

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of Regular Meeting
April 23, 2019

Call to Order: Vice President Henke called the meeting of the Duluth Library Board to order at 4:35 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 2019.

Members Present: Matt Rosendahl (arrived at 4:40), Sue Henke, Lizzy Luoma, David Sperl, Betty Ramsland (left at 5:18), Michelle Foshay, Stephen Welsh

Also Present: Carla Powers, Sue Schumacher, Steph Meyer, Renee Zurn, Deputy Director of Planning & Economic Development Adam Fulton, City Councilor Em Westerlund (arrived at 4:43)

Absent: Nick Foucault, Neil Glazman

Agenda was reviewed. Implications of inter-city rail service moved from New Business to start of the meeting. Agenda approved with this change.

Public comment period: no comments

Minutes: Minutes of the March 26, 2019 board meeting were approved as drafted with voice consent.

Implications of inter-city rail service on Main Library:

- Adam Fulton on behalf of Duluth's planning and economic development department shared information on the proposed heavy-rail train service that would end at the Union Depot, just across Michigan street from the main library. Much of the Depot will be preserved.
- A trip between Duluth and the Twin Cities would take 2 hours and 20 minutes, cost around \$30-\$35, and provide wi-fi. Proposed funding would pay for trains, bridges, rail sidings, agreement with BN for current rails, ADA compliant depot, and parking. It does not cover buying more land to expand parking services.
- Possible implications for the library:
 - a. Tourism increase in the area of the main library. Tourism does not clearly align with the library's current mission. Examples of libraries that do court tourism in other cities were discussed.
 - b. Increased demand for public restrooms.
 - c. Increased pedestrian traffic on 5th Ave West bridge towards the DECC and sidewalk west of the Depot to connect to West Duluth.
 - d. Parking demand would increase, as would taxi and automobile traffic.
 - e. Influx of library users/patrons.
 - g. With increased tourism, the library may be eligible for tourism tax funding, which it currently does not receive.
 - h. The library real estate value likely would increase.
- The environmental review has been completed for this project. Minnesota would need to provide \$50 million, to fulfill part of the funding agreement at the Federal level.

A master planning process would be recommended for library needs and funding, if the transit investment moves forward. It is premature at this point to request master planning for the library with this plan as a timeline would depend on state funding.

Reports:

Library Manager's Report

- The computer lab moved today. The board will be updated next meeting about this transition.
- Data for Priority Based Budgeting is being collected via "games" functioning as a survey online. Decisions will be based on this as a source of public input. Libraries and lifelong learning fall under the "Culture" category. The board expressed great concern that data collection is not scientific and does not cover all the library's services and activities. The survey is now open, and the close date is not defined. Library Manager and City Councilor Westerlund will continue to update the board.

Foundation Report

- The Foundation raised \$20,000 for Library Giving Day this month. The Foundation is planning to partially fund an early literacy support position for a 3-year period. This need was identified in the Strategic Plan but has not yet been funded by the City.

Friends of the Library Report

- Reviewed as written.

Old Business:

Library Advocacy update

- Letter drafted by the Board at its last meeting was sent to the City Council and Mayor Larson.
- The library was not mentioned in the Mayor's recent State of the City address.
- Em Westerlund mentioned that as the chairperson for the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Committee, she can call a hearing and invite the City Councilors and the Mayor in order to present information on the state of the libraries. The council would meet as a Committee of the Whole for this hearing. Rosendahl will contact the Foundation and the Friends about this proposed advocacy effort to determine their interest and support. The Board is interested in a hearing regarding action and investment in the strategic plan.

Election of Officers

- Annual elections were held at the March 26 meeting, but the board was not able at that time to name a secretary. Luoma agreed to act as secretary for April 23 meeting.

New Business:

Fine Free Proposal

The library board approves the library administration's proposal to move to a fine-free model and recommend the city to incorporate this into budget planning. Unanimous vote in favor.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 28, 2019; 4:30 p.m.; Main Library Conference Room