



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, May the 4th, 2022

Approved
6/1/2022

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 Chair Teresa Eisenbise at 5:30pm.

Members physically present: Teresa Eisenbise; Carrie Mesrobian; Gerri Moeller; Rachele Waldon; Nick Novitsky (Council Liaison). **Members remotely present:** N/A. **Members Absent:** N/A. **Also present:** Renee Dougherty (Library Director); Nick Olberding (Recording Secretary). **Public physically/remotely present:** Dan Spriggs.

1. **Impact of Libraries Video** (<https://youtu.be/my7P1tbPcqk>): The Board watched this 4-minute video on libraries as the cornerstone of community and the popularity of them, especially during times of economic hardship.
2. **Review/Approve Minutes from April 6, 2022, Board Meeting:** **Moved and unanimously approved.**
3. **Review Operating Budget:** Four months (~33%) into the year and 28.8% of the budget used.
 - a. **Interdepartmental Labor Serv (41070):** This is the budget line that transfers funds to mainly Public Works for services and labor; each department has a similar budget line for this purpose.
 - b. **Minor Equipment (42010):** 99.99% spent due to an unforeseen expense; we couldn't remember what the expense was at the meeting, but it was for a new digital camera. We use for photographing programs and events, and for content in publications such as the City Newsletter and bi-weekly GreenSheet.

Community Forum: Opportunity for public input; Dan Spriggs (father of City Council candidate, Justice Spriggs was in attendance, and Paul Cram (CH Resident, Library Volunteer, Actor) submitted a letter.

4. **Letter from Paul Cram (4/13):** Paul Cram, a resident and volunteer, wrote to express his feelings on the mandatory \$25 rental fee for the Library Community Room. He has been personally affected by the fee with a "Men Who Read" Book Club he started in 2019; they are currently at 12 members which is the maximum occupancy for free space. They can either (1) not grow, (2) charge dues to cover the fees, (3) congregate in the general Library space, or (4) find a new location. His request is that the Library Board make a recommendation to the City Council to re-visit the Community Room Rental fee, and encourage the fee be removed during Library "open" hours.
 - a. The Board discussed the letter, agreeing with the resident. They expressed the belief that the library space should not follow parameters used for park buildings and Murzyn Hall, especially for groups such as Book Clubs which are made up of local residents and align with the library's mission. Council Liaison Novitsky noted that the City Council debated similar issues when they finalized the policy in August 2021, and they are not likely to re-visit the policy after less than a year of utilization. The Board would like to make a recommendation to the City Council but agreed to wait until August. In the meantime, the Library will estimate how many groups have been displaced, or don't reserve the room due to fees.
 - b. Dan Spriggs asked Renee if the rental fee has been a barrier for groups in the community room. She replied that groups who used the room before the implementation of fees have stopped reserving it, and that others who call to inquire about room use, often do not finalize a book and she attributes this to the barrier of the rental fee.

Old Business:

5. **Procedure for Filling Board Vacancy:** Due to the fact that the previous application period was so recent, the City will be reaching out to those applicants to gauge their continued interest; if none are still interested, they will re-open the position for applications. It is anticipated that we will have a new member in June or July.

New Business:

6. **Partnership Opportunity: DNR Minnesota State Parks Library Program:** In response to an invitation from the DNR Parks and Trails Outreach representative, the Columbia Heights and Fridley Libraries will participate in a program to encourage park use in low-income communities. Staff are currently planning how to deliver the program which should be in place in June or July. We will have between 1-3 passes available for checkout; they will be good for 7 days (for entry to the parks, but not camping or other equipment rentals). Park passes will be first come, first served (not reservable, renewable, or transferrable) and available to anyone with a library card registered at Columbia Heights or Anoka County Library.
7. **Strategic Planning (Staff Priorities):** Renee conveyed the priorities of the staff: **Building Patron Base, Technology, Communication, and Art** (in this order); these are generally aligned with the priorities named by the Board. Strategic Planning will be tabled until fall so that it may include results from Anoka County Library's Community Needs Assessment and MELSA's Library Technology Survey. The Board intends to schedule a special meeting to focus on planning (potentially with guidance from Phil Kern who will conduct Strategic Planning with the City Council over the summer).
8. **Outreach Events:** Renee listed six upcoming community events and invited Board members to attend to represent the Library. Events include Latino Fest, Jamboree Arts & Info Fair, Bilingual Monarch Festival, Police Department Neighborhood Eat & Greets, Lee Carlson Center events, and Pride Fest. Members were interested in getting involved, so Renee will reach out with more information as we get it (some events are still TBD).
9. **Director's Update:** Operational reports, general updates, event reminders, and items from the floor.
 - a. **March Operational Reports:** For Your Information.
 - i. Teresa wondered why several March Storytimes on the list were cancelled, and it was because of COVID. FYI: Storytime will resume in June with no registration required (but there will be a cap on attendance); it's undetermined whether any will be held outdoors.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 6:31 pm and the **meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees