

Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Workshop
July 19, 2023
4560 Victoria Street North Shoreview, MN – 6:30 PM

The July Library Advisory Board Workshop does not include a public comment period. Individuals wishing to provide public comments may do so at any time by emailing them to: Margaret.Soukup@Ramseycounty.us or sending them to her attention at the mailing address above. All public comments received are shared with the full Library Advisory Board.

Workshop Agenda

- Call to order
- Collectively build a clear understanding of the new role and value of the Library Advisory Board and begin the collaborative effort to operationalize it.
 - Countywide and Library Department perspectives (Johanna Berg, Pang Yang)
 - Library Advisory Board facilitated discussion (Antonio Montez, Facilitator)
- Preparation for August subcommittee meetings
- Adjournment

There will be no August meeting of the Library Advisory Board.

Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Statutory Language

The Ramsey County Library Advisory Board shall provide advice and make recommendations on matters pertaining to county library services. The Ramsey County Library Advisory Board shall provide recommendations regarding integrated county service delivery that impacts or is enhanced by library services. The county board may delegate additional powers and duties to the Ramsey County Library Advisory Board.

2023-2025 Ramsey County Library Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Extending our welcome			
We strive to grow welcoming spaces, to be more anti-racist, equitable, responsive, and effective for all communities.			
Sub priority	Sub Priority 1.A	Sub Priority 1.B	Sub Priority 1.C
	Amplify the voices of communities that have been marginalized	Empower staff and strengthen customer service	Diversify workforce
	We recognize the strength of community perspectives and community partners. By engaging with community members who have not traditionally had a seat at the table, we will contribute to the growth, advancement, and prosperity of Ramsey County.	We create supportive spaces and responsible environments that are radically welcoming to staff of all backgrounds and identities, and disenfranchised communities. We commit to providing a reflective, proactive, and responsive approach to Ramsey County residents, library users, and to our communities.	We develop a team that reflects the community, meets the needs of evolving demographics, and is diverse in thought, race, gender, language, and ability.
Context	We recognize there are communities that have been marginalized due to structures and systems that makes access and participation difficult. This priority is about centering perspectives of those historically marginalized.	This priority is about tapping into and supporting staff to serve the diverse communities of Ramsey County.	To ensure a welcoming space for residents and to meet the needs of a dynamic and changing population, we need staff who reflect our communities. This priority specifically focuses on developing a team reflective of communities that have been disenfranchised or have experienced mistrust with institutions that prevent them from using resources.

Priority 2: Growing our partnerships and community presence			
We will be deliberate in igniting our communities and forging partnerships to maximize positive impact.			
Sub priority	Sub Priority 2.A	Sub Priority 2.B	Sub Priority 2.C
	Learn from current partnerships to build new ones	Co-create library programs and services with partners in a continuous feedback loop	Create programs that bring libraries to community and community to libraries
	We leverage the strengths of our current relationships to develop new ones with perspectives that are currently not present. We rethink how we deliver services and invest in our communities to reach all of Ramsey County.	We approach decision making in partnership with community organizations and members.	We work towards the destruction of obstacles and barriers to library services and resources, physical and intangible.
Context	We recognize an array of partnerships already exist and have proficient processes in place to strengthen growth. This knowledge should also be used to nurture partnerships with organizations that are underutilized.	Library services and resources should involve resident voice with equal membership at the table. This priority is about ensuring that in the life cycle of decision making, residents and partners are kept in constant communication and are a part of decision making.	Beyond books, most residents do not know what a modern public library has to offer; however, most residents do rely on the support of their communities. By embedding ourselves in community spaces, communicating through community networks, and inviting communities into our spaces, we can reach underserved Ramsey County residents.

Priority 3: Building resources to create positive change			
We will build our services, programs, spaces, technology, and collections to reflect the needs of the residents we serve, and to celebrate diverse cultures across our communities.			
Sub priority Description Context	Sub Priority 3.A	Sub Priority 3.B	Sub Priority 3.C
	Invest in our youth through responsive programming	Reflect the interests and needs of the communities that have been most marginalized	Provide dynamic spaces and opportunities that bring people together
	We foster an environment where youth and families supporting youth feel valued and able to contribute.	We provide resources where all residents not only survive, but also thrive. We connect residents to opportunities to advance and access the highest level of health and well-being.	We create environments residents can physically access, intellectually identify with, and emotionally engage in. These environments will meet varying needs as well as celebrate community and connect people.
	School readiness, literacy, and social-emotional development are all instrumental to the growth of young people. This priority is about creating opportunities for young people to prosper.	We recognize there are communities that have been marginalized due to structures and systems that makes access and participation difficult. This priority is about the development of programs and services centering those historically marginalized	Libraries are one of the few spaces that residents can occupy without having to make purchases or adopt certain beliefs. In addition to free spaces for residents, libraries have an opportunity to connect people to people, and to their community.

Strategic *Priorities*

2023-2025

Extending our *welcome*.

We strive to grow welcoming spaces, to be more anti-racist, equitable, responsive and effective for all communities.

Growing our *partnerships* and *community presence*.

We will be deliberate in igniting our communities and forging partnerships to maximize positive impact.

Building resources to create *positive change*.

We will build our services, programs, spaces, technology, and collections to reflect the needs of the residents we serve, and to celebrate diverse cultures across our communities.



Learn more:
rclreads.org/Planning

Ramsey County Library Board Subcommittees 2023

Context and Purpose

On June 20 2023, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved Minnesota Statute Section 134.114, which placed the responsibilities of directing, operating, and managing the Ramsey County library system on the county board. The library board remains intact with its current seven members, but our responsibilities shifted from governance to advisory.

Our new advisory powers and duties are as follows:

The Ramsey County Library Advisory Board shall provide advice and make recommendations on matters pertaining to county library services. The Ramsey County Library Advisory Board shall provide recommendations regarding integrated county service delivery that impacts or is enhanced by library services. The county board may delegate additional powers and duties to the Ramsey County Library Advisory Board.

With this new charge, the library board needs to update our bylaws and policies. We also need to evaluate our processes for providing advice and making recommendations. To accomplish these tasks, we are forming two subcommittees.

Tentative details for each subcommittee

By-Laws and Policies Subcommittee

Charge & Process

- Review documents provided by Ramsey County, including but not limited to
 - RCLB by-laws draft
 - New library advisory board charge
 - RCL strategic priorities
 - Peer groups' by-laws and policies, e.g. RC Parks & Recreation advisory commission, other metro area library advisory boards
- Draft new by-laws for the library that are well-aligned with other RC advisory groups
- Present new by-laws and policies to the library board for edits and approval

Timeline

- **June:** subcommittees introduced
- **July:** combined subcommittee workshop: finalize charges, members, tasks
- **August:** individual subcommittee work session (no library board meeting)
- **September:** subcommittee progress share-out
- **October:** if ready, board approves by-laws

Members

- Jason Isaacson
- Marissa Kirby
- Stephen Fitze

Community Engagement Subcommittee

Charge & Process

Our advisory board's new role is to provide advice and make recommendations on matters pertaining to county library services, as well as integrated county service delivery that impacts or is enhanced by library services. As we continue to determine our policies and processes for how to provide this advice and make these recommendations, we will begin by focusing on the topic of community engagement.

Engaging the community will play a crucial role in supporting RCL's [strategic priorities](#) to extend their welcome, grow partnerships and community presence, and build resources to create positive change.

This subcommittee's initial charge is to help the library board understand the current state of RCL's community engagement, and to consider the role the library board can play in providing advice and recommendations in this area.

Initial subcommittee tasks include but are not limited to

- Guide board in knowledge building
 - Gather information on RCL's community engagement approach and future strategies
 - Present information to library board
- Guide board in developing our new advisory role
 - Consider the role our new advisory board plays in community representation, i.e. how do we seven members best represent the interests of all Ramsey County residents and communities?
 - Present ideas to the library board for further development

Timeline

- **June:** subcommittees introduced
- **July:** combined subcommittee workshop: finalize charges, members, tasks
- **August:** individual subcommittee work session (no library board meeting)
- **September:** subcommittee progress share-out
- **October:** determine next steps for Community Engagement subcommittee

Members

- Andrea West
- Dawne Brown White
- Kami Miller