

## DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Minutes May 25, 2021

Sue Henke called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

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

**Also present:** Library Manager Carla Powers, Property, Parks & Libraries Department Director Jim Filby Williams, City Councilor Arik Forsman

**Absent:** David Sperl

### **Review and approve agenda**

Motion by Welsh, seconded by Ramsland, to approve the agenda as drafted. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

**Public comments** received in advance of meeting – none.

**Approve minutes of April 27, 2021 meeting** – Motion by Foshay, seconded by Glazman, to approve the minutes as presented. Approved by unanimous show of hands.

### **Reports**

Library Manager's Report – Powers added the news that DPL has received four Minnesota state park passes for checkout. They go into circulation June 1. The passes check out for one week. At the end of the week they expire and do not need to be returned to the library. The state created the program with the intention of removing barriers to state parks and encouraging more people to enjoy them. The state awarded sets of passes to select public libraries based on proximity to state parks and local poverty levels. Funding for this program came from the Legacy Amendment.

ECRD Report – Accepted as submitted. Reports will be made about ECRD in person at board meetings quarterly in the future.

Friends Report – Ramsland reported that there will be a one-day mini book sale on Michigan Street in June. The Friends will also participate in Sidewalk Days and give away books to children.

Foundation news (no written report) – Rosendahl reported that Executive Director Patra Sevastiades is leaving her role, and the Foundation is searching for a new Executive Director.

## **Old Business**

Update on restoring services and staffing – There will be an official announcement tomorrow that branches will reopen more fully Tuesday, June 1. Hours will remain as they currently are. Capacity limits will be dropped. The host station will go away. People will be free to come and go as they wish. Public computing will be available at the branches. Play areas for kids will not be available for the time being, as young children are not eligible for vaccination yet. Main library will reopen one week later on June 7, to provide more time for curbside pickup to transition to a pickup window. The hours at Main will also remain the same as they are now. A greeter/concierge in the Superior Street lobby will help orient people to changes made in the building while it was closed, and make masks available if requested. For safety and comfort, and on the advice of the city safety officer, every other computer will be unavailable for the time being at main and at the branches. Similarly to the branches, the play area at main will be unavailable and much of the furniture will not be deployed.

Masking: CDC, State of Minnesota, and City of Duluth have changed requirements about masks. In discussion with DPL staff, DPL management decided on a policy to encourage but not require mask use to help protect young children and unvaccinated people. Staff intend to model this policy by continuing to wear a mask.

Hours of operation for the future are still under discussion. Because they are still so reduced and different from pre-pandemic, it is an opportunity to look at the hours of operation through a lens of equity and re-examine how well they work for everyone.

## **New Business**

June board meeting - Still likely that City Council will remain virtual through the council break in mid-July. City staff support boards meeting outside in person. Powers noted that the library closes half an hour before the board meeting begins, which poses a challenge to public attendance and open meeting laws.

The June meeting will be held online, and Powers will investigate our options for meeting after the July break.

## **Ongoing Business**

Advocacy - Henke inquired with Councilor Forsman and Filby Williams about the requests for building projects in the city using federal stimulus funds. Filby Williams reported that city officials are awaiting clarity on this issue from the federal government. Two weeks ago the city received its first written guidance on how the federal stimulus funds may be spent, however this was only preliminary and raised as many new questions as it answered old ones. There remains the possibility that some level of investment in a project at the main library would be an eligible, permissible use of federal stimulus funds. In that case the mayor may wish to prioritize a portion for this purpose.

**Adjournment** – Motion by Ramsland, seconded by Welsh, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

