

January 8, 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Wednesday, January 8, 2020.

CALL TO ORDER

Mark Prosperi, President, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Members present: Mark Prosperi, President; Eugene Griffin, Vice President; Karen Parrilli, Secretary; Mira Barbir; Susan Greer; Jonathan H. Maks, MD; Magnolia Rivera-Pulex; and Richard Kong, Director

Staff present: Blythe Trilling, Finance Manager; Laura McGrath, Deputy Director

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no comments from the observers.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2019

Mr. Griffin made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Parrilli to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 11, 2019, subject to additions and/or corrections. There being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved unanimously and placed on file. The vote was 7 ayes and 0 nays.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Written report provided by Mr. Kong to the Board prior to the meeting)

Renovation Update

The transition to close the second floor, in order to prepare it for the start of construction on Monday, January 6, went well. A temporary computer commons was set up in the Mary Radmacher Room and information services staff are stationed in the gallery. An assortment of tables and seating have been placed in the gallery space, the Petty lobby, and the east lobby area. Shales McNutt (SMC) erected a temporary wall to close up the opening of the main staircase while still allowing public access between the west/east sides of the first floor. Hallett Movers worked quickly to pack up and move most of the second floor collection.

There are no billings from trade contractors for December, so the next billing will be for January. Most of the construction work this month will center on the demolition, metal stud framing, and drywalling of the second floor and, later in the month, the first floor area that will become the new circulation/staff workroom.

Architect Andrew Berman will be visiting the library on January 15, 2020 to attend our first OAC (Owner-Architect-Contractor) meeting where we will review the status of the project with the

construction manager. We may also use his visit to discuss some remaining design work on a section of the youth area and the courtyards.

Communication Strategy for Renovation

Last month, the Board asked for more information about the ways in which we have communicated information about the upcoming renovation to the public. As I have mentioned throughout the planning process, I have spoken with many community leaders and library patrons about the project through a number of meetings, formal presentations, and informal pop-up conversations. In addition to these efforts, our Communications and Multimedia Engagement team designed an approach that includes a variety of strategies using our website, social media channel, print publications, and posters.

The renovation website (<http://skokiellibrary.info/renovation>) has been featured on the homepage since September 2019. It has been the 10th most trafficked page on our site with about 2400 unique page views. The renovation webpage coincided with a blog post from me introducing the project. Various site pages for services affected by phase one (e.g., computers, study rooms, meeting rooms, donations) were all updated to notify users of the upcoming changes. The “site violator” (yellow band at the top of all pages of skokiellibrary.info) has warned of the second floor closure since December 13. Furthermore, we posted information about the second floor closure and the renovation in general on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter).

The renovation was also featured in various print publications, including a teaser in the November/December newsletter, a two-page spread in the January/February newsletter, and mentions in the January/February *Hullabaloo* and the December issue of *Next*. We are also distributing flyers to local neighbors apologizing in advance for any noise disturbance they may experience during the renovation.

Inside the library, staff placed Renovation 2020 signage at both entrances and at the top of the second floor stairs starting in September, and more than 200 signs were placed on the second floor to warn of the upcoming changes. This included table signs at each computer workstation, on each table/carrel, and in all study rooms; and large stand-alone poster signs at the top of the stairs, outside the Computer Classroom, and near empty shelving. Staff also placed large posters and signs to notify patrons of upcoming changes to the Used Books/vending area, the Mystery collection, and the World Languages collection.

Revision of Borrowing Policy

Last year the Board approved a revision of the Borrowing Policy, which included the elimination of overdue fines for youth materials. Since the policy change, we have seen that, by and large, patrons appreciate the new policy and are returning their materials in order to keep their accounts in good standing. The loss of revenue also has not presented a major issue since we adjusted the expected revenue projection during last year’s budgeting process. In the next couple of months, staff will look at the Borrowing Policy once again and likely suggest moving to the full elimination of overdue fines

for all materials. Many libraries across the country, including those in the local Chicagoland area, have adopted a “fines free” approach in order to increase access to resources, pursue equity, and improve customer service.

Village Tax Levy Presentation

The Village of Skokie Board of Trustees voted to approve the 2019 tax levy, including the library’s levy, during the December 16, 2019 meeting.

The Property Tax Levy ordinance serves as formal notification to the Cook County Tax Extension Office of the aggregate amount of property taxes to be levied from Skokie properties. The ordinance will be filed with Cook County.

Coming Together in Skokie and Niles Township

This year’s CTISNT program, focusing on the theme, “Journeys to Niles Township,” will officially begin at the opening ceremony on Sunday, January 26, 2020, 1 pm at Niles West High School. Community residents will share their stories through a variety of performances, videos, and other expressions of art. Board members are encouraged to attend if possible. More information about the entire program, including the downloadable program book, can be found at the website <http://comingtogether.in>. Amy Koester, Learning Experiences Manager, is serving as this year’s program co-chair and has done an excellent job of representing the library and planning the program.

ILA Legislative Meetup Breakfast

Each year Illinois Library Association (ILA) hosts a series of legislative meetups to provide an opportunity for state legislators and library leaders to discuss issues facing local libraries of all types. For our region, the legislative meetup will be held in the morning of Monday, February 17, 2020 at the Arboretum Club in Buffalo Grove. I will attend the breakfast, but Board members are invited to participate as well. Please let me know if you would like to be registered for the event.

Capital Asset Study

I met with BTC Engineering to discuss a plan for updating our capital asset study. After seeing their initial proposal, I believe that it would be best to wait until at least the middle or end of our renovation project to update the plan. This will give us an updated picture of what capital improvements and investments will need to be made in order to keep both the library’s building and long-term financial picture in good condition. Building Services Manager Tim Murphy and I are also planning a roofing assessment in the spring of this year to help us determine when a larger roofing replacement project is needed.

A discussion ensued where questions were asked and answered.

BILLS

The Trustees clarified some of the paid bills for the month.

A motion was made by Mrs. Parrilli, seconded by Dr. Maks:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

APPROVE THE BILLS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

The roll call vote for approval was 7 ayes and 0 nays; the motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statements; Statistics Report; Reports from Department Heads; Gifts; Personnel)

A discussion ensued where questions were asked and answered.

Dr. Maks made a motion, seconded by Ms. Greer:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT, AND THAT THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BE PLACED ON FILE:

1. STATISTICS REPORT;
2. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS;
3. GIFTS: \$25 FROM DEBBIE MAYEROFF AND TANNER BUEL;
4. PERSONNEL: HIRES: BECCA BOLAND, FULL-TIME SUPERVISOR FOR ADVISORY SERVICES, PATRON ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2020; ADAM SONDERBERG, FULL-TIME MATERIALS HANDLING SUPERVISOR, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2020; CHERYL SZUCSITS, FULL-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, ADMINISTRATION, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 18, 2019; MEGHAN WHITE, PART-TIME PHOTOGRAPHER, COMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2020; DEPARTURES: BILL OHMS, PART-TIME PROGRAM ASSISTANT, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 27, 2019; MIGUEL RUIZ, FULL-TIME COMMUNITY INFORMATION COORDINATOR, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 20, 2019; JESSICA SHUTE, PART-TIME MATERIALS PAGE, ACCESS SERVICES, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 11, 2019.

The motion passed unanimously. There were 7 ayes and 0 nays.

APPROVAL OF AND AUTHORIZATION FOR COUNSEL TO SIGN EXTENSION TO TOLLING AGREEMENT WITH IMET

Last January, the Board approved an extension of the IMET (Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund) tolling agreement. This extension expires on January 31, 2020. IMET's attorney has contacted the library's attorney Samuel Cavnar to offer another extension to the tolling agreement. The proposal is to extend the tolling agreement for one year, terminating on January 31, 2021.

The total amount lost from the library's IMET account in 2016 was \$111,936.40. With a recent payment of \$46,722.23, we have recovered a total of \$62,276.55 (55.64% of the total amount lost). On December 2, 2019, IMET Executive Director/Chief Investment Officer Sofia Anastopoulos sent

an email indicating that the fair value estimate of how much we should expect to recover increased to 58%, which means we should still expect to receive \$2,641.70 (2.36% of the total amount lost).

In order to retain the right to pursue litigation against IMET for another year, Samuel Cavnar recommends that the Board approve a one-year extension of the tolling agreement and authorize Robbins Schwartz to execute and return the tolling agreement extension to IMET's attorney.

Board approval of the extension of the IMET tolling agreement and authorization for Samuel Cavnar to execute and return the agreement to IMET's attorneys on the Board's behalf was requested.

There was brief discussion among the Board.

A motion was made by Dr. Maks, seconded by Ms. Greer:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF THE IMET TOLLING AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION FOR SAMUEL CAVNAR TO EXECUTE AND RETURN THE AGREEMENT TO IMET'S ATTORNEYS ON THE BOARD'S BEHALF.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. There were 7 ayes and 0 nays.

QUARTERLY INVESTMENT UPDATE

The investment policy states that the director shall prepare a quarterly report on investments and their returns.

The library's Reserve Fund for Sites and Buildings includes the following accounts, with their respective balances at the end of the 4th Quarter 2019.

- Fifth Third Reserve Fund (\$1,089,696)
- IL Funds Reserve Account (\$5,977,828)
- IMET Reserve Fund (\$568)
- North Shore Community Bank Max Safe 4 CDs (\$1,066,417)
- North Shore Community Bank 4 CDs (\$1,054,577)
- First Bank Chicago CD (\$1,056,394)

The total balance of the Reserve Fund as of December 31, 2019 is \$10,245,480. This is a 19.40% increase from the balance at the end of calendar year 2018. Interest earned in calendar year 2019 totaled \$204,130.13 and the end-of-year transfer from the operating fund into the reserve fund in June 2019 was \$1,200,000.

The Board noted the update.

PROJECTED FY 2020-2021 BUDGET

The Village Board recently approved the 2019 Property Tax Levy Ordinance, which includes the library's 2019 levy amounting to \$12,201,936. This does not include the debt levy next fiscal year in

the amount of \$1,273,050 for a total levy of \$13,474,986 as approved by the library Board in September 2019. This is a 0% percent increase from last year's total levy amount.

The Board was provided with a preliminary draft budget for FY 2020-2021, including estimates for anticipated revenues and expenditures. This is the first look at the projected budget. Mr. Kong will provide revised budgets in February and March, and will ask the Board to approve the budget in April.

The provided projected operating budget spreadsheet and projected revenues/expenditures document provide more detail, but Mr. Kong shared some important notes to consider.

Revenues

Revenue from corporate personal property replacement taxes is projected at \$330,000, which is an increase of \$30,000 from the amount budgeted in FY 2019. For FY 2020, the Illinois Department of Revenue estimates an increase of 15.4% from the FY 2019 replacement tax allocations.

Revenue from fines and fees is also projected to be lower by \$30,000 than last year due to potential changes in the library's borrowing policy. The decrease in this revenue category is minimal, so we would be able to absorb the loss in our operating budget.

Revenue from interest earned on the library's interest-bearing checking accounts and investments is projected at \$100,000, which is a slight decrease from last year's projection. We are not factoring in interest gained from our Reserve Fund accounts.

Revenue from the library's Per Capita Grant is projected to be \$81,000. The Illinois State Library awarded the library a FY 2019 Illinois Public Library Per Capita Grant in the amount of \$80,980, which was received at the end of September 2019 (FY 2020).

Also on the revenue side, the library is projecting the use of \$600,000 from the Reserve Fund to pay the first year's interest payments from the new 2019 bond, and another \$1,000,000 from the Reserve Fund to pay for capital projects and needs associated with the renovation project. Finally, an estimated \$12,000,000 from the 2019 bond issuance will be factored into the projected budget to cover expenditures for phases 2 and 3, respectively. This amount will be adjusted with a more precise figure in April 2019 when we will have a better projection of how much of the bond proceeds will be used prior to the end of the current fiscal year.

Salaries, Benefits, IMRF, FICA

The largest portion of the library's expenses is for the salary line projected at \$7,100,000. This includes a tentative combined 3.1% increase to allow for the possibility for both a cost of labor increase and a merit increase upon Board approval. The Board typically considers increases in March.

Some expected increases are factored in the budget for insurance (i.e., health, dental, life). The library's contribution toward employee HSA accounts is increasing due to the Board's decision to increase the annual contribution amounts to \$1,000 for single coverage and \$2,000 for family coverage. In addition, the IMRF employer's rate for 2020 is 10.39%, and the FICA rate is 7.65% of the wages.

Continuing Education and Memberships

The Continuing Education and Memberships budget is decreasing to \$120,000 since it will not be a PLA National Conference year and the 2020 ALA Annual Conference will be held in Chicago. The library also anticipates continuing its staff development and training efforts in the areas of EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion).

Programming

The Programming budget is receiving another increase as this service area continues to evolve and grow. The additional funds will support the Studio (i.e., the new second floor makerspace and digital media labs).

Collections

The collection budget will remain relatively flat, though there will be a decrease in materials processing and learning platforms, and an increase in research resources (i.e., online subscription databases) and leased content (i.e., digital content). By maintaining the library's considerable budget for physical materials, we will be able to offer an impressive collection when we open up our first floor renovated spaces to the public.

Professional Services

This year spending on professional services was higher than expected due to legal assistance required for the planning of the renovation project. For next year, though these costs may be less as the project gets underway, Mr. Kong would like to increase the budget line to make sure we account for legal fees required to close out the project.

Printing and Publicity

The budget for Printing and Publicity, which primarily funds the work of the Communications and Multimedia Engagement staff, is expected to increase as we increase the page count in our main print newsletter. This will allow us to provide community members more information about upcoming events and more featured content beyond program listings.

Maintenance of Equipment

A large portion of this budget line usually goes to the cost of maintaining the library's RFID and materials handling equipment from Bibliotheca. This year the library is signing a new agreement with the purchase of updated equipment, and Bibliotheca has included a one-year waiver of the maintenance fees on the new equipment. This will allow us to budget less this year, but the costs will increase in subsequent years.

Summer/Winter Reading

We are considering the creation of a new budget line for summer/winter reading expenses. The main expenditure here will be for summer reading t-shirts, which are usually offset by local business donations.

Capital

The Capital line is expected to decrease to just above \$400,000, and will go toward various projects related to the renovation. A separate budget line will be included to reflect spending directly on the renovation project from the 2019 bond proceeds.

Approval of the budget is not required until April 2020.

There was brief discussion among the Board. The Board noted the proposed budget.

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

The RAILS Board did not meet in December.

Mrs. Parrilli will be out in February and March and will not be able to provide a RAILS report for March.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

The Trustees toured the second floor space to view the construction progress.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:40 pm a motion was made by Mrs. Parrilli, seconded by Ms. Barbir to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen Parrilli, Secretary