

Duluth Public Library Board Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2023

Present: Bill Arezzo, Lizzy Luoma, Ellen Hatfield, Jose Gonzalez, Lori Steinbach, Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, Jim Filby Williams, Peter Passi (Duluth News Tribune)

Absent: Susan Henke, Betty Ramsland

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 PM by Michelle Foshay, President

Review and approval of agenda

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Luoma, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the June 27, 2023, meeting

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Gonzalez, to approve minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager

- Little Library Go is so popular that library can't say yes to all requests.
- New Mail-a-Book service from the Arrowhead Library System is now available within the city limits of Duluth.
- Employee Pulse survey had a 90% rate of completion and showed continued positive progress since first annual survey was done in 2021.
- The library partnered with the Duluth Community Garden Program on a Love Your Block grant to clean up the gardens outside the Main Library Building. Clean-up and planting happened to be taking place during the board meeting.

Foundation

- Learning & Libations at the Library will be held on Friday September 15 with a theme of Get Reunited With Your Library. Highlights will include a food, a bar featuring alcoholic drinks and mocktails, a photo booth, speakers, and a live auction. Attendees are invited to dress retro if they wish.

Friends

- Will hold a strategic plan meeting on Saturday, September 16.
- Hosted a book sale at the West Duluth branch during Spirit Valley Days
- Littlest Holiday sale will be held December 5-7 at The Mount Royal Branch.

Old Business

Safety Update

- Three more security cameras were installed inside the Main Library building. Other the cameras were replaced and are of higher quality than the previous ones.
- Off duty police were in the building 12 hours per week in the summer, maybe they helped prevent incidents.
- There are still plans to convert a .5 Library Technician position to a Library Safety Specialist position in the fall.
- The Mayor presented her proposed 2024 budget to the City Council and requested an additional \$60,000 for the library. This is the first step in a dialog with Council, and the budget could be changed.

Main Library Facility Update

- Community engagement continues over the summer with focus groups, zoom meetings and pop-up events. 600+ surveys were returned. There are tentative plans to hold an open house on September 28 at the Main Library with an optional tour prior to the presentation. MSR consultants are working with Kraus Anderson to update cost estimates for the predesign report due to the State Legislature on Oct. 1.
- The City is seeking funding to cover half the cost of a building project from the State of Minnesota and intends to fund the other half from non-state sources. Workforce Development is a full partner in this endeavor. It offers them operational savings with a new building and no longer having to have a lease.

New Business

Request for Reconsideration Process

Currently a policy and process is in place for anyone who has an issue with books, events or art in the libraries. Anyone who would like something to be reconsidered receives get an information packet and a form to fill out. The Library Manager follows up by talking to the staff involved with choosing the book/event/art, and in the case of books also looks at reviews. DPL partnered with the Duluth-Superior Pride Festival last year and is doing it again this year. Last year a few requests for reconsideration for drag storytime were received; however, the program was held as planned. The Duluth Library Foundation is sending a letter to all donors explaining why the Foundation supports diverse programming at the library.

Appropriate Library Behavior

The last version of Appropriate Library Behavior was updated in 2018. The library's Diversity Action Group is proposing updates that were approved by the leadership team. The board discussed the new draft and recommended a couple of changes. Powers will talk with staff about the board's recommendations and bring forward a new draft next month.

Periodic Reviews of Strategic Plan

There was discussion of how often to review the new strategic plan. Consensus was to review it at next month's meeting, and twice a year after that.

October Board Meeting

The October board meeting will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 25 in order to hold the meeting at City Center West. There may be a presentation and/or tour of the West Duluth Branch.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

A group from the Library Foundation, Friends of the Library and the Library Board will ask for a larger increase to the library's 2024 budget. There is discussion about requesting a Committee of the Whole meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:27 PM