

**Duluth Public Library Board Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**January 23, 2024**

**Present:** Bill Arezzo, Lizzy Luoma, Ellen Hatfield, Jose Gonzalez, Lori Steinbach, Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl and Sue Henke

**Also in attendance:** Carla Powers, Sally Larson (League of Women Voters) and City Councilor Azrin Awal

**The meeting was called to order at 4:31 PM by Michelle Foshay, President**

**Review and approval of agenda.**

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Henke, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of minutes of the November 28th, meeting**

Motion by Rosendahl, seconded by Arezzo, to approve minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

**Reports**

Library Manager

- **West Duluth Reimagined** – The West Duluth Branch Library will be closing for the renovation project of replacing the service desk, installing new kiosks and hold shelves. The Duluth Library Foundation is planning an Open House and Ribbon Cutting at the West Library in early March.
- **Wifi Hotspots** – The hotspots are mostly checked out and in use. Library is receiving good feedback about the program from the public. This purchase was funded by the Federal Emergency Connectivity Fund to increase access to the internet. It is funded for one year.
- **Work Experience Programs** – Beginning in January the Duluth Public Library has brought on two people who are participating in work experience programs through the Workforce Center. The participants are learning more about the library and gaining new skills in their positions. Their wages are paid for by CareerForce.
- **“Swatting” incidents at MN Public Libraries** – Recently several public and academic libraries in Minnesota have received phone calls with threats of violence. All calls were unfounded, and law enforcement think they all originated from outside the country. DPL did not receive any such calls. However, one was received at another library in the Arrowhead region.
- **December 2023 Library Program** – December is a busy month for programs at the DPL and the final month of 2023 did not disappoint. Participation is way up from 2019 program participation. Staff are creative and doing a great job in planning and carrying out interesting events for the community.

Foundation

- The foundation appreciated the teamwork from all three boards (Foundation, Library Board, and Friends) during our joint board meeting. There are many people dedicating their time to the library. Participants expressed that it was nice to learn what the other boards do. There was a fabulous turn out, and our entire Library Board was there. Some

participants mentioned uncertainty and disappointment about the building project.

#### Friends

- The Friends have \$16,306 in treasury and a motion was made and carried to donate \$10,000 to the library. Membership as of Mid-January is 81. This year's book sale will take place on June 10-13. They will host their meetings in February, March and April via Zoom.

### **Old Business**

#### Main Library Facility Update

- Many were Impressed by public comments in support of the library at a recent City Council meeting. John Magas and Erin Kreeger from the foundation spoke about the library and the importance of a library. Several locals spoke on behalf of the library as well. A local citizen did their own survey and asked 50 people if they were okay with the building project not going forward at this time, and only 1 person said yes. Library advocates started an e-mail campaign to add Workforce Development and the Behavioral Unit language into the bonding request. Terese Tomanek asked admin why they were asking for bonding money for additional planning when a plan was just completed. Mayor stated this was a placeholder.

#### Library Staffing Update

- Unfortunately, the person recently hired for the .5 Library Technician position in circulation left for a full-time opportunity at another organization. A posting is underway to create a new Civil Service list for this and any other Library Technician openings that may come up in the next seven months.

### **New Business**

#### Privacy Policy Update

Updates to the policy as written are needed. Will review at an upcoming meeting and vote on it.

#### Naloxone (commonly know as Narcan) Distribution

Recently library received a couple of requests to allow naloxone distribution at the library. Decision was made to allow Health Equity Northland to distribute it at their tabling events. However, the library itself will not become a distribution point at this time, nor will library staff distribute naloxone.

#### Staff Invitations to Board Meetings

As a way of strengthening the connection between library board members and staff, we would like to invite one or two staff members to attend a meeting each month.

### **Adjournment – 6:06 pm**

Next Regular meeting: February 27, 2024