



Rochester Public Library

More Than You Think

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Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Lyell Branch Library, 956 Lyell Avenue, Rochester, NY 14606
November 30, 2022
Minutes

RPL Trustees Present: K. Baynes, D. Benjamin, A. Drury, G. Gardner, R. Hamilton, D. Karin, S. Salluzzo (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: E. Brenner, C. Conklin, E. Stephens

Staff and Guests: City Legal Dept. Liaison, D. Mowry; FFRPL Executive Director, Donna Borgus; staff members B. Harrison, M. Lewis, D. Mansour, J. Smathers, A. Suro, P. Uttaro

Call to Order

Ms. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the board.

Meeting Minutes

The minutes of September 21, 2022, and October 26, 2022, meetings were approved.

Personnel Changes

Ms. Suro called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for the period October 11, 2022, to November 10, 2022, and answered several questions. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Baynes AND SECONDED BY Mr. Hamilton to approve the personnel changes. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Reports

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

February 2023 Board Meeting Date

Ms. Uttaro reviewed the proposed action item. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Baynes AND SECONDED BY Ms. Benjamin to approve the date of Thursday, February 16, 2023, at Noon for the Joint Board Meeting with the Monroe County Library System Board. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Election of Officers

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Benjamin shared the following slate of officers for 2023:

President: Dick Hamilton
Vice-President: Glenn Gardner
Treasurer: Ellen Brenner
Secretary: Donna Benjamin

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Baynes AND SECONDED BY Mr. Karin to approve the recommended slate of officers for 2023. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Reappointment of Trustees

Ms. Benjamin shared that trustees Daniel Karin and Carolee Conklin have terms expiring December 31, 2022. Each has expressed interest in being reappointed. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Hamilton AND SECONDED BY Ms. Salluzzo to approve forwarding the names of Mr. Karin and Ms. Conklin for recommendation to the City Council for reappointment to the RPL Board of Trustees for 5-year terms from January 1, 2023–December 31, 2027. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Ms. Uttaro reported that the MCLS Board approved the standard items. Of note was a discussion on diversity and equity in library collections spurred by a couple of book lists shared by trustee Rev. Mack Smith Jr.

Reynolds Library Board Liaison to the Rochester Public Library Board

Ms. Salluzzo reported that the Reynolds Board welcomed a new member, Bruce Marché.

Friends and Foundation of Rochester Public Library (FFRPL)

Ms. Borgus reported that the previous day's Roc the Day campaign surpassed last year in the number of donors, total amount raised, and matching funds from trustees.

Alinda Drury joined the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Ms. Borgus reviewed the highlights of her written report and offered to answer questions.

Director's Report

Ms. Uttaro offered to answer questions about the director's written report. She then reported that the selection process for the paid advisory committee on the Black Archive project is progressing nicely and she is pleased with the progress so far. Over 50 applications came in, and 14 people have been interviewed for 10 positions. They expect to make recommendations to the RPL Board in January 2023 for the appointments to the advisory committee.

Next, she reported that Monroe County issued an RFP for county historian services, and she is submitting a response on behalf of the library without naming an individual but rather the Local History Division as the provider of those services.

She shared her enthusiasm for the "Take It Down! Organizing Against Racism" programming at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. She recently attended this program that focuses on the "pickaninny" panel removed from Rochester's Dentzel Carousel and explores the important lessons it

provides on racism in our community. Since the RPL and MCLS Boards are considering a joint retreat in early 2023, she is considering this program as an option for a portion of the retreat.

Next, she reported that the discussions with the city and the developer continue regarding a new northeast library branch. The decision is in the mayor's hands. The city would need to commit \$2.9 million for the building and furnishings and then ongoing costs are estimated at \$480,000 annually.

Lastly, she reminded trustees of a previous conversation about extending the elimination of late fines to include all materials. Trustees asked for more information about the costs associated with collecting or forgiving fines. She worked with the Circulation Supervisor, Chad Cunningham to track staff time. They excluded time spent collecting fines for missing or damaged items and collected information at Central, Sully Branch, and Winton Branch. There was a large variance in the cost at Central compared to the Branches due to the fine collection being handled by lower-paid staff at Central compared to Branch Managers in the branches. The survey was conducted for one week. The results showed that the staff cost at Central was 10% of the fines collected or waived, at Sully, it was 139% and at Winton, it was 80%. She asked trustees to let her know if there were any other data they would like to see to aid in a decision on eliminating late fines for all materials. Ms. Salluzzo asked if the MCLS member libraries that have recently gone fine-free are experiencing any issues with patrons keeping the "Hot" or "New" books longer than the normal checkout time due to there being no fines if they become overdue. Ms. Smathers will investigate. In response to a question, Ms. Uttaro stated she will likely bring a proposal to the board in January 2023.

Central Library

Ms. Smathers offered to answer questions about the written report. She reported that the Central Library's e-Sports team, The Liberators, won a contest against the Farm Craft 2 developers by 169 points. The kids are working out the details to play against the Rochester Police Department soon.

Community Libraries

Ms. Lewis offered to answer questions about the written report. Next, she shared information about the social work program mentioned in one of the branch reports. The program is a 5-year partnership with the city and the College at Brockport. Several city departments are participating. In the libraries, the Branch Managers reviewed resumes, interviewed candidates, and selected a student to work in the branch. The participating branches are Wheatley, Monroe, and Maplewood. The social work students spend their time making connections and offering referrals for things ranging from haircuts to housing and legal aid. They will also assist patrons in filling out forms and applications for state and federal services. The student at the Maplewood branch is bilingual and helps with English classes and translation. Their work has been widely viewed as valuable and Ms. Lewis is working to find ways to keep this program going.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:58 a.m.

Submitted by Debi Mansour