



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 7th, 2024

Approved

3/6/2024

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 5:37pm.

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

1. The Meeting's **Agenda** was **approved as-is**.
2. The **Minutes** of the **January 3rd and January 13th, 2024**, Board Meetings were **moved and approved**.
3. **Review 2024 Operating Budget:** 8.47% of the year and 5.93% expended; no concerns raised.

Community Forum: Opportunity for public input. No correspondence. One member of the public remotely in attendance.

Old Business:

4. **Strategic Directions:** The Board reviewed Version 2.0 of the Strategic Directions 2024-2026 document and agreed that it was a good framework to focus on in the coming years (see Agenda Packet for full list). Additional ideas brought up during this meeting were: organize our network of past/future partnerships to help (re)establish the connections for future collaboration; boost accessibility (eg. standing desk computer option, video conferencing access); niche/focused displays (eg. comedian memoirs); display suggestion box to gather insight from patrons; consider shelf-talkers to help merchandise the collection; and making "What is the Board reading?" an official item of future meetings (plus use for social media posts).
 - a. **Collections:** raising awareness, increasing appeal, and boosting circulation
 - b. **Communications:** revitalized website, collaboration with communications staff, patron input, promotions
 - c. **Outreach:** more events, more partnerships and renewed ones, more librarian outreach visits
 - d. **Space:** play/learning areas, repair/renewal of facility, custodial duties, parking, safety/accessibility

A motion to adopt the Strategic Directions 2024-2026 as the Library's guiding document was made; seconded, and unanimously approved.
5. **Website Redesign Process:** Revize (host of the City website) will be meeting with Renee and the City Communication team next week to discuss the steps of moving forward with the proposed Library micro-site.

New Business:

6. **City-wide Book Club:** Justice Spriggs would like the city to host a book club and wanted to get the Board's opinion on the subject; it is still in the feasibility and planning stages. The thought was to frame it around a book like *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time* by Jeff Speck to help gain support and educate people on the benefits of building community around people rather than automobiles. The Board liked the idea, but advised that when nonfiction books are chosen for Book Clubs they are generally narrative nonfiction that tells a story. Previous attempts at a city-wide Book Club, were not well attended, and many had not read the book.
7. **After-School Community Learning Grant:** The Library and Recreation were approached by the school district about applying for an after-school learning grant through the Minnesota Department of Education; after losing

out on the last round of federal grants for 21st Century Learning Centers. Applications are due by February 22, and programming will begin in May, so it is a quick turn-around. The partners (Library, Recreation, School District) will focus on programming for youth in grades 1-5.

8. **Tri-Metro Arts Collective Exhibition Application:** In the absence of a defined CHPL Public Art Committee, the Library Board reviews and approves art exhibition applications. The current application has been submitted by Columbia Heights Public School art teacher, Sarah Honeywell, and would be comprised of student artwork (mostly 2D, but potentially some sculptures). The exhibition hopes to attract the area's teen population to the library; it will consist of a juried showcase event and continuing exhibition from April -May 2024. **The Board made a motion to approve the application by the Tri-Metro Arts Collective; it was seconded and unanimously approved.**

Director's Update:

9. **December Board Report:** Provided as an FYI.

10. **From the Floor:**

- a. **What is the Board Reading?:**

- i. Carrie: *Pig Earth* John Berger; *A Court of Thorns and Roses* Sarah J Maas
 - ii. Chris: *The InvestiGATORS* John Patrick Green; *33^{1/3}: PJ Harvey's Rid of Me* Kate Schatz
 - iii. Melanie: *The Turtle of Oman* Naomi Shihab Nye; *Remarkably Bright Creatures* Shelby Van Pelt
 - iv. Gerri: *Nettle & Bone* T. Kingfisher; *This is Your Mind on Plants* Michael Pollan
 - v. Justice: *Walkable City: How Downtown can Save America, One Step at a Time* Jeff Speck
 - vi. Renee: *What You are Looking For is in the Library* Michiko Aoyama
 - vii. Nick: *White Noise* Don DeLillo

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees

Strategic Directions 2024 – 2026

Collections – Increase awareness, promote availability, and boost use of library resources

- Increase the appeal of physical collections:
 - Merchandising strategies, simplification, face out covers on shelves and displays
 - Weeding unattractive, outdated, and worn materials
- Boost circulation of physical and digital materials:
 - Expand SORA from Columbia Academy and High School to all CHPS schools and students
 - Increase number of library card holders
 - Consider other types of materials (Library of things, art, video games, table games, materials exclusive to Columbia Heights, eBooks)

Communications – Show and tell the breadth of library services and their impact on the community

- Map the customer journey to determine patterns of use
- Revitalize the Library website
- Use the expertise of city communications staff
- Conduct a patron survey
 - Routinize whiteboard questions in the library
- Determine library “brand” and have a consistent look and feel across print and digital platforms
- Take photographs – events, people, displays
- Raise awareness of underused collections (streaming video, large print, music)
- Communicate benefit and value (free resources, life-long learning, social connections)
- Quarterly Board member attendance and/or reports to the City Council

Outreach – Determine identify of community and how the library can connect

- Identify non-users and prospect for new customers
 - Demographic research
 - Increase number of open house events with targeted groups (ECFE, adults, ELL learners at CHPS elementaries, entrepreneurs/business owners)
- Re-establish partnerships and establish new partnerships (Existing: Metro North Adult Basic Education (ABE), Columbia Heights Public Schools, Early Childhood and Family Education, Heights Next)
- Expand active and passive programming (classes, cosplay, movies, book clubs, game contests)

Space – Ensure the building is welcoming, safe, comfortable, and accessible to all

- Address concerns about safety
 - Staff de-escalation training
- Address cleaning issues and custodial staff shortages
- Plan and budget for repair and replacement (HVAC, door access/card readers, video cameras, building security, self-check kiosks, furniture, community room AV, study room technology)
- Early literacy play and learning spaces for all ages
- Explore use of vacant lot (green space, parking lot)
- Conduct space and fixture evaluation and capture metrics of use