

Library Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2022

Members present: Draper, Finander, Gold, Romenesko, Rund, Styles Spooner, Thompson and Halgren (staff)

Absent: Hart (excused)

Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes
- Bills

Approval of the consent agenda items moved by Rund, seconded by Finander, roll call vote, passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Repair and Maintenance

- The library's network issues (cameras, VPN, etc.) have been finally sorted out with a reboot by the state's network.
- The library garden on Marie Avenue was weeded July 12, but looks like it needs it again.
- The carpet was cleaned August 6 and slightly flooded on August 17. On August 25, the Parks and Rec crew cleaned out the stairwell by the drain in anticipation of future heavy downpours.

Preliminary 2023 Budget

- After all departments finished their budgets for 2023, the overall levy clocked in at 9.17%.
- Departments were asked to look over their budgets for cuts. The Finance Director and Council agreed to fund the library's severance/service recognition payments and retirement payments from another fund outside of the library's budget (Compensated Absences fund).
- Anticipated savings from staff movement and outside fund payments = \$78,233. These measures would help to reduce the levy by 0.54% and other non-library options are expected to bring the levy down to just over 7%.

NEW BUSINESS

Circulation Stats

- The library circulated 8,124 items in July, which was a 18.3% increase over July 2021, but a 6.27% decrease from July 2019's pre-pandemic numbers.
- In August, the library circulated 8,412 items, which was a 28.5% increase over August 2021, and a 5.16% *increase* from August 2019's pre-pandemic numbers!

Closure for Employee Appreciation Lunch

- City staff have determined that our employee appreciation luncheon will be held on Thursday, October 20. Last year the library closed for around two hours so that all staff could attend.

Motion to close the library the duration of the luncheon on October 20 so that all staff may attend moved by Rund, seconded by Gold, roll call vote, passed unanimously.

Minitex Connect Conference

- Minitex, an information and resource sharing program of the MN Office of Higher Education and the University of MN Libraries, had its first Minitex Connect Conference earlier this year in May.
- Because of COVID, it was virtual and just two half-days, but Director Halgren took advantage of learning more about the organization itself, free resources such as the free genealogy resource list distributed to the board, unique libraries, and the future of libraries in general.
- Interesting sessions included an introduction to the American Craft Council Library, which was originally housed in NYC and then moved to Mpls. in 2010 and has 20,000 non-circulating items as well as over 3000 craft artist files; a quick overview of the technology used to deliver materials to patrons and libraries through Minitex's electronic delivery system; and a panel discussion surrounding hotspots, laptops and lending digital equipment that featured two DCL coworkers speaking about the challenges in lending such a large number of digital devices with staff spending 10-12 hours a week straightening out returned items, while other speakers revealed the stark disparities between rural and urban communities in the state.
- The highlight for Halgren was Felton Thomas, Jr., Executive Director and CEO of the Cleveland Public Library, the keynote speaker who presented a talk titled "Puzzles and Mysteries: Examining the Future of Public Libraries" in which he focused on how libraries have changed in simply providing answers to patrons' questions to solving mysteries in their communities and advocating/supporting change as co-conspirators in providing equity. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhL-u0Zv5FQ>

Summer Discovery Wrap Up

- Youth Services Librarian Sarah Connolly conducted a successful Summer Discovery learning program for youth from June 13 to July 16.
- With a return to in-person programming, she provided many opportunities for children and teens to engage and learn with one another with a total of 482 program attendees. This year's numbers showed an increase in participants in Summer Discovery of 214 youth (116 in 2021) with a breakdown of 62 pre-readers, 139 readers, and 13 teens.
- Connolly offered two series for school-aged youth that focused on STEM and our 100th Birthday. The most well-attended (82 participants) children's program was Snake Discovery's Snake, Rattle and Roll.

DC GGP Meeting, Board of Commissioners Meeting and New Library Updates

- On Tuesday, August 16, Jay Biedny of Dakota County Capital Projects presented the lowest contractor bid for the new library project to the County Board at the General Government and Policy Committee of the Whole. Seven bids came in quite a bit higher than estimated, which is not unusual in our current climate of labor shortages and price volatility, but one interesting twist was the fact that County staff decided to fund the project with federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) dollars instead of County CIP funds.
- The total project, if awarded to Donlar Construction Company, now comes in at \$11,300,000, and this is without a Net Zero component. It would take 120 years to break even with the \$1.1 million outlay for a Net Zero building.
- After much discussion, the County Board vote ended in a tie with Commissioners Gaylord, Atkins, and Halverson voting yes and Commissioners Slavik, Holberg, and Hamann-Roland voting no. Commissioner Workman was absent. While Commissioner Slavik wants SSP to be part of the system, he didn't think a library "fit" as a Legacy with ARP monies; Commissioner Holberg also took issue with ARP funding and felt the library was a want instead of a need for the County; Commissioner Hamann-Roland was not pleased with the abandonment of Net Zero enhancements.
- County staff brought the topic back to the commissioners' September 6 meeting, and an added feature to the resolution was the agreement that the County Board, in its commitment to decreasing carbon emissions and increasing energy efficiency in the County's overall building portfolio, would direct the County Manager to place \$1 million in the 2023 Capital Budget for funding energy conservation projects.

- Much more discussion by the Commissioners ensued. Commissioner Workman was “disappointed with how the project has marched forward” and wondered why, after the project didn’t pass in committee, it was brought back today. Was it to resolve the issue that came up in committee? She was unhappy that the project was not going to be net zero and felt that the project was creating a BMW version of a library. She also wondered about two other projects that had been considered a priority for the County before the library project.
- Commissioner Slavik felt the project was excessive with the library feeling suburban rather than urban, and it should be half the planned size. While he advocates SSP being part of the County system, he feels that the tax situation will benefit the community and not the entire County and that ARP funding should be directed Countywide rather than towards one community. He did not feel that the City was doing any more than other communities had done when becoming a part of DCL. With the current economic situation looming, he felt that this expense would be a burden on County taxpayers.
- Commissioner Holberg has been a skeptic of the project from the start since Wentworth is so close to SSP and felt the project was more of a loss than a win for the County with the \$750,000 annual operating cost, ample meeting rooms at Wentworth, and higher County property taxes coupled with inflation, job uncertainty, etc. She felt the extra million tacked onto the resolution was to buy the fourth vote for the project and made a motion to remove the last “whereas” from the resolution concerning additional spending in the 2023 Capital Budget. This failed 4 to 2 with Workman and Holberg voting no.
- Commissioners Atkins, Halvorson, and Hamann-Roland spoke favorably about the project and what it would bring to the community and County (accessibility, environment, reuse of current building, teamwork of City and County, library in city center adjacent to school, library addresses core County goals with Wi-Fi access, workforce applications, small business promotion, addressing homelessness and such programs as vaccinations, etc.).
- Finally, Commissioner Gaylord shared that Dakota County had initially supported the construction of the 1927 building with an outlay of \$7500. She, along with Commissioner Atkins, praised the team for their work on the project.
- The final vote on proceeding with the contract to Donlar Construction was 4-2 in favor with Workman and Holberg once again voting no. Slavik was attending virtually so could not vote, but he mentioned that he would also vote no if he were there.
- Meanwhile, the project team kept on working as if the new library would be built. Soft furniture types and fabrics have been selected along with shelving, signage, etc.
- The adult section will feature a blue-and-gray plaid for soft seating, while the teen area will have a variety of different types of seating options with teal and burnt orange as anchoring hues. The children’s area will have greens and blues as the main color scheme with many other pockets of color in chairs, cushions, and activity boards attached to walls.
- The Heritage Room will have mission-style chairs in a deep burgundy.
- The project team “test drove” chair samples at BKV and then toured Columbia Heights Public Library, which was built in 2016, to hear about what was working and what they wished they had done differently.

Joint Memorial for Leslie Greaves Radloff with Dakota County Historical Society

- Executive Director Matt Carter has proposed a reading nook area in memory of Leslie where the stained-glass window area was located on the main floor of the Dakota County Historical Society. They plan on a shelf of books with a table and chairs and plant. Board members expressed their enthusiasm to partner with this project that encompasses Leslie’s passion for both entities and her encouragement of reading by or to children with their caregivers.

Motion to approve partnering with the Dakota County Historical Society in memorializing Leslie Greaves Radloff with a reading nook in Lawshe Museum moved by Rund, seconded by Gold, roll call vote, passed unanimously.

Pandemic Programming Highlights

- Both Honora and Sarah visited 15 block parties during Night to Unite (8/2).

Adult Programs

- Tech tutoring appointments have picked up over the summer; good participation for the book discussion of *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman (7/14) and the most recent discussion of *A Place Where the Sea Remembers* by Sandra Benitez (9/8). Bucket Drumming with MacPhail Center for Music at the John Carroll high rise intrigued 14 people with others watching from their balconies (8/4).
- *Upcoming*: Birch Tree Resist Painting by Caponi Art Park (9/26), Creepy Doll Head Planters (10/3); and Fiction Basics with The Loft (10/24).

Children's Programs

- As Summer Discovery was winding down for the year, 23 participants enjoyed MacPhail Center for Music's Tap, Shake, Scrape – It's Only Natural (7/12) and Sarah's STEM Lab of Bubbles and Slime attracted 22 attendees (7/25) with the STEM Lab Chair Design Challenge gathering 17 participants (8/1). The Toddlers Takeover sessions have started to gain traction this summer, too. The State Fair Scavenger Hunt (7/26) had 74 hopeful scavengers entering to win State Fair tickets from MELSA; 50 lucky winners received two tickets. Water Makes Music: Sing, Play, and Learn with MacPhail Center for Music (9/8) attracted 17 participants.
- *Upcoming*: Storytimes resume on Tuesday mornings with baby storytimes occurring on Wednesday mornings and Toddlers Takeover every other Friday morning. Sarah's also starting a teen fandom club every third Monday of the month at 6:30 pm. Soft Sculptures with COMPAS teaching artist Emmett Ramstad (10/14).

Book Sale

- The impromptu book sale the first full week of July raised \$160.15.
- The Fall Book Sale will occur October 10-15.

Other/Correspondence

- The library was open for the first Saturday of the season on Sept. 10!

Motion to adjourn the September Library Board meeting by Rund, seconded by Draper, roll call vote, passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Next meeting – October 10, 2022

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Halgren
Library Director

Programming Statistics

July through partial September 2022

Program name	Program Start Date	Format	Target age	Attendance: in-person programs	Attendance: live virtual programs	Views at 7 days: recorded programs	Participants: self-directed activities
Scavenger Hunt	07/01/22	Self-directed activity	ages 0-5				31
We All Belong: Stories with Children's Author Laura Purdie Salas	07/01/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	7			
Tech Tutoring	07/01/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	1			
Storytime for 2's-6's	07/05/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	13			
STEM Lab - Ozobots	07/05/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	4			
Summer Playhouse	07/06/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	18			
Perler Beads	07/06/22	In-person onsite program	YA(ages 12-18)	3			
Bees and Butterflies	07/07/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	11			
Snake, Rattle & Roll	07/08/22	In-person onsite program	all ages	82			
Tap, Shake, Scrape - It's Only Natural	07/12/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	23			

Summer Playhouse	07/13/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	4			
Manga Hedgehogs	07/13/22	In-person onsite program	YA(ages 12-18)	8			
DIY Journals	07/14/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	2			
Book Club	07/14/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	9			
Tech Tutoring	07/14/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	1			
Toddlers Takeover	07/15/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	6			
Make a Zine Workshop	07/18/22	In-person onsite program	YA(ages 12-18)	0			
Storytime for 2's-6's	07/19/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	2			
Tech Tutoring	07/19/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	1			
Summer Playhouse	07/20/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	2			
Toddlers Takeover	07/22/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	4			
STEM Lab - Bubbles and Slime	07/25/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	22			

Art Journaling & Creative Memory Making	07/25/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	7			
Storytime for 2's-6's	07/26/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	0			
Summer Playhouse	07/27/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	6			
Design a Library	07/28/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	6			
Scavenger Hunt w/State Fair Prize Drawing	07/26/22	Self-directed activity	ages 0-5				74
STEM Lab - Chair Design Challenge	08/01/22	In-person onsite program	ages 6-11	17			
Night to Unite	08/02/22	In-person offsite program	all ages	175			
Storytime for 2's-6's	08/02/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	6			
Bucket Drumming	08/04/22	In-person offsite program	adult(ages 19+)	14			
Tech Tutoring	08/04/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	1			
Toddlers Takeover	08/05/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	11			
Teen RPG Club	08/08/22	In-person onsite program	YA(ages 12-18)	0			

Book Club	08/11/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	8			
We Are SSP Peg People	09/01/22	Self-directed activity	all ages				100
Toddlers Takeover	09/02/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	6			
Storytime for 2's-6's	09/06/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	4			
Storytime for Babies	09/07/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	9			
Book Club	09/08/22	In-person onsite program	adult(ages 19+)	9			
Water Makes Music with MacPhail	09/08/22	In-person onsite program	ages 0-5	17			
Maple Tree	09/09/22	In-person offsite program	ages 0-5	32			