

Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Meeting

May 20, 2026

Ramsey County Library – White Bear Lake

2150 22nd Street, White Bear Lake

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn, Sandy Doubek, Kami Miller.

NOT PRESENT: Alex Kovarik, Megan Jacoby.

STAFF PRESENT: Blia Lee, Office Manager; Kelsey Lied, Planning Manager; Ivory Love, Planning & Evaluation Manager; Pang Yang, Director; Ray Lockman, Deputy Director; Ann Wahlstrom, North St. Paul Branch Manager and Children Facilitator.

CALL TO ORDER

Kirby-Stofferahn called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the May Agenda.

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

Approval of 2026 April Meeting Minutes

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

Approval of Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws

Director Yang shared the update changes on the Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Bylaws per the previous board meeting discussion. Deputy Director Ray Lockman read over the changes in article 4. Additions and changes will reflect:

Article 4 Conduct of Business

The Library Advisory Board Shall:

- Expect respectful language, tone of voice and behavior.
- Shall be beholden to and abide by Ramsey County's Visitor Conduct Policy
- Article 7 Attendance

... within a period of 12 months, upon recommendation of the Chair of the Library Advisory Board, the Library Director will recommend to the Chair of Commissioners for removal from the Library Advisory Board.

Miller moved to approved updated Bylaws, Doubek seconded, which passed unanimously.

DICUSSION ITEMS

Ramsey County Library Summer Learning Program

Ann Wahlstrom, North St. Paul Branch Manager and Children's Facilitator presented on Ramsey County Library's Summer Learning Program. Ann shared summer reading programs themes that Ramsey County Library has had in the past years, along with historical program data from 2014 – 2025. The data shows participation numbers compared to numbers of completion of the programs. Surrounding library systems were recording only the participation number, which was double or more than the completion number. Historically, Ramsey County Library recorded only the number of individuals who completed the program until 2023. Ann presented both numbers side by side for the past three years to see where Ramsey County Library stands. To encourage higher participation and completion Ramsey County Library has and continues to offer incentives such as: a package of 4 tickets to MN State Fair, passes to Battle Creek Water Park, and Cup & Cone token for a free cone.

Walstrom also shared the upcoming important dates of this year's programs along with the different types of programs. Summer Learning Program activities include, summer reading passport, reading records to track books or hours, and Beanstack (virtual tracker).

Statistical trends – 10 year

Director Yang, presented briefly on this subject in the previous meeting in March as a part of state reporting. The Library Advisory Board requested additional information to reflect the past 10 years of Library service data from 2016 - 2025. Data presented personnel FTE over 10 years has decreased while Library Tax Levy has increased, indicating that operations expenses have increased.

The data also shows that from 2016 physical visits were high and drastically dropped during 2020, with a gradual increase though peaking at about half of prior visits.. This data shows the same pattern for circulation, computer usage, reference questions, numbers of programs facilitated, and attendance of programs facilitated.

Where the data showed a much higher increase after Covid was public meeting room reservations. Comparing the data from 2016 to 2025 it has doubled since, identifying high interest for community and meeting spaces.

Yang also presented MELSA benchmarks for 2024, comparing data of the surrounding 8 library systems along with Ramsey County metrics and MELSA average. Ramsey County Library ranked second overall in operating revenue per capita at \$59.33, exceeding MELSA average. Program attendance per capital was also above MELSA average, placing Ramsey County fourth with 3.35 attendees per capita. Additionally, the library system ranked fourth in both collection expenses per capita and circulation per capita with circulation performance remaining above the MELSA average.

Ramsey County Library ranked fourth in visits per square footage at 4.56 and fifth in visits per FTE with 7,927 visits per FTE. Similarly, circulation per square footage ranked fifth overall and was below the MELSA average.

Integrated Library System (ILS) Migration

Kelsey Lied, Digital Service Manager, shared information on the upcoming Integrated Library System Migration. It has been 25 years since Ramsey County Library has been with Horizon and now moving to Polaris. Polaris is an innovative product, now owned by Clarivate. Polaris has shown it to be doing well as it is the US leader in public libraries at 18%. The cost of moving forward with Polaris is also more affordable and cost efficient.

The transition phase starts towards the end of June to early July. During this time patrons will encounter temporary disconnect with Interlibrary Loan, and checkouts will be extended temporarily from three to six weeks with limited service. Library users can expect services to resume back to normal mid to late July.

2026 Library Advisory Board Calendar

Director Yang confirmed that the updated Library Advisory Board calendar as reflected from changes voted upon at the March Library Advisory Board meeting.

Library Advisory Board Roundtable

Sandy Doubek, Library Advisory Board Member, shared her experience from attending most recent Friend's Board Meeting. The Ramsey County Library Friend's Board are planning to be adding new members. Their budget is on track and earned 14K from the last book sales. The Friends are currently working with Ramsey County Library to put together maker kits. These take-home kits include a book and a maker kit. The Friends are currently working with outside firms on strategic initiatives for outreach.

Library Director's May Report

Director Yang shares how appreciative the team is for Ray and Ann, both have been working on reorganizing staff work structures and shift efficiencies after an almost 5 FTE reduction.

Since the one-day closure at Ramsey County Library – Shoreview, there has also been an increase in work volume and double the number of visits since last year. Calibrating for this increased business, Ray and Ann both have come together to ensure that the library remains open to provide public service. A huge thanks to Ray and Ann.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:54PM.