



**Rochester
Public Library**

More Than You Think

115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

**Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Kusler-Cox Auditorium
August 24, 2022
Minutes**

RPL Trustees Present: K. Baynes, D. Benjamin, C. Conklin, A. Drury, G. Gardner, R. Hamilton, D. Karin, E. Stephens (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: S. Salluzzo

Staff and Guests: City Council Liaison, M. Gruber; FFRPL liaison, D. Borgus; staff members B. Harrison, M. Lewis, D. Mansour, J. Smathers, A. Suro

Call to Order

Ms. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and welcomed trustees, staff, and guests.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to address the Board.

Meeting Minutes

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Gardner AND SECONDED BY Mr. Karin to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 29, 2022. THE MOTION PASSED with Mr. Hamilton ABSTAINING.

Personnel Changes

Ms. Suro called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for the period June 11, 2022, to August 5, 2022, and reviewed the changes with trustees. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Hamilton AND SECONDED BY Ms. Drury to approve the personnel changes. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Reports

Ms. Harrison reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer any questions. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Drury AND SECONDED BY Ms. Baynes to approve the monthly financial reports as presented, and as approved by the RPL Finance Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Grant-In-Aid from Senator Samra Brouk

On behalf of Ms. Uttaro, Ms. Harrison reviewed the action item and offered to answer questions. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Hamilton AND SECONDED BY Mr. Gardner to accept the grant-in-aid of \$25,000 from NYS Senator Samra Brouk to fund an author visit with Jason Reynolds. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agreement with FFRPL to Host Jason Reynolds

On behalf of Ms. Uttaro, Ms. Harrison reviewed the action item and offered to answer questions. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Baynes AND SECONDED BY Ms. Drury to approve an agreement with FFRPL not to exceed \$25,000 for a visit by author Jason Reynolds. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Allocation of 2021-2022 Annual Campaign Proceeds

Ms. Harrison reviewed the action item and offered to answer questions. She noted the RPL budgeted \$92,000 and the actual allocation is over \$97,000. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Benjamin AND SECONDED BY Mr. Gardner to approve the proposed 2021 – 2022 annual campaign earnings allocation as described. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

NYSED Grant Approvals

Ms. Harrison reviewed the action item and offered to answer questions. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Drury AND SECONDED BY Mr. Karin to approve grant applications and acceptance of funds up to \$821,350 from the NYSED Division of Library Development for the construction projects described. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tutoring Agreement—Parrish

Ms. Lewis reviewed the action item and offered to answer questions. In response to a question, Ms. Lewis will provide the Board with statistics on the usage of the tutoring services. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Baynes AND SECONDED BY Mr. Hamilton to approve an agreement with Melissa Parrish, for the services described, for an amount not to exceed \$6,090 through June 30, 2023. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Rochester Public Library Liaison to the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) Board

Ms. Smathers gave an update on activities happening in her office including training opportunities for MCLS member library staff.

She invited trustees to attend the Art of the Book reception on Wednesday, September 21, from 5:30–7:30 p.m. in Hacker Hall.

She then reported that at the last MCLS Board meeting, Amy Discenza, Outreach Coordinator gave a presentation to the Board showcasing the services provided by the Outreach Department. She also reported the MCLS Board had no action items other than previous meeting minutes and financial claims.

Friends and Foundation of Rochester Public Library (FFRPL)

Ms. Borgus reported on the recent passing of three friends of the library, John Lovenheim, Evelyn Bailey, and Robert Becker. The family of John Lovenheim asked that donations in his name benefit the Monroe County Library System. FFRPL is receiving donations with a current total of \$2,484. The funds will be used towards the purchase of Empire State Park Passes.

Gifts to the Evelyn Bailey Shoulders to Stand on Endowed Fund continue to come in. The fund's current balance is \$53,195.

The fall Annual Campaign letter is expected to be in homes around September 10.

As part of the grant receipt process, FFRPL is preparing final reports for grants requiring feedback on the projected outcomes in the grant applications.

FFRPL staff is providing tours of Central Library to current and potential donors. The goal is to resume small group tours as was done before the coronavirus pandemic.

Lastly, she asked everyone to mark their calendars for the following events: a reading and Q&A with author Jason Mott on Wednesday, November 2, at Noon in the KGA and Living Books ROC! as part of the Rochester Fringe Festival on September 17.

Director's Report

On behalf of Ms. Uttaro, Ms. Harrison offered to answer questions about the director's written report. She reported that work to repaint the public elevator in the Rundel Building has finally commenced and should be completed in a day or two. The RPL has submitted two requests for a fiscal year-end amendment to the City of Rochester in hopes of receiving funding to fully renovate the elevator given its age. The second request is to replace the roof of the Charlotte Branch Library.

Central Library

Ms. Smathers reported that the opening of the Rundel Memorial Library Building's North Terrace has been widely acclaimed as a success and an excellent example of public art. She noted some regulars have already established routines of enjoying their mornings on the terrace.

Mr. Stephens joined the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Community Libraries

Ms. Lewis offered to answer questions about the written report. She made note of the previously mentioned promotions for the site supervisors to Branch Managers in recognition of their work. The administration is hopeful that the new title will not only boost morale among those in the positions but will also help attract better-qualified candidates for any future openings.

Next, she reported great success with the Summer of Opportunity program in contrast to last year when there were very few participants, and most were recent graduates. This year, 15 high school students participated and were placed throughout Central and the Branches. The evaluations coming in from the Branch Managers have all been outstanding.

She reported that the Lincoln Branch closed for renovations on August 15. The staff is moving into a temporary location at the Jackson R-Center with a targeted opening date of September 12.

Ms. Lewis reported that several quotes from Matt Seidel and photos from the Toy Library were included in an article about toy libraries published in *The Toy Book*, a national magazine.

Next, she reported that the Branch Administration team is working closely with the staff in the MCLS office and branch staff to implement recommendations from Causewave Community Partners that resulted from a social media audit.

Updates on Local History Archives

Ms. Ridarsky provided an update on both the Shoulders to Stand On archive of LGBTQ+ history and the Archive of Black History and Culture.

For the Shoulders to Stand On archive, the transfer of the naming rights has been completed upon Evelyn Bailey's death. Ms. Ridarsky is working with the Out Alliance; however, they are in the process of moving from their College Avenue location into the Red Cross building causing some delays. During their move, there have been a couple of additional boxes of material that has been transferred to the library. As soon as they get settled, work on a plan to officially announce the transfer of the program to the library will continue.

Ms. Ridarsky is also working with Shoulders to Stand On stakeholders to update the mission and vision, to develop their diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism statements, and Native American land acknowledgment. There will also be a search for a board to manage the Shoulders to Stand On Archive and any related programs. The goal is to find a diverse group of people to represent all aspects of the LGBTQ+ community.

For the Archive of Black History and Culture, the library received a grant from the Community Foundation to support part two of the planning process. The library is partnering with the Clarissa Street Reunion committee, Teen Empowerment, and the Black Community Focus Fund. Ridarsky reported that all these entities are facing pressures that have put the library's archive project behind schedule. The component that has had the most progress made on it is the survey done with help from the Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) to find and document what archives of Black history already exist in the local area. The RRLC is building a website to house the results of the survey and to serve as a clearinghouse of information. The next step is to establish a paid advisory board. Ms. Ridarsky shared a draft of the recruitment flyer for the advisory board and encouraged everyone to share the information in their networks. Ten people will be chosen to serve on the advisory board. She reported they are also looking to hire a consultant to work with the project.

Mr. Gruber asked if Ms. Ridarsky was in touch with the head of the Frederick Douglass Institute for African & African American Studies at the University of Rochester. Ms. Ridarsky is not, and Mr. Gruber offered to make an introduction.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

A MOTION WAS MADE by Ms. Conklin AND SECONDED by Ms. Benjamin to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Submitted by Debi Mansour