
Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board of Trustees
August 18, 2022

LIBRARY TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Grace Atkins, Claire Chang, Sida Ly-Xiong, Sylvia Neblett, David Perry, Andrea West, Steve Woods.

STAFF PRESENT:

Pang Yang, Deputy Director; Chuck Wettergren, Digital Services Manager; Jeff Eide, Senior Library Manager, Planning and Analysis; Julie Comine, Clerk Typist; Maggie Soukup, Library Board Coordinator.

OTHERS:

Nicole Joy Frethem, Ramsey County Commissioner; Johanna Berg, Deputy County Manager, Mary Worley, Executive Director, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries; Antonio Montez, Racial Health Equity Administrator; Les Sipkma, Shoreview Resident.

CALL TO ORDER:

Woods called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Shoreview resident Les Sipkma explained that he had four items that he would like to share for public comment: first, frontline worker pay for Ramsey County library staff; second, removal of the vote to close the Maplewood branch during tonight's meeting until all questions on the maximum price have been answered; third, update the Trustees strategic planning reading list to include materials on architecture; fourth, self-evaluations should be reviewed immediately to identify dissatisfied Trustees.

To view Sipkma's public comment in its entirety, follow this [link](#) (0.39).

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

A motion was made by Ly-Xiong to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Perry, which was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A motion was made by Neblett to approve the consent agenda items as presented. The motion was seconded by Atkins, which was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

RECOMMENDATION FOR CLOSURE

Yang shared that the expected construction time for the renovation of the library in Maplewood is between December 2022 through September 2023. Should the library remain open, there is an expected additional cost of \$160,000.00 added to budget, and additional minimum of three months of closure beyond projected timeline between December 2022 through September 2023. Pang explained that the user experience will be impacted by inconsistent environment of sound, temperature, and limited access.

A motion was made by Neblett to recommend the closure of the Ramsey County Library Maplewood branch during renovations from December 2022 through September 2023. The motion was seconded by Atkins, which was approved by the majority. Perry abstained from the vote.

To view the entire discussion, follow this [link](#) (6:40).

APPROVAL OF MAPLEWOOD RENOVATION BUDGET

Woods shared that he and Neblett met with Yang and Jennifer McMaster earlier this week to review the preliminary cost estimate. He explained that the estimate came in approximately \$250,000 higher than expected and that staff had worked out several tradeoffs to reduce the cost.

Neblett made a motion to accept the changes proposed by staff to lower the cost of the Maplewood renovation project to align with the proposed budget. Atkins seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

To view the entire discussion, follow this [link](#) (24:24).

DISCUSSION ITEMS

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER UPDATE

Presented by Deputy County Manager Berg. Update can be found by following this [link](#) (27:55).

RAMSEY COUNTY BOARD LIAISON REPORT

Presented by Commissioner Nicole Joy Frethem. Report can be found by following this [link](#) (40:00).

LIBRARY DIRECTOR VACANCY

Woods shared that all Trustees have met individually with Deputy County Manager Berg to discuss the director vacancy and their roles as Trustees in the hiring process. Berg explained that she and Board Chair Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo will be meeting with Woods to discuss the Trustee feedback from the individual meetings and the consultant contract. Berg shared that the scope of work for the consultant contract is already in draft form and has been shared with Woods.

To view the entire discussion, please follow this [link](#) (41:07).

STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION

Antonio Montez, Racial Health Equity Administrator, facilitated a discussion for the Trustees centered on the strategic planning process and a focused conversation around the Trustee evaluation.

See Attachment A for notes on the discussion.

To view the entire discussion, please follow this [link](#) (1:01:00).

ADJOURNMENT

Neblett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:33pm. Perry seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.