



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 7th, 2024

Approved

9/4/2024

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public who wished to attend could do so in-person, or via Microsoft Teams at columbiaheightsmn.gov/join-a-meeting and entering Meeting ID 258 492 181 742 and passcode GWNpXW 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 Melanie Magidow at 5:31pm.

Members present: Rachele Waldon; Melanie Magidow; Amina Maameri; Chris Polley. **Members remotely present:** Carrie Mesrobian. **Members absent:** Justice Spriggs (City Council Liaison). **Others present:** Renee Dougherty (Library Director); Nick Olberding (Board Secretary). **Public present:** N/A.

1. The Meeting Agenda was **approved as-is**.
2. The **Minutes** of the **June 5th, 2024**, Board Meetings were **moved and approved**.
3. **Review 2024 Operating Budget:** 58.20% of the year and 50.35% of the budget expended.
 - a. **42010/42012 (Equipment):** These lines reflect costs incurred for the unplanned replacement of an interior security camera and an exterior parking lot camera (plus wiring), and the installation of a rugged outdoor Wi-Fi access point in the parking lot for public usage.

Community Forum: Opportunity for public input. No correspondence and no public in attendance. The City website has a Contact Form for each Board/Commission as a new method for the public to submit questions or concerns: https://www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/government/boards_and_commissions/index.php after clicking desired group, scroll to the bottom of their page to find the contact form.

New Business:

4. **Mid-year Usage Comparison:** Provided with some graphs that compared library usage in January through June of 2024 with the same period in 2023. They show a 15% increase in visits, a 23% increase in sessions of public computer usage, a steady level of item borrowing, and a 13% increase in programs (which would have been higher had the 21st Century Learning Centers Grant not concluded). Insight gleaned from this is that many visitors to our Library are here to use the amenities and resources on the premises but are not all borrowing things to take home with them. Computer usage may have increased due to the end of the Federal Connectivity Grant causing some households to cancel or reduce their home internet subscriptions.
5. **Parking Lot Extension Plan:** The City has not forgotten about the initiative to expand the parking lot into the empty lot behind the building and have provided some preliminary design drawings showing about 40 additional parking spaces, stormwater management, and native plantings. The City would like to have this area paved at the same time as a smaller plot is done on the east side of the City Hall building. They will be going out for bids soon, but current estimates suggest the Library portion would cost around \$100k; funding may come partially from the CHPL Foundation and/or the Capital Improvement Fund, but this is still unknown. The Board is happy to see the proposal design matches the aesthetic of the current parking lot and that stormwater and pollinators are being considered. They suggested that a pedestrian walkway at the NW corner would allow patrons a more direct route to the building (in addition to allowing access for the adjacent neighborhood). They would also like to know how construction may affect the existing parking access.
6. **Draft Proposal from Anoka County Library to Increase Fees & Revise Memorandum of Understanding:** We do not yet have any written proposal from Anoka County Library for a new contract, but Renee wanted to bring the Board into the loop. Our previous contract originated in 2009, and a lot has changed since then (including e-books and Kanopy streaming video). Currently we are being charged based on a predictive formula for e-book usage

from July-June, so charges are merely estimates and span two budget years. We would like to be charged based on actual usage during a single calendar/budget year if possible. Items to consider provided through Anoka County Library are services such as weekly deliveries, ILS software access, public catalog access, e-materials, streaming video, mailed overdue/damage notices, CD/DVD polishing service, and cataloging. One item included on the previous contract which we will remove is reference help services. Renee has added some estimated numbers to the proposed 2025 budget for certain aspects of the hypothetical contract, but we do not have enough information for accurate figures. The Board will be updated as we receive more information.

7. **Discussion of Unstaffed Access at Metro Libraries:** Chris has suggested a discussion of unstaffed access based on an article published by MinnPost on July 15, 2024 (see Board Meeting Packet); even if we do not pursue this service, it should be discussed due to its implementation at several public libraries in the state. The idea of allowing access to the building outside of normal operating hours for patrons to utilize is a nice theory; in practice there are a lot of things to consider: Related costs, building modifications necessary, safety/security issues, behavior/vandalism/theft, liability/insurance implications, etc. The Board would like to gather first-hand information and experiences from librarians/staff at libraries that have implemented service like this, and would like to know if it seems to devalue the benefit having staff on the premises. Certain patrons would be plenty self-sufficient to not need assistance or would only need access to browse and check-out items at times convenient to their schedule. Many other patrons visit the library for the assistance they receive from staff. CHPL would likely not offer this option any time soon but will keep it in mind as we go forward.
8. **Proposed 2025 Budget:** The Board was provided an overview of the proposed budget for 2025 which would be approved by the City Council in December but needs to be compiled to set the City's tax levy by September. So far Finance or the City Manager have not proposed any changes to the Library's proposed budget which contains a \$30,900 (2.45%) increase. Items of note include new staff computers (which IT suggests need replacement due to age), adding \$3000 for anticipated Kanopy streaming video costs (from Item 6), a \$3000 reduction to the print book budget, and \$3,700 reduction for music/audiobook CDs. At this time health insurance costs and collective bargaining contracts have not been negotiated for 2025 so these costs are still variable. However, the personnel budget has been eased somewhat by the resignation of two full-time employees at the top level of the pay scale and replacement by staff at the lower end of the pay scale. More information on the proposed 2025 budget will be relayed at a future meeting as needed.

Reports:

9. **May & June Board Report:** Provided as an FYI. No comments.
 - a. **MakerSpaces:** Melanie proposed that we discuss this at our next meeting.
10. **Board Books:**
 - a. Chris: *The Parking Lot Attendant* Nafkote Tamirat; *Slam (1998)* Mark Levin (streaming on Kanopy)
 - b. Amina: *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* William Kamkwamba; *English* (Guthrie Theater)
 - c. Rachelle: *Forty-Five: Poems* Frieda Hughes
 - d. Melanie: *The Comfort of Ghosts* Jacqueline Winspear; *Max & the Midnights (series)* Lincoln Peirce
 - e. Nick: *1984* George Orwell; *Prince of Persia: The Lost Crown* (PS4/5) Ubisoft (available via ACL)
 - f. Carrie: *Madness: Race and Insanity in a Jim Crow Asylum* Antonia Hylton; *The Bookseller of Florence* Ross King
 - g. Renee: *James* Percival Everett

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees