



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 5th, 2023

Approved
5/3/2023

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public who wished to attend could do so in-person, by calling 1-312-626-6799 and entering **meeting ID 862 5221 5747** and **passcode 039390**, or by Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86252215747> at the scheduled meeting time. For questions, please call the library at 763-706-3690.

The meeting was called to order in the Library Community Room by Gerri Moeller at 5:30pm.

Members physically present: Gerri Moeller; Carrie Mesrobian; Chris Polley; Rachelle Waldon; Melanie Magidow (New Member); Justice Spriggs (Council Liaison). **Members remotely present:** N/A. **Members absent:** N/A. **Also present:** Renee Dougherty (Library Director); Nick Olberding (Board Secretary); Sara Ion (City Clerk). **Public present:** N/A.

1. The **Agenda** was amended by Renee to include two additional items: an Art Exhibition request by artist, Jeffrey Berger; as well as a request to the Library Board for a member to accompany Renee to a meeting of the ACL Library Board on May 22nd at Northtown Library. The Amended Agenda was **moved and unanimously approved.**
2. **Oath of Office:** Sara Ion was in attendance to swear in our new member, Melanie Magidow and give an overview of the duties, expectations, and Open Meeting rules before the meeting's Call to Order. Board introductions were made during this portion of the meeting. Welcome to the Library Board of Trustees, Melanie :)
3. **Annual Elections of Board Officers:** A nomination of Gerri Moeller as Chair, and Rachelle Waldon as Vice-Chair were made; both accepted the nominations; **a motion was made to appoint Gerri Moeller as Chair and Rachelle Waldon as Vice-Chair, it was seconded and unanimously approved.**
4. The **Minutes** of the **March 1, 2023**, Board Meeting were **moved and unanimously approved.**
5. **Review Operating Budget (2023):** 24% of the year and 20% of the budget encumbered; no concerns raised.

Community Forum: Opportunity for public input. No correspondence, or members of the public in attendance.

Old Business:

6. **Update on Recommended Changes to the Meeting Room Usage Policy:** Justice informed the Board that this issue was discussed by the City Council at their recent Work Session, and there was an agreement on **removing the rental fee for the room and prohibiting food**, but the Council was split on the **restricting hours** to only Library open hours. The Council cited that some community groups (e.g. HeightsNEXT) organize events that only work outside of the Library's weekly schedule (City-sponsored events like public meetings, election polling, and the NE Business Council would still be able to meet outside of open hours); they would like the Library Board to discuss this aspect further. The Board discussed ideas around refundable damage deposits, trusted groups, and security monitoring, but it kept coming back to safety. There were worries about the safety of the building, library/custodial staff, and the groups themselves (as the external doors would remain unlocked during the duration of meetings and groups would not be able to restrict anyone who seeks to enter the building). After discussion, the Library Board still agreed that the room use should be restricted to library operating hours, but they are open to revisiting the issue in the future if anything changes, or if data suggests that the need for extended hours are needed.
7. **Staffing Update:** One hired Page has made it through training and is now on the regular schedule. Our second hire, due to a family emergency, had to move out of state. Another interviewee was offered the position and will begin training next week. We will soon be fully staffed.

New Business:

8. **Approve Submission of the 2022 Minnesota Public Library Annual Report:** The Library Board was excited to see

that gate-count (visits), circulation (check-outs), program count, program attendance, and volunteering had all increased from the previous year. It was noted that during the pandemic it was clear patrons were less interested in virtual events and programming (which continued long after the Library itself re-opened to the public in June of 2020). A **MOTION was made to approve the submission of the Minnesota Public Library Annual Report for 2022; it was moved and unanimously approved.**

Director's Update:

9. **February Board Report:** Provided as an FYI; no discussion.
10. **Art Exhibition Request (Jeffrey Berger):** The application has yet to be submitted, but the artist spoke with Renee, and even dropped off the woodblock series (Titled: La Bestia) for the Board to preview.
 - a. Notes from the artist:
In order to reach the United States, people sometimes ride La Bestia (The Beast) - freight trains on the rail network running from Mexico/Central America to the southern border of the United States. Immigrants who make these journeys face great risks. There are many photos on the internet of people traveling in this way. Those photos provided the starting points for most of the woodblock prints. Today, and throughout our history some have promoted stories targeting immigrants (especially immigrants without documents) as dangerous threats to society as a means of gaining political power for themselves. I hope these prints help defeat those false stories.
 - b. Proceeds from sales of these prints will be donated to: **Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota** (which provides immigration legal assistance to low-income immigrants and refugees), and **Raices Sagradas** (Sacred Roots) which provides mental health services for uninsured Spanish speaking immigrants.

Artwork sales will not occur in or via the Library, instead contact information for the artist will be displayed with the art for interested buyers. A **MOTION was made to pre-emptively approve the Art Exhibition by artist Jeffrey A. Berger it was seconded, and enthusiastically approved!**

11. **Invitation to accompany Renee Dougherty to the May 22 Anoka County Library Board Meeting:** Renee was invited to attend the May 22 ACL Board Meeting to present the history and mission of the Columbia Heights Public Library; Carrie and/or Rachelle said they would be available to attend the meeting with Renee.
12. **From the Floor:**
 - a. **Puzzle Contest:** Carrie and Chris both attended the Friends of the Library Puzzle Contest on March 25; they were very happy with the event, saying that it brought in first-time visitors, it was very engaging, and that we should host more events like this in the future.
 - b. **Book Sale:** The Board would like to continue discussions of a potential book sale at the next meeting. On a side-note: the Library's Book Sale Cart is Buy-One-Get-One-Free for the month of April in honor of National Library Week.
 - c. **National Library Week (April 23-29):** Renee has submitted our NLW Proclamation to the City Council for presentation at the April 24th Council meeting.
 - d. **Library Board Public Engagement Presentations:** The Board would like to continue discussing outreach opportunities to local community groups using the staff-created PowerPoint presentation.
 - e. **HF1974/SF1911:** Senator Kunesh has introduced legislation to provide funding to public school libraries/media centers. Also noted, Columbia Academy's Media Center is open to students thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers.
 - f. **March Meeting:** The Board wanted to let Renee know that Cortni did a great job hosting the March meeting in her absence. Job well done, thank you Cortni!

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 6:44 pm; the **meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees