

**Ramsey County Library Advisory Board**  
**February 18, 2026**  
**Ramsey County Library – Shoreview**  
**4560 Victoria St N, Shoreview, MN 55110**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Action Items**
  - a. Approval of the February Agenda
  - b. Approval of 2025 January Meeting Minutes
- III. Discussion Items**
  - a. Ramsey County Library Friends
  - b. Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws and Evaluation
  - c. Library Advisory Board Roundtable
  - d. Library Director's Report
- IV. Adjourn**

**Library Advisory Board**

Sandy Doubek  
Megan Jacoby  
Molly Jansen  
Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn, Chair  
Alex Kovarik  
Kami Miller, Vice Chair  
Andrea West

## **Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Meeting**

**January 21, 2026**

**Ramsey County Library – White Bear Lake**

**2150 2nd Street, White Bear Lake, MN 55110**

**LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT:** Sandy Doubek, Megan Jacoby, Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn, Alex Kovarik, Kami Miller.

**NOT PRESENT:** Molly Jansen, Andrea West.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ray Lockman, Library Deputy Director; Pang Yang, Library Director.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Kirby-Stofferahn called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

#### **Elections**

##### **a. Chair**

Miller made a motion to nominate Kirby-Stofferahn as Board Chair. The motion passes unanimously.

##### **b. Vice Chair**

Kirby-Stofferahn made a motion to nominate Miller as vice chair. The motion passes unanimously.

#### **Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws.**

Discussion of whether Article 4 is standard board language. Staff confirms and adds that the language is revisable. No edits proposed to bylaws.

#### **2026 Library Board Schedule.**

Board discusses 2026 meeting schedule and locations. Board agrees that location will rotate until they have visited all branches once, then meet at Shoreview thereafter. Kirby-Stofferahn made a motion to cancel December and July due to library and board member schedules. Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **ADJOURN**

Kirby-Stofferahn made a motion to close annual meeting. Miller seconded the motion, which passes unanimously.

## **JANUARY MEETING**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Kirby-Stofferahn called the meeting to order at 6:56 p.m.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Approval of the January Agenda**

Kirby-Stofferahn moved to approve agenda. Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **Approval of 2025 November Meeting Minutes**

Kami Miller moved to approve minutes. Doubek seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **Acceptance of Gift Funds**

Miller moved to approve 2025 Gifts. Jacoby seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **Racial Equity with Ramsey County Boards and Committees**

Angie Guenther, Ramsey County Race and Health Equity Administrator, and Nicole Beane, Ramsey County American Indian Relations Administrator, led a training informing board members of county history and the legacy of racism in resident outcomes.

#### **Library Director's Report**

Yang shared the January staff updates with the Library Advisory Board, highlighting the enactment of the 2026-27 budget, the retirement of two key staff members, the results of the Ramsey County Food Drive hosted by Ramsey County Library at the end of 2025, a well-deserved staff award, and how current events can impact library staff and patrons.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:23.

## Request for Library Board Action

**Meeting Date**  
February 18, 2026

**Action Requested**  
Information and Discussion

**Presented By**  
Melissa Nykanen,  
Ramsey County Library  
Friends Executive Director

**SUBJECT:**

Ramsey County Library Friends Report

**BACKGROUND:**

Melissa Nykanen, Executive Director of the Ramsey County Library Friends, will attend the February Library Board meeting to provide an update on recent activities and accomplishments of the Friends.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

For information and discussion.



## **Report for the Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Meeting**

February 18, 2026

Presented by Melissa Nykanen, Executive Director

### **Updates**

- Our November Used Book Sale was highly successful, with gross proceeds of over \$13,000 for the second sale in a row. The Members' Pre-Sale was very popular.
- In November, our Board approved a \$150,000 grant request from the Library for 2026. This is a \$20,000 increase over the past few years. Funds will be used to support Library programs, collections, and improvements.
- In December, we coordinated a group of about 25 Library supporters to attend the County's public hearing on the 2026-2027 budget. We believe this helped raise awareness of the importance of the Library in its community.
- Our annual giving in 2025 was up over previous years, including a 46% increase in unrestricted giving. Because of this, we intend to give the Library an additional gift in 2026, beyond the grant.

### **Coming Up**

- The Friends' next Board Meeting will be held February 23 in the Shoreview Library Community Room. All are welcome.
- Library Legislative Day is February 25 at the State Capitol.
- We are hosting Breakfast with Friends on Saturday, February 28. This is a fundraiser to support purchases of materials for the Library's collection. The featured author is V. V. Ganeshanathan, author of *Brotherless Night*, in conversation with Shoreview Library Manager Marcus Lowry. We will also host a raffle.
- National Library Workers' Day is April 14, and our Board will be delivering cards and treats to the Library staff that week.
- The next semi-annual used book sale will be April 22-26 at the Roseville Library.

### **Opportunities**

- If you don't get our email newsletters or our mail and would like to, please email Melissa at [mnykanen@rclfriends.org](mailto:mnykanen@rclfriends.org).

## Request for Library Board Action

**Meeting Date**  
February 18, 2026

**Action Requested**  
Information and Discussion

**Presented By**  
Ray Lockman,  
Library Deputy Director

**SUBJECT:**

Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws and Evaluation

**BACKGROUND:**

Ray Lockman, Library Deputy Director, will facilitate a discussion around Library Advisory Board evaluations for 2025 to inform edits to the bylaws and future meetings. Edits to the bylaws will be voted on in a future meeting.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

For information and discussion.

## Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws

### Article 1

#### Purpose

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.

### Article 2

#### Organization

- The Ramsey County Library Advisory Board is comprised of seven residents of suburban Ramsey County appointed by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
- The Library Advisory Board shall, at its first regular meeting in a calendar year, elect a Chair and Vice Chair to serve for that calendar year. An officer may serve two consecutive terms.
- Ramsey County will provide administrative support to the Library Advisory Board, including serving as recording secretary.

### Article 3

#### Meetings

- The Library Advisory Board shall meet at least quarterly but intends to hold regular monthly meetings. An annual schedule of the Library Advisory Board meetings will be published in January. Meetings may be canceled by the Library Advisory Board Chair or designated authority.
- Special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon the written request of four members for the transaction of business as stated in the meeting request. Special meetings may consider only those items specified in advance. All members shall be notified of all meetings at least two (2) days before the meeting date.
- The Chair may appoint standing committees as needed by the Library Advisory Board. Ad hoc committees for the study of special issues may also be appointed by the Chair; such committees to serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed.
- The principal place for meetings shall be at the Shoreview Library; however, the Library Advisory Board may hold meetings in other places within the County as desired.

## **Article 4**

### **Conduct of Business**

- Meetings shall be facilitated by the Chair or by the Vice Chair in the Chair's absence or another Library Advisory Board member as delegated by the Chair.
- A quorum shall consist of a majority of the appointed members; there must be a quorum to conduct a vote.
- Rosenberg's Rules will be used for formal voting.
- The Library Advisory Board shall:
  - Expect people to act with best intentions and expect best intentions from others.
  - Treat each other with respect.
  - Not tolerate disrespectful language, tone of voice, or behavior.
  - Focus on ideas: If you disagree with something that has been said, question the idea or practice, not the person.
  - Focus our energies on how we can better meet the needs of the community while supporting greater inclusiveness, accessibility and equity.

## **Article 5**

### **Duties of the Library Advisory Board**

- Provide advice and make recommendations on matters pertaining to county library services. Examples include:
  - Ensure the inclusion of voices from our community of residents in determining department programs and services.
  - Advise library staff on existing and newly-proposed resident-facing services, programs, spaces, technology and collections on behalf of residents, with an equity lens focused on our communities that experience marginalization.
  - Advise library staff on where additional community input should be solicited; review programs and services for gaps and duplication with other county and externally-provided services.
  - Review and make recommendations on long-range plans for the library.
  - Participate in department strategic plan development and monitoring.
  - Advocate for libraries at the legislature and other venues, in collaboration with library staff.
  - Advise library staff on priorities within operating and capital budget development processes.
  - Review and advise library staff on department-level policies.
- Provide recommendations regarding integrated county service delivery that impacts or is enhanced by library services. Examples include:
  - Schedule briefings on countywide initiatives such as Digital Equity; foster thoughtful and strategic discussions about opportunities and challenges for the library; advise library staff on impacts and enhancement opportunities from a resident perspective.
  - Bring personal and professional expertise and interests to the table in considering new integrated service delivery opportunities.
- Accept gifts to the library of up to \$5,000, under the delegated authority from the Ramsey County Board.



## **Article 6**

### Open meeting

Library Advisory Board meetings shall be open to the public.

## **Article 7**

### Attendance

Library Advisory Board members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings and must notify the Chair if they are unable to attend a meeting.

Any member of the Library Advisory Board who:

- Misses more than two consecutive meetings without advance notice
- Misses more than three consecutive meetings with advance notice
- Misses one-third of announced Library Advisory Board meetings

within a period of 12 months, may be recommended to the Chair of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners for removal from the Library Advisory Board.

## **Article 8**

### Amendment of Bylaws

The Library Advisory Board shall adopt bylaws and update them at least annually. Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Library Advisory Board at any regular meeting, provided that written notice setting forth in detail the contents of the proposed amendments(s) has been given to Board members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.



## **Library Advisory Board Survey Results**

**January 22, 2026**

**Please indicate your level of satisfaction for the Library Advisory Board in the following areas:**

	Very Dissatisfied 1	Dissatisfied 2	Neutral 3	Satisfied 4	Very Satisfied 5
Structuring discussions and presentations to keep our conversations at a strategic level during board meetings.				1	3
Fulfilling our advisory duties (acting in the best interest of the organization, adhering to appropriate laws, etc.).				1	3
Fostering an environment that builds trust and respect among board members.					4
Allotting sufficient time for questions, participation, and discussion during board meetings.				2	2
Board Chair and Vice Chair receptivity to your ideas or concerns.					4

**Please indicate your level of satisfaction in the following areas:**

	Very Dissatisfied 1	Dissatisfied 2	Neutral 3	Satisfied 4	Very Satisfied 5
Your understanding of our history, mission, strategies and values.				1	3
Your sense of contribution in furthering the strategic priorities of Ramsey County Library.				1	3
The extent to which we are utilizing your skills and experiences.				2	2
The extent to which you find serving on the Library Advisory Board a satisfying and rewarding experience.					4
I feel welcomed and respected as a board member by library staff and library administration.					4

### What do you like best about serving on this board?

I like the opportunity to feel connected to the community and join people with a common sense of purpose.

The sense of having a better understanding of the goings-on of an important institution to the community and having a better understanding of what is happening in the County in general.

Being part of the community and support a sacred gathering place for all. Helping to shape decisions that support our library structure in support of the community.

To contribute to my community and learn.

### What changes might you suggest to make the board meetings more informative, motivating or enjoyable?

Learning more how the members of this board can additionally support the operations of the library.

None.

Like to help more, how can our committee contribute?

I really enjoyed the site tours, maybe touring updates or even spaces or issues of concern or that are on a list for improvement. There could be a benefit to seeing a before and after of a project and understanding the challenges of updating a public space that is well used.

### What are two or three key areas the board should focus on in the next year to improve its performance?

Monitoring the impact on community of the funding cuts to programs and other library and social services.

Maintaining and progressing on the strategic values established by the County and library in the wake of opposing values on the national level.

- Safe community gathering spot - how do we provide this or communicate this?

- Hearing from the community on what is working and what more we can offer?

Visitor safety, advocacy.

- How do we continue to support each other using library services?

How to navigate thru budget cuts and helping our branches offer help and assistance to the community.

### Are there any areas in which you feel you could add more value? What would need to happen for that to occur?

No.

I just fully retired and would like to support the library more where needed.

I really enjoy volunteering and interacting with the public, but it can be difficult with an 8-4:30 job.

Volunteer opportunities.

### Is there anything else you'd like to say?

No.

Overall, the time spent on this board has been very fulfilling, As we move through these troubled times, as a member of the community, how do we support each other? The leadership of the County Board and Library Services is incredible. Bravo to all of you for your service.

It has been a wonderful experience getting the behind-the-scenes information about the library system.

Thank you 😊

## Request for Library Board Action

**Meeting Date**  
February 18, 2026

**Action Requested**  
Information and Discussion

**Presented By**  
Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn,  
Library Advisory Board Chair

**SUBJECT:**

Library Advisory Board Roundtable

**BACKGROUND:**

Library Advisory Board members are encouraged to participate, volunteer and engage with Ramsey County Library, literacy, and learning activities. Board members are invited to share their experiences.

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

For information and discussion.

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## LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 2026

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*Ramsey County is committed to providing a positive experience to everyone visiting and working at our properties. Visitors and staff should expect to find spaces that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, respectful, clean, safe, healthy and comfortable. This includes an environment free from verbal abuse, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or any language or behavior showing hate, bias, or discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, disability, or other identity or group characteristic.*

### **Black History Month**

Each February, Black History Month is observed nationwide to recognize and celebrate the achievements, contributions, and resilience of Black individuals and communities. It is also a time to reflect on the ongoing fight for freedom, justice, and equality in the United States, while honoring the leaders, activists, and creatives who paved the way. The 2026 Black History Month theme, “A Century of Black History Commemorations,” marks 100 years of honoring Black history, with origins dating back to 1926. Designated by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the theme reflects on the growth of public commemorations and their role in shaping greater recognition, visibility, and progress for Black people in the modern world. What began as a week-long observance has since grown into Black History Month, officially recognized at the federal level in 1986. Guided by the legacy of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, often called the Father of Black History Month, we are reminded that the study of Black history is not only about honoring the past, but also about building a more just and informed present and future.

### **Integrated Library System**

In 2026, Ramsey County Library will be transitioning to a new Integrated Library System (ILS), a software that manages library card accounts, collections and materials, and circulation. The ILS Ramsey County is transitioning to is Innovative's Polaris. As we move from the ILS we have been on for 25 years, Polaris offers modernization that will streamline staff training and day-to-day effectiveness, allow for adoption of new features and functionality, and provide a fresh foundation to build upon, as a system this central to library operations is closely coupled with our processes and policies. Additionally, the transition to Polaris positions us for increased traceability and reporting, flexibility in staff movement, and sustainability in our costs associated with this software. This update will allow us to better meet the needs and growing community, and embrace opportunities to leverage this core library technology to best serve our patrons.

### **Ramsey County Board of Commissioners**

On Tuesday, February 3, 2026, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners denounce aggressive tactics used by federal agents in Operation Metro Surge. [Click here to find the statement.](#)

Pang Yang

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