce development but is concerned about losing square footage. Foshay asked if it was possible to close in the Plaza for more space. Filby Williams said this consideration was out of scope. Rosendahl stated that he appreciated the change in windows to bring in more light, and the separate entrance for Workforce Development to help handle different hours of service. However, he has concerns about having sufficient amount of staff workspace. Welsh noted that the technology and services for the public continue to evolve and should inform the evolution of the library building, and that the co-location of these services make more funds available. Henke said what is most important is an inviting, inspiring entrance, and sufficient space for the children's area and community meeting rooms. Henke stated that the public must be involved in the planning process. Strehlow asked if an immediate next step could be sharing of information with the public and gathering more public feedback. Filby Williams responded that city leaders will need to develop a thorough design process with robust public and stakeholder input now that this exercise showed potential feasibility. Foshay asked about the costs to demolish and rebuild, and Filby Williams noted that studies now more than six years old showed significant cost increase to demolish and rebuild rather than extensively remodel. Glazman asked for a description of what Workforce Development does. Filby Williams said in the narrowest sense it helps unemployed people find work, but that the department in Duluth works

proactively to connect industry and training and development to meet the needs of employers and potential employees.

Bylaws review: Powers shared that the old, outdated bylaws were on the website, which prompted a review of the current, 2016 bylaws that were distributed last month. Powers recommended no changes. Foshay moved to approve, Henke second. The motion passed unanimously. The record will reflect that the bylaws were reviewed and approved in 2022.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy: Henke asked if there was a timeline for public input phase about the main library facility. Filby Williams said a meeting of city leadership will take place soon, and the Mayor will decide on next steps. Foshay stated that at the next meeting we can learn about the Mayor's decision, hear feedback from the Friends and Foundation, and decide how to proceed with advocacy.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.