
Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board March 17, 2021

LIBRARY TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Deb Berry, Claire Chang, Marisol Chiclana-Ayala, Sida Ly-Xiong, Sylvia Neblett, Gwen Willems, Steve Woods

STAFF PRESENT:

Karen Saltis, Interim Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Chuck Wettergren, Digital Services Manager; Carol Jackson, Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:

Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner and Liaison to the Library Board of Trustees; Jolie Wood, Ramsey County Policy Analyst; Les Siphema, Shoreview resident

CALL TO ORDER:

Ly-Xiong called the virtual meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom video conference.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Les Siphema spoke to the Library Board Trustees about several topics and his suggestions for improvement. Neblett spoke as a citizen, offering her support to Library Board Trustees and Library staff of Asian descent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Berry made a motion to approve the agenda for March 17, 2021, as presented. Neblett seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Woods made a motion to approve the minutes of February 17, 2021 as presented. Neblett seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Deputy Director Hiring Update: Pang Yang has been appointed as the new Deputy Director of the Ramsey County Library! She comes to us with a wealth of experience from the St. Paul Public Library and will begin her new role on Wednesday, March 31st. Pang will be introduced at the April board meeting.

Service Delivery Redesign: Over the last month, the Library has been reintroducing services that were provided pre-pandemic. In New Brighton, two computers and one printer are now being offered for patron use in the community center space. In North St. Paul, a copier previously located within the library has been relocated to a close common space within the community center for patron use.

Significant progress has been made on the Roseville browsing pilot. Staff members have been actively engaged through the safety committee and site-specific staff meetings to gather valuable feedback for consideration as we move forward. Public Health, Property Management, Service Centers and Library staff are working collaboratively to address all applicable details to ensure safety for patrons and staff. Implementation is tentatively scheduled for the week of March 29th. A plan is being developed to stage reopening the additional six locations to patron browsing. Lessons learned from the Roseville pilot will be incorporated into the plan.

OverDrive Transition Update: On Tuesday, February 23, Ramsey County Library's downloadable collection moved over to Libby by OverDrive (OverDrive for Kindle users) as the one-stop shop for e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines. Staff has been busy answering questions from patrons regarding this new tool for accessing materials.

Virtual Library Legislative Advocacy Week: Ramsey County Library participated in six virtual meetings with local legislators to advocate for additional funding and a change in formula that would benefit all regional libraries in the State of Minnesota. And, stories of how the library adapted service delivery during the pandemic were shared. Ramsey County Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire, as chair of the Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) Board of Trustees, and MELSA staff also participated in these virtual meetings.

IT Consolidation Update: Consolidation continues to make progress. Significant milestones achieved include updated/added cabling and network access. The library's network cabling has been updated and increased in all locations to support a more seamless transition. County network connectivity has been extended to each library location.

The county's phone system will be extended into each library building to provide unified phone service across all county departments. Beginning March 22nd, new phones will be installed alongside existing phones to begin testing, setup and training, with the cutover to the new system planned for mid-May.

All staff computers and laptops will be replaced and updated with Windows 10. Librarians and managers with personal workstations will be receiving laptops per a new county initiative moving to portable technology. New Brighton is currently the test site for computers using library business applications and ensuring required connectivity from within the county network. Following successful testing, staff computing at New Brighton and the other branches will be updated and moved one at a time into the county network. This movement is scheduled to begin the week of April 5th.

Countywide Updates:

1. Ramsey County continues to focus on COVID-19 vaccination distribution within the community. Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health is distributing the vaccine in alignment with the guidance from the CDC and Minnesota Department of Health. It is an employment-based model, meaning in most cases, the job you do determines your access to the vaccine. Public Health in collaboration with Human Resources is coordinating an employee distribution plan. Library staff who interact with the public and have no ability to work from home have been placed on a list for vaccination. I'm pleased to report that some Library staff have received their first vaccination dose and are scheduled for their second. More will follow in the coming weeks for staff interested in receiving the vaccine.
2. There is a correction to last month's director's report in that presentations to the Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee for projects at RCL-Maplewood and RCL-Roseville are scheduled for April 1st and not March 4th as was previously noted. These projects are being led by Property Management in conjunction with library staff and will incorporate building changes that support county service center operations.

A couple topics arose last month during the board meeting— workplan updates and strategic planning. To follow-up, the 2021 Workplan will be included in the April board packet with updates through the first quarter. Long-range strategic planning occurs every 3 years and that work typically begins in the summer so watch for this topic in June.

Saltis noted that the Ramsey County Service Center located in Shoreview will be closing effective April 5, one of two County Service Centers closing to focus on outreach.

The Children's Grab Bag program has been very successful, with more than 10,000 books pulled by the children's librarians for families since January.

The LSTA grant-funded partnership between the Library and Community Corrections was also quite successful, with many new books purchased for the correctional facility library, and greatly appreciated by the inmates.

FRIENDS OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:

The Friends Online Auction – *Hats Off to the Library!* was a great success. Our hope for this event was to get us halfway to our 2021 grant commitment of \$30,000 for the Ramsey County Library lending collection. This event far exceeded our wildest dreams raising more than \$20,000! At least \$14,000 of the total raised will support the children’s collection specifically. Proceeds from this event will add much-needed items to the lending collection, including extra copies of the most popular materials as well as new audio books, large-print books, and e-books shared online and by the public libraries in Maplewood, Mounds View, New Brighton, North St. Paul, Roseville, Shoreview, and White Bear Lake. Many thanks to the many volunteers, auction contributors, auction bidders, fund-a-need and other donors, and partners who helped to make this event possible.

It's Membership Renewal Time

Friends membership renewal reminders and envelopes will be mailed out in late May. With the help of our members, we exceeded our 2020 goal and provided more than \$146,000 in grant funding to support the RCL collection; virtual programming for adults, teens and children; the Summer Learning Program; and many other resources and services that enhance the Library and support the community. Woods noted that all of the current Library Board Trustees have become Friends members in 2021.

Virtual Used Bookstore Now Available at Roseville

The Friends Virtual Used Bookstore at the Shoreview Library, has now expanded to the Roseville Library location. Stock up for summer with books of many genres, videos, games, puzzles, music CDs and audiobooks, available to browse, order online and pick up “grab and go” style. Available items are different at each location, and must be picked up at the locations where they are in-stock. Patrons placing orders of \$25 or more on a single day may request pick-up of their entire order at either the Shoreview or Roseville Libraries.

Thank you to our 2021 Partners!

- Northeast Bank
- Pioneer Press
- Silver Lake Smile Family Dentistry
- Courtney Billing
- Mary and Wayne Carter
- Cathy Croghan and Kathy Robbins
- Jeff and Paula DeZellar
- Dick and Mary Fowler
- Frank and Jayne Harris
- John W. Harris
- Pamela Harris
- Barbara Heinemann
- Kate and Rob Huebsch
- Susan Miller
- Wallace and Nancy Olson
- Sheff and Deirdre Otis
- Ron and Sandi Riach
- Kris Robertson-Smith
- John and Ann Trapnell
- Susan Vandenberg
- Rong Yang and Haifeng Xiao

In response to a Library Board Trustee query, Saltis noted that the Friends’ hiring process for a new Executive Director will kick off in June and have a new director start in September to overlap with Cyndi Cook for training.

ANNUAL REPORT TO STATE:

State Library Services, a division of the Minnesota Department of Education, coordinates a statistical survey on library usage, collection size, staffing distribution, etc. for every library in Minnesota each year. Libraries are required to submit their annual data to the State Library Services Office no later than April 1.

Policymakers, library administrators and the general public use the statistical data to plan and evaluate library development and services. Data for public, academic and state library agencies is available from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The report will be available electronically at

https://public.education.mn.gov/WebsiteContent/LibraryListing.jsp?SEARCH_VALUE=R after the data has been vetted by State Library Services.

Woods made a motion to authorize the Library Board Chair and Library Director to sign and submit the 2020 Minnesota Public Library Annual Report Approval Form to the Office of State Library Services as mandated. Neblett seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

CONDUCT POLICY UPDATE:

Jolie Wood, Policy Analyst in the County Manager's Office, updated the Library Board on the Ramsey County Conduct Policy being developed for all Ramsey County facilities. She reviewed the timeline of the policy development, which began in late 2019 following incidents in several County buildings. The Library's conduct policy was used as the basis for the County policy, with additional content to address other County locations. The first draft was produced in February 2020, but had to be updated following the opening of the County Service Centers in summer 2020, which were located in several libraries and changed the ways that libraries were affected. A revised draft was produced in late 2020, after Wood toured a library service center, worked with the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, and met with key stakeholders in departments.

The Library Board Trustees questioned whether the Library could be given an exception to the County-wide policy, since libraries have a unique legal status among public buildings. Wood noted that the County is transitioning to County-wide policies, to increase clarity for residents. The Trustees also requested a current version of the policy to review before offering their feedback, which was not provided in time for the Library Board packet. The current draft will be shared and revisited at a future Library Board meeting.

Chiclana-Ayala made a motion to table the discussion to a future meeting. Woods seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATED MATERIALS HANDLING EQUIPMENT:

Ramsey County Library has automated materials handling (AMH) equipment at its three regional libraries located in Roseville, Maplewood and Shoreview. The AMH systems streamline the processing of returned materials by checking items in and pre-sorting them, significantly reducing the amount of staff time spent managing returns. To protect the Library's investment in this technology, a service agreement is maintained. Because AMH technology is unique, maintenance is purchased directly from the manufacturer, Tech Logic Corp., through a Full Service Agreement. The current maintenance agreement expires March 31, 2021.

Ramsey County Library recommends approval of the five-year agreement offered by Tech Logic Corp. to take advantage of multi-year discounts providing maintenance through 2026. The five-year Full Service Agreement cost is \$76,985.00 per year, and includes labor for mechanical repair, discounted parts, preventative maintenance visits, and software support. Savings under the combined agreement total more than \$20,000.00 over five years compared to the existing maintenance agreement. In addition, the new agreement now covers normal-wear parts including bearings, chains, conveyor belts and roller bands.

For any potential costs due to changes initiated by the Library for software upgrades, network changes and parts or repairs not covered under the terms of the maintenance agreement, Ramsey County Procurement has included an additional \$50,000.00 over the life of the contract, bringing the maximum not-to-exceed total to \$434,925.00 for the five-year term. The Ramsey County Attorney's Office and Ramsey County Procurement are working with Library staff and Tech Logic to finalize the Full Service Agreement renewal.

Woods made a motion to approve the AMH Full Service Agreement with Tech Logic Corp. of Oakdale, MN for a five (5) year term at a cost of \$76,985.00 per year, with a maximum not-to-exceed cost of \$434,925.00 over the life of the contract, and authorize the Library Director to sign the Agreement subject to the approval of Ramsey County Procurement and the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. Willems seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

2022-2023 BUDGET TIMELINE AND OVERVIEW:

On February 25, 2021, the Ramsey County Manager kicked off the 2022-2023 budget process by asking Service Teams to develop budget proposals that focus on sustaining countywide strategic initiatives that support countywide goals; bring to scale initiatives and programs that build stronger communities; build on what we've learned as an organization in the past two years and during the pandemic; foster collaboration within and across service teams; tether and make progress on performance measures; demonstrate innovation, creativity, or efficiency; and better align budget to actuals.

The Library will work with the Economic Growth and Community Investment (EGCI) service team, Finance, and County Manager to produce a budget based on the 2021 adjusted levy and service team targets for 2022/2023.

Saltis noted that a discussion guide will be presented at the April Library Board meeting for the Library Trustees' consideration. The Trustees requested the information as early as possible, in order to have adequate time to familiarize themselves with the issues. Commissioner Reinhardt reminded the Library Board that the Library has a separate, suburban only levy that is voted on by the entire County Board. She noted that the County's budget has been strained by the pandemic, resulting in the lower levy targets given to departments.

Budget Process Timeline:

- Budget system opens to department staff: March 11, 2021
- Library Board approves 2022-2023 budgets: April 21, 2021
- Completed budget forms due to Finance Department: April 23, 2021
- Service Team presentations to County Manager: May 10-21, 2021
- Budget 101 Town Hall Meetings: May 24-June 13, 2021
- County Manager sets proposed budget: late June, 2021
- County Manager presents proposed budget to County Board: August 24, 2021
- Service Team presentations to County Board: September 1-13, 2021
- County Board certifies 2022 maximum property tax levy: September 21, 2021
- Truth in Taxation hearing: November 29, 2021
- County Board adopts 2022-2023 budgets and 2022 property tax levy: December 14, 2021

TASK FORCE UPDATE:

The Library Board reviewed the summary report created by Task Force comprised of Library Board Trustees and County Commissioners to address roles and responsibilities of the two governing boards. The Ramsey County Board will be attending the April 21, 2021 meeting to discuss the work group's report and recommendations. Final comments on the report should be shared with Willems by March 26, in order to incorporate any changes and share the final draft with the Commissioners before the April meeting.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR SEARCH UPDATE:

The department head hiring steps and timeline was revised to include the Library Board's role in the process. The Trustees discussed the timeline, which would kick off in May following the joint meeting with the County Board to finalize roles and responsibilities. The Board discussed goals for each step, and clarified the timing of the process.

NEXT MEETING - April 21, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Following a motion by Neblett and a second by Chiclana-Ayala, Ly-Xiong adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson

Library Board of Trustees Coordinator