

January 9, 2019

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Wednesday, January 9, 2019.

CALL TO ORDER

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

Members present: Mark Prosperi, President; Diana Hunter, Vice President/President Emerita; Karen Parrilli, Secretary; Mira Barbir; Susan Greer; Eugene Griffin; Jonathan H. Maks, MD; and Richard Kong, Director.

Staff present: Laura McGrath, Deputy Director; Shelley Sutherland, Youth Services Manager

COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

There were no observers present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
December 12, 2018

Mrs. Parrilli made a motion, seconded by Mr. Griffin to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 12, 2018, 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.

APPROVAL OF DESTRUCTION OF CLOSED SESSION AUDIO RECORDINGS OF  
JUNE 8 AND JUNE 16, 2016

Mrs. Parrilli made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hunter to approve the destruction of the closed session audio recordings of June 8 and June 16, 2016. The vote was 7 ayes and 0 nays.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Renovation Update

Andrew Berman and his associate Alex McLean visited the library in late December to meet with library staff as well as members of the Shales McNutt (SMC) construction management team. They had a productive meeting bringing SMC up to speed on the schematic plans. Once the schematic plans are finalized this month, SMC will provide an updated cost estimate for the entire project. Mr. Kong shared another update with staff informing them of our progress, and will provide a more thorough update during Staff Day later this month.

Strategic Planning Update

The core committee held its second meeting last month. The group discussed trends relevant to libraries with Miguel Figueroa from American Library Association's Center for the Future of Libraries and Barb Macikas from Public Library Association. One helpful theme that came out of the discussion was the importance of staying true to the library's core values as an organization. Several people commented that remembering our core values would help us prioritize our work in the midst

of all the changes and trends we encounter. The second half of the meeting centered on the community conversations and interviews conducted over the past few months. Based on the discussion of the main themes that were revealed from conversations with community members, they created aspiration statements that will be used to guide the work of the subcommittees. The main topics to be explored by the subcommittees include connectedness and belonging, civic participation, navigation in a changing information landscape, healthy and safe communities, and fostering curiosity and creativity within the organization.

#### Revision of Borrowing Policy

The library's Borrowing Policy was adopted last year in January 2018. Staff are working on a few revisions, and Mr. Kong plans to bring the revision to the Board for approval in the next few months. One change in policy that is being worked through is a proposal to eliminate overdue fines for youth materials. Over the past few years, many libraries across the country, including in the Chicago area, have taken steps to eliminate overdue fines to create more equity and ease of access for patrons. Just this month, Morton Grove Public Library will begin eliminating overdue fines for their residents. We are still hearing from parents and children that overdue fines are a barrier for some families, so figuring out the logistics of making a change like this possible is important.

Mrs. Hunter requested a list of all of the local libraries that have eliminated overdue fines. She would also like information regarding the tax base for those libraries. Ms. Barbir expressed a desire to discuss the topic, both the financial impacts and the motivation for people to return items if there are no fines. Mr. Kong will provide data and information about what he's learned about this initiative from other libraries that have been doing it for years when he brings the policy to the Board for approval in the coming months.

#### Village Tax Levy Approval

The Village of Skokie Board of Trustees voted to approve the 2018 tax levy, including the library's levy, during the December 17, 2018 meeting. There were no comments or questions from the Board about the library's tax levy.

#### Coming Together in Skokie and Niles Township

This year's Coming Together in Skokie and Niles Township program series will focus on building knowledge of and appreciation for Polish culture. Residents of Niles Township will have the opportunity to participate through a series of book discussions and other programs. The opening ceremony will be held on Sunday, January 27, 1pm at Niles West High School. More information about all of the programs and selected books will be shared at <http://comingtogether.in/>.

#### Staff Day

Staff Day will be held on Thursday, January 17 this year, which means the library will be closed for this event as usual. This year, staff will participate in a "Tour of Skokie" at various stations set up inside the library. Community partners and staff will provide information about different aspects of the community, such as education, economic development, and social services. There will also be

time for staff to participate in a strategic planning exercise, as well as receive an update about the renovation plans. Each department will also have time to meet, and there will be a variety of breakout sessions and other team-building activities during the afternoon. Interested Board members are encouraged to participate in the day, and are to let Monica know if they plan to attend.

#### Request for Reconsideration

Upon receiving a formal written request for reconsideration for a book in our collection, Mr. Kong followed the steps outlined in the Resources Selection Policy and formed an ad hoc committee to review the request. After receiving their recommendation, he determined that the book in question meets the requirements of the Resources Selection Policy and should be retained by the library. A letter explaining the process and his decision was sent to the person who made the request.

#### Public Library Association Involvement

For the past two years, Mr. Kong has co-chaired the PLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Task Force. He has informed PLA staff and the task force members that he will be stepping down as co-chair this summer, when a new co-chair will likely be appointed by the incoming PLA President. His three-year term on the PLA Board will also conclude this summer after the ALA Annual Conference. Though he plans to stay involved with PLA and support its initiatives, it will be at a reduced level in light of the demands on his time that will come with the renovation project.

#### 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting

Mr. Kong will be attending the 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle later this month. In addition to participating in the PLA Board meeting and the PLA EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion) Task Force meeting, he will give a short presentation for the ALA Emerging Leaders program. Other staff attending include Laura McGrath (2020 PLA National Conference Program Subcommittee), Amy Koester (ALSC Board), Lorrie Hansen (Batchelder Award Committee), Mimosa Shah (ALA Emerging Leaders), Jarrett Dapier, and Miguel Ruiz.

#### BILLS

Mrs. Parrilli asked a clarifying question about a \$4,000 payment to MB Financial under Programming. Mr. Kong explained that it was to help pay off the balance of the MB Financial credit card from charges related to library programs.

Ms. Barbir asked a clarifying question about the payment to the Niles Township Property Tax Appeals Coop. Mr. Kong explained that it is the group that jointly contests large property tax appeals in Skokie.

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

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; Circulation Report; Reports from Department Heads; Gifts; Personnel)

Ms. Barbir asked a clarifying question about the payment to LIRA. Mr. Griffin commented on the high number of cardholders for the month. Mr. Kong explained that part of the change in number is due to the elimination of card expiration dates last year.

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. CIRCULATION REPORT
  2. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS
  3. GIFTS: \$200 FROM EVELYN MARKS SIEGEL REFERENCING ADULT SERVICES AND AUDIO-VISUAL; \$50 FROM NURBEK SAGYNBAEV IN GRATITUDE FOR THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LIBRARY; \$100 FROM KATHERINE AND KURT GARST IN THE NAME OF THE CARY-DIERS FAMILY
  4. PERSONNEL: TERMINATION: DEBORAH AMORE, FULL-TIME SAFETY SUPERVISOR, BUILDING SERVICES AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2019.

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

PRESENTATION BY SHELLEY SUTHERLAND, YOUTH SERVICES MANAGER

Mrs. Sutherland presented on the upcoming Grow a Reader, 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program and the library's partnership with District 69 preschool.

Discussion ensued, and the Board praised the design and quality of the program materials.

Ms. Sutherland left the meeting at 7:33 pm.

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, 2019. IMET's attorney has contacted the library's legal counsel Heidi Katz to offer another extension to the tolling agreement. The proposal is to extend the tolling agreement for one year, terminating on January 31, 2020.

Heidi Katz recommends that the Board approve this one-year extension of the tolling agreement and authorize Robbins Schwartz to execute and return the tolling agreement extension to IMET's attorney.

Both the original tolling agreement and the proposed text for the one-year extension were provided to the Board.

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

Mr. Griffin asked whether the Board should discuss the topic in closed session. The Board agreed that although it is related to litigation, it was not necessary that the tolling agreement be discussed in closed session.

Mr. Prosperi provided a more detailed explanation of tolling agreements.

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

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES \ APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE COUNSEL TO SIGN THE EXTENSION TO THE TOLLING AGREEMENT WITH IMET.

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 2018.

- MB Financial Reserve Fund (\$1,032,513)
- IL Funds Reserve Account (\$4,404,459)
- IMET Reserve Fund (\$555)
- North Shore Community Bank Max Safe 4 CDs (\$1,040,770)
- First Bank & Trust CDs (\$2,321,746)

The total balance of the Reserve Fund as of December 31, 2018 is \$8,800,043. This is an 8.63% increase from the balance at the end of calendar year 2017. Interest earned in calendar year 2018 totaled \$143,037.88 and the end-of-year transfer from the operating fund into the reserve fund in June 2018 was \$550,000.

#### PROJECTED FY 2019-2020 BUDGET

The Village Board recently approved the 2018 Property Tax Levy Ordinance, which includes the library's 2018 levy amounting to \$12,210,636. This is exclusive of the debt repayment that does not need to be re-levied each year. The amount of the debt levy next fiscal year is \$1,264,350 for a total levy of \$13,474,986 as approved by the library Board in September 2018. This is a 0% percent increase from last year's total levy amount.

The Board was provided with a preliminary draft budget for FY 2019-2020, including estimates for anticipated revenues and expenditures. This is the first look at the projected budget, and Mr. Kong welcomed any comments or questions from the Board. He will provide revised budgets in February and March, and will ask the Board to approve the budget in April.

### **Revenues**

Revenue from corporate personal property replacement taxes is projected at \$300,000, which is less than the amount the library received in FY 2018. For FY 2019, the Illinois Department of Revenue estimates a decline of 7% from the FY 2018 replacement tax allocations.

Revenue from fines and fees is also projected to be lower than last year due to changes in the library's borrowing policy last year.

Revenue from interest earned on the library's interest-bearing checking accounts and investments is projected at \$175,000, which is a significant increase from last year's conservative projection. Interest rates have gone up in the past year.

Revenue from our Per Capita Grant is projected to be \$81,000. The Illinois State Library awarded the library a FY 2018 Illinois Public Library Per Capita Grant in the amount of \$80,980, which was received at the end of July 2018 (FY 2019).

### **Salaries**

The largest portion of the library's expenses is for the salary line projected at \$6,892,906. 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, and this year's decision will need to factor in the results of the salary benchmarking process, so more information will be provided in the next couple of months. Mr. Kong also factored in an additional \$100,000 in anticipation of individual increases that may be required by a new salary scale. It is likely that the final salary line projection may change by the time the Board votes on the budget in April.

Some expected increases are factored in the budget for insurance (i.e., health, dental, life). In addition, the IMRF employer's rate for 2019 is 7.95% with the 2020 rate estimated at 10.00%, and Mr. Kong factored in a FICA rate of 7.65% of the wages.

### **Continuing Education and Memberships**

The Continuing Education and Memberships budget is increasing due to anticipated requests to attend the 2020 PLA National Conference and a consideration to pay for association membership dues for additional staff. The library also anticipates continuing its staff development and training efforts in the areas of EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion).

## **Programming**

An increase in the Programming budget is warranted due to the increased emphasis and demand on learning experiences provided at the library for patrons of all ages. Staff are planning additional hands-on learning opportunities for adults as well as a new film festival that will include discussion panels after the films.

More funds will also be allocated for young adult (i.e., teen) programming such as the “Let’s Talk About It” series focused on offering local teens a safe space to ask health related questions. This series is a partnership series with Turning Point, and builds off the launch of the program series that was previously funded by a Skokie Community Foundation grant. The library is also planning a Comics Fest in the summer for teens.

Some of the additional funding in the Programming line will also go towards ADA reasonable requests for accommodation (e.g., ASL interpreters).

## **Collections**

The overall collection budget is expected to remain relatively flat, though Mr. Kong expects to decrease the budget for physical content due to temporarily slowing down new acquisitions leading up to and during the renovation project. This will be adjusted when the library prepares to open up renovated spaces to the public. The collection funds will continue to be represented in four different lines, including Physical Content, Leased Content, Research Resources, and Learning Platforms.

## **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 significantly. Additional funds will go towards a variety of new initiatives, including a new library cardholder campaign, additional promotional items for the bookmobile and book bike, materials for the Grow-a-Reader early literacy initiative, and temporary building signage required to help patrons during the renovation project.

## **Capital**

The Capital line is expected to decrease to \$517,480, which will mostly go towards soft costs (e.g., architectural fees) for the renovation project. In the final version of the projected revenues and expenditures presented to the Board in April, Mr. Kong will use updated cost estimates for the renovation project to calculate what additional amount may need to be appropriated from the library’s Reserve Fund for Sites and Buildings for FY 2020. Once the details of the new bond are determined later in 2019, using updated cost estimates provided by our construction management firm, we will be able to accurately project the payments of the first year’s bond debt repayments that will come out of the Reserve Fund.

Other minor adjustments were made to some of the other budget lines. These estimates may be adjusted over the next couple of months as Mr. Kong continues to discuss the budget with the Board and staff.

Approval of the budget is not required until April 2019.

Discussion ensued.

Mrs. Parrilli left the meeting at 7:47 pm and returned at 7:49 pm.

Dr. Maks left the meeting at 7:55 pm and returned at 7:59 pm.

#### PRESENTATION OF SCHEMATIC DESIGN UPDATES FOR RENOVATION PROJECT

Mr. Kong presented the latest schematic design plans and an updated timeline for the renovation project.

A number of questions were asked and extensive discussion ensued.

Dr. Maks left the meeting at 8:21 pm and returned at 8:23 pm.

Ms. Greer left the meeting at 8:57 pm.

#### REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

The RAILS Board did not meet in December.

Dr. Maks left the meeting at 9:12 pm.

#### COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

There were no comments from trustees.

At 9:13 pm a motion was made by Mrs. Parrilli seconded by Ms. Barbir to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

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Karen Parrilli, Secretary