
Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board of Trustees October 20, 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; Pang Yang, Deputy Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Jeff Eide, Roseville Senior Library Manager; Monica Stratton, Maplewood Library Manager; Carol Jackson, Shoreview Library Manager; Carrie Lyons, Roseville Library Manager; Meg Robertson, New Brighton Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:

Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner and Liaison to the Library Board of Trustees; Kristi Saksvig, EGCI Communications Manager; George Hardgrove, EGCI Controller; Maggie Dreon, EGCI Planning Manager; Mary Worley, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries Director; Lynn Belgea, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries; Hannah Sprague

CALL TO ORDER:

Ly-Xiong called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. via Zoom video conference.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Reinhardt requested that the Task Force Update and Library Director Hiring Process be moved to be the first items under Discussion on the agenda. Willems made a motion to approve the agenda for October 20, 2021, as amended. Chang seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Willems made a motion to approve the minutes of September 15, 2021 as presented. Chang seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

In addition to her written report, Saltis noted:

- RCL-White Bear Lake was closed for a day due to a water main break near the building. Staff scheduled to work that day were redeployed to other library locations and information about the closure was posted online.
- The first all staff Inservice Day in two years was held earlier this week using a hybrid model spread over three locations. The event went well.
- RCL's Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) grant application in conjunction with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions was approved and funded in the amount of \$57,862.50. Grant funds must be expended by June 30, 2022. St. Paul Public Library's ECF grant application was also approved and fully funded.

2020 Highlights: At the July Library Board of Trustees meeting, the Communications Team attended to give an overview of their work. As an outcome of your comments and input during that meeting, a "2020 highlights" document has been created that summarizes some of the excellent work that was done in the Library last year. A copy of this document has been included in your board materials.

IT Consolidation: Work has begun on updating infrastructure that supports public computing. A major step includes migrating public computers at each branch onto new network equipment managed through Information Services. The libraries in Mounds View, New Brighton, North St. Paul, and White Bear Lake have been migrated. The remaining three regional locations will be done over the next 4-8 weeks. Planning has also begun to replace and consolidate staff printers and copiers. This project will support a smaller number of centrally located, high-end multifunctional devices. Staff will use badges to release their print jobs, improving security and eliminating the worry print jobs will get lost!

Technology Update: Self-Check Station Request for Proposals (RFP): Ramsey County Library (RCL) has published an RFP for updated self-check stations. Solicitation responses were due October 14, 2021. Some of the features/enhancements RCL is looking to provide:

- Turnkey support (hardware and software)
- Chip and PIN credit card readers
- Improved accessibility
- Larger touch-screen monitors
- Customizable banners/content
- Patron account access
- Email receipts
- Offline circulation
- Multiple language options

Administrative Assistant Hiring: The process has begun to hire the administrative assistant to support the Library Board of Trustees, Director, Deputy Director, Management Team, and entire Library department. This hiring fills the gap created when the current Administrative Assistant was promoted to a supervisory position within the newly formed Economic Growth & Community Investment Finance and Accounting Division.

Staff News/Kudos: Librarian Paul Lai recently shared that the project *This was 2020: Minnesotans Write About Pandemics and Social Justice in a Historic Year* won the Minnesota Author Project's award in the Communities Create category and was announced recently at the Minnesota Library Association conference (see [blog post announcement](#)). A big thank you to Paul for bringing this idea forward and navigating the details!

Countywide Updates:

1. **Talent Attraction Retention and Promotion (TARP);** Update on Theme 4: Modernize job classification structure and compensation plans. The following information was taken from the county's internal news article.

Ramsey County's new job classification structure is now available for staff to preview through the county's data portal, Open Ramsey County. The structure was designed in partnership with Gallagher Benefit Services and is anticipated to be implemented throughout 2022.

The interactive tool shows how the new structure organizes classifications into job families and series. The tool is intended to provide employees, supervisors, and labor representatives the opportunity to explore the structure and better understand how it functions. It also provides greater transparency to the development of the new classification system.

Currently, the tool shows the following information: job family, series, classification specification and classification level. It does not yet show classification specification descriptions or salary ranges.

Next steps

Human Resources is working with department heads in October on a final review of classification specification descriptions and employee placement. **Employees should expect to learn where they'll be placed in the new structure later this fall.**

Salary ranges and placements in the range are anticipated to be shared in 2022. The county's phased transition to the new structure is not expected to begin until 2022 and will include negotiating collective bargaining agreements for our represented employees.

2. The Service Delivery Senior Advisory Council and Operations Advisory Council continue to meet on a regular basis. The Senior Advisory Council has created a blueprint for ongoing work which includes understanding the Residents First vision, exploring the Enterprise Services objective, describing key elements of the work, and determining strategies to achieve the vision. These include people, partners, process, platforms, and performance metrics.

The Operations Advisory Council has established a Services subcommittee and a Partnership subcommittee to do focused work. The Services subcommittee has gone through evaluating available services from the departments of Workforce Solutions and Financial Assistance Services and is now turning to Social Services. Meanwhile, the Partnership team has established relationships with Neighborhood House and Health Partners. Additionally, county navigators have gone along on key outreach activities which were booked by Library Outreach staff. Additional work by this team has focused on processes around staffing the Downtown Service Center. Lastly, the Service Center at Roseville has moved from the library atrium into the former Dunn Brothers space. This change took place on October 4th.

3. Ramsey County is implementing a COVID-19 staff vaccination mandate effective November 1st, 2021. Those staff choosing not to be vaccinated must test regularly. Final details of the implementation plan are expected to be shared with all staff on Monday, October 18th.

FRIENDS OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:

Join us for an exclusive Virtual Author Talk with Nancy Pearl – November 10, 2021

Nancy is a best-selling author, librarian, and literary critic, but first and foremost, she is a reader and has spent her life promoting reading as one of the most beneficial and joyful experiences anyone can have. We are fortunate to have a panel of our talented librarians, Andrea Hermanson, Ann Wahlstrom, and Carol Jackson lead the conversation. Zoom opening remarks will begin at

6:10 pm and the formal program will start at 6:30 pm. Registration information can be found on our website-rclfriends.org

Shoreview Book Sale December 4, 2021

Our Shoreview Bookstore volunteer team are in the early stages of planning a one day book sale at the Shoreview Library on Saturday December 4th— more details to follow.

Friends Used Bookstore and Book Carts Are All Open

We are accepting gently used donations of books and media at our Roseville and Maplewood locations only.

Friends Online Auction February 17-24, 2022

Save the dates to have fun shopping while you help us add new items to the Ramsey County Library lending collection. The Friends Online Auction will feature items such as dining and sightseeing experiences, artwork, autographed books, food and wine, sports, travel, and themed gift baskets. Watch for additional information in coming months.

TASK FORCE UPDATE:

Ly-Xiong indicated that the Library Board Trustees, Ramsey County Board, and Ramsey County Management have reached a foundational agreement on a governance structure that will allow the Library Board to begin the hiring process for a new Library Director. The new governance model will be reviewed at the end of 2022, and may be amended as needed in the future.

Commissioner Reinhardt was pleased with the results and noted that the consultant hired to facilitate the process was very helpful. She recommended that the Library Board pass a motion to approve the foundational agreement negotiated by the Task Force. The Library Board Trustees discussed several areas of the agreement, including the Library Director's salary range; the performance review process and metrics for the Library Director; the balance of work time spent between Library and County and/or service team issues; and the frequency and recipient of Library Director performance updates to the Library Board.

Saltis noted that the recommended salary range for the Library Director is included in the data received from the TARP (Talent Attraction and Retention Program) study recently. Commissioner Reinhardt indicated that the information has not been shared publicly yet, as it is part of the bargaining agreement negotiations currently underway.

Ly-Xiong noted that Saltis is due for her annual performance review process and has agreed to serve as the test subject for the new performance review process outlined in the foundational agreement.

Woods made a motion to move forward with finalizing details for the basis of hiring the next Library Director per the recent foundational agreement constructed with Ramsey County. Neblett seconded the motion. Willems questioned whether the Library Director hiring needed to be included in the wording of the motion, noting that County Manager Ryan O'Connor had agreed that the Library Director hiring process could proceed. Ly-Xiong noted that the hiring process and the finalization of the foundational agreement would be parallel processes moving forward at the same time, and recommended approval of the motion to indicate the support of the entire Library Board to the County Board of Commissioners. Woods indicated that the wording he proposed reflects the voluntary nature of the Library Board's support of the new governance structure, rather than something that was forced on it unwillingly, and that the agreement could be restructured in the future if it no longer meets the needs of the Library Board. Following the discussion, the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Neblett thanked the Library Board representatives on the Task Force, while Commissioner Reinhardt recognized the Library Board for their work on the issue. Ly-Xiong acknowledged Commissioner Reinhardt for her advocacy and understanding during the process.

RAMSEY COUNTY EGCI FINANCE & ACCOUNTING UPDATE:

Maggie Dreon, Planning Manager, and George Hardgrove, Controller, were present to provide an update to the Library Board Trustees on the EGCI Finance & Accounting Team consolidation and how it impacts the Library.

The decision to implement a Finance and Accounting Division of the EGCI (Economic Growth & Community Investment) Office was made to advance the service team model and to better leverage expertise and resources across the service team. Dreon outlined the changes from the previous distributed model to the new consolidated structure. Benefits to the Library include the addition of an Accounting Manager resource, a centralized accounts payable team rather than two individual Library staff, access to team efforts and learnings, rather than just a department/silo, and opportunity for promotion for Library staff joining the team in a supervisory role.

The Library Board Trustees thanked Dreon and Hardgrove for their presentation.

SHOREVIEW BRANCH UPDATE:

Carol Jackson, Library Manager, was present to give the Library Board an overview of the Ramsey County Library in Shoreview. Jackson recognized Mark Bullock, Circulation Supervisor, the Shoreview staff and volunteers for their exceptional grace and creativity during the pandemic. She also thanked Commissioner Reinhardt for her support and the Library Trustees for their recognition and appreciation. Jackson mentioned the award-winning book "This was 2020: Minnesotans Write About Pandemics and Social Justice in a Historic Year" edited by RCL Librarian Paul Lai, which was included in the Library Board packet. Lastly, she shared her concerns about reductions that will impact the Library in the 2022-2023 budget.

Trends in the Service Area:

- According to Mounds View Public Schools:
 - 59.9% of families identify as white, 11.3% as Asian, 11.3% as Black, 9.6% identify as Hispanic, and 7.5% identify in two or more categories.
 - 28% of students receive free or reduced-price lunch, 11% receive special education services, 6% speak English as a second language.
 - After English, the top three languages spoken by families are 1) Spanish, 2) Somali, 3) Hmong.
- In Shoreview City News:
 - Shoreview created a forgivable loan program to help Shoreview's small businesses. Through the program, the city has given out over thirty \$5,000 loans.

- The city will update the park system plan in 2021. This includes reviewing all city parks, demographics and recreation trends, and developing a conceptual master plan for each park. The city added three new trail links in 2020.
- Over the past few years, the city has added more than 1,000 apartments and townhomes. Several large projects will come forward in 2021 including the redevelopment of the former Deluxe Campus.

Library Issues and Service Trends:

- Business continues to increase. The Roseville Library is currently averaging approximately 325 visitors per day and circulating more than 2,200 items per day.
- Dunn Bros. briefly opened for drive thru and then walk-in service but closed shortly after due to financial difficulties.

Library Services and Events:

- Circulation rose in the summer and it was good to welcome families back to the library.
- Demand continues for reserving of our meeting rooms and our study rooms are frequently occupied.

The trustees thanked Jackson for the hard work of the Shoreview staff during the pandemic and acknowledged the difficult decisions in the coming budget years.

MAPLEWOOD RENOVATION UPDATE:

Pang Yang, Deputy Director, reported that vendors have been interviewed for the Maplewood Renovation project, and a selection has been made by the selection team. Ramsey County Procurement is in contract negotiations with the vendor. Once the negotiations are completed, the contract award will go to the County Board for approval and the name of the successful design/build team will become public.

The Library Trustees discussed the need for upgrades to the parking lot and grounds, which are not currently included in the project scope or budget. Woods and Neblett will represent the Library Board on the project team once the vendor is announced.

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE:

Eide noted that he contacted multiple community engagement firms from the Ramsey County Master Contract list and shared the statement of work developed by the Library. Two proposals were received, and selection criteria are being developed for review by Ly-Xiong, Saltis, and Eide.

NEXT MEETING –November 17, 2021, 6:30 p.m., online via Zoom communication software.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ly-Xiong adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Larson
Library Board of Trustees Coordinator