COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 13th, 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 429 831 7754** and **passcode 039390,** or by Zoom at **https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4298317754** at the scheduled meeting time. For questions, please call the library at 763-706-3690.*

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION

The meeting was called to order in the Library Community Room by Gerri Moeller at 11:11am.

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

1. **Strategic Planning**
    a. **Idea Generating Questions:** The Board went around the room asking rapid-fire questions (without expecting answers) to prime imaginations and inform subsequent discussion. **Those able to be captured are as follows (loosely sorted into the strategic direction categories):**

    COLLECTIONS (AND PROGRAMMING): What is the age of our library's collection, and how does it compare to other libraries? ▪What platforms is Kanopy is available on? ▪What is the average turnover of a collection? ▪What are the reasons to weed a collection? ▪Do we have statistics on student digital resource/e-book usage? ▪How can the Library promote more non-book materials and create engaging displays for them? ▪Has the community voiced any objections to the Library or its collections; do we need any policies in place to address them? ▪How to get people to associate the Library with ideas, not only books? ▪Could we have Conversation Circles for everyone? ▪Have we done or could we do Books n' Brews events? ▪Could we have a Library of Things collection? ▪Could we host movie nights? ▪Could we do yoga sessions…goat yoga? ▪How much time and work does it take to create a display from scratch? ▪Literary cosplay events (Jane Austen night, Great Gatsby, etc)?

    COMMUNICATIONS (AND DEMOGRAPHICS): Translation options, or bilingual staff/volunteers available? ▪Patron preferences of communication/updates, website, Facebook, Instagram, etc? ▪What demographic groups are missing from feedback and community survey results? ▪How to optimize communication methods (email/social media)? ▪Does staff have time for more social media platforms and online promotion; does it require mostly manual work or use automation? ▪What demographic shifts are occurring in the community, and how do they effect the Library? ▪Which social media platforms are the most prevalent in Columbia Heights? ▪Are there categories/classifications of patrons studied in the library schools—mainly from a marketing perspective? ▪What differences are there in our community compared to other cities in Anoka County and the wider metro?

    OUTREACH (AND PARTNERS): How to attract the growing non-English-speaking population? ▪Could school outreach go beyond ECFE and family education events? ▪Are there any current or historic barriers between the Library Board, Staff, Council, City, Friends, Foundation? ▪What do we know about library non-users/non-members? ▪What percent of residents are not library users; why; how do we reach them? ▪What partnerships has the Library had in the past, what presently, and which should we pursue in the future; who/what have we never partnered with, and what promotions and events could they facilitate? ▪What can help grow stronger connections to the Library with the different youth age groups (toddlers, elementary age, tweens, teens)? ▪What kind of collaboration or partner events/initiates could be created with the CHPD? ▪Are there

partnerships we can create with social workers and other health and wellness organizations? ▪Are there creative ways other libraries have increased membership that we could utilize? ▪Do patrons fall into distinguishable groups? ▪Are the Friends of the Library invited to Board meetings? ▪What organizations do we partner with?

SPACE (AND SAFETY): Could the Juvenile and YA areas have more dedicated seating and socializing space? ▪How can we utilize the vacant lot behind the building in a way that enhances the Library or fits its vision/mission? ▪What are the most concerning safety issues for staff and patrons? ▪How do we create a more inviting environment? ▪Are there guidelines or plans for specific threats and situations (eg, gun violence, bomb threats, weather)? ▪Do we have enough custodial staff? ▪Should we provide Open Access (24/7 unsupervised library use)?

MISCELLANEOUS: What is the Library's role in workforce development in 2024? ▪What increase in workload, visitors, circulation, communications can the current staffing level handle? ▪How can Library facilitate and enhance social and emotional learning and development? ▪What is the scope of the Library's role in the community—our perspective vs. the community's view? ▪Not counting our City Council Liaison, how much of a priority is the Library to the Council? ▪Does the staff position "Library Page" still make sense? ▪What will be the role of artificial intelligence at the Library? ▪Should taxes be our primary funding source, or should we generate additional revenue? ▪Does Columbia Heights have any type of literacy coalition unaffiliated with the schools (generally a non-profit or community group)? ▪Should city residents automatically get a library card? ▪How are libraries unique as a public service? ▪Is there a synergy between CH Library and the little free libraries? ▪What tasks cannot be automated?

b. **Strategic Directions:**

COLLECTIONS – Increase awareness, promote availability, and boost use of library resources
- Increase the appeal of physical collections:
  - Merchandising strategies on shelves/displays; increase number of face-out books
  - Simplified displays
  - Weeding unattractive, outdated, worn materials
  - Other types of collections? Art? Interactive Displays?
- Boost circulation of physical and digital materials
  - Expanded SORA access from Columbia Academy and the High School to all schools and students in the CHPS district
  - Increase number of library card holders
  - Acquire e-purchasing power?
- Raise awareness of Kanopy

COMMUNICATIONS – show and tell how ~~great~~ the city library ~~is~~ can improve your life
- Revitalize the Library website
- Coordinate and use the expertise of city communications staff
- Patron survey
  - Whiteboard questions in the library
- Consistent look and feel across platforms
  - Integration with social media
- Photographs – events, people, displays
- Videos
- Value; connection; mapping the patron's journey; brand loyalty; word of mouth

OUTREACH – who is our community and how can the library be useful?
- Increase number of open house events
  - English Language Learner events for CHPS elementary schools
- Re-establish partnership with Adult Basic Education (ABE)
  - Class visits from librarians

- o Tours/open house event
- o Programs related to MN Driver's License for All
- Continue librarian visits to Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) classes
- Partnerships; expanding events/types; demographic data; identify non-users ; passive programs

SPACE – ensure that the building is welcoming, safe, comfortable, and accessible to all
- Address concerns about safety
  - o Staff de-escalation training
- Address cleaning issues and custodial staff shortages
- Planning and budgeting for systems repair and replacement (HVAC system, door access/card readers, building security)
- Early literacy play and learning space
- Parking lot
- Seating areas; furniture; space evaluation; feedback forms; capturing metrics

c. **From the Floor:**
- Need more microphones connected to the Community Room A/V System (for Zoom)
- Discuss a "big picture" idea at each future Library Board Meeting?
- Publish the occasional "What is the Board reading" posts to social media?
- Quarterly Library Board representation at City Council meetings?

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees