

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: July 28, 2020

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

NOTICE: The Duluth Public Library Board will be holding a special meeting in July by other electronic means pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.021 in response to the COVID-19 emergency. Members of the Board will be participating through video conference. Due to the COVID-19 emergency and the closure of City facilities, public comment will not be taken in person. However, members of the public can monitor the meeting and provide public comment on agenda items through WebEx Events. Visit <https://duluthmn.gov/live-meeting> to access the meeting. The public is also encouraged to submit written comment to Library Manager Carla Powers prior to the meeting. Please include "Library Board Agenda" in the subject line, and include your name and address and the agenda item you are speaking to. Please note that all public comment is considered Public Data.

AGENDA

Call to order
Review and approve agenda
Public comments received in advance of meeting
Approve minutes of June 23, 2020 meeting

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers
Foundation Report – Rosendahl

Old Business

Every Child Ready Duluth update

New Business

Main Library facility study
Advocacy meetings

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: August 25, 2020, at 4:30 p.m., location TBD

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes of Virtual Meeting
June 23, 2020

Call to Order: Matt Rosendahl called the meeting of the Duluth Library Board to order at 4:37 on June 23, 2020.

Members Present: Michelle Foshay, Matt Rosendahl, Neil Glazman, Betty Ramsland, and Sue Henke. Lizzy Luoma joined at 5:00 pm. David Sperl joined at 5:10.

Also Present: Carla Powers (Library Manager), Arik Forsman (City Council), Jim Filby Williams (Director of Property, Parks and Libraries)

Absent: Stephen Welsh

Review and approve Agenda

Motion by Glazman, seconded by Foshay, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Used this time for introductions. This was Councilor Arik Forsman's first meeting as the City Council liaison.

Review and approve minutes from February 25, 2020.

Motion by Henke, seconded by Glazman, to approve the minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager's Report (Powers)

Powers reviewed her written report and answered questions. The layoffs of Library Technicians remain in effect. Two librarians chose to retire in April. With a hiring freeze in effect, these positions cannot be filled at present. The library is doing lots of online programming. Curbside pickup service recently moved to unscheduled pickups. At present there are 22 people on staff. The library lost 16 part-time staff in the first round of layoffs, and 25 library technicians in the second round. The layoffs are temporary according to the city, but the budget forecast is very uncertain so it's unclear when staff will be able to return. The book budget has not been affected, but staff that previously ordered materials is currently laid off.

Friends Report (Ramsland)

Book sale will not take place this year, and donations are not being accepted at this time. Everything is currently on hold. The Friends recently approved a \$10,000 contribution to the library via email.

Foundation Report (Rosendahl)

The Foundation has continued to meet and do its fundraising work despite the pandemic. The Foundation secured a Paycheck Protection Program grant to keep all staff employed. Library Giving day exceeded the goal by raising more than \$20,000. The Foundation's major focus has been keeping Every Child Ready Duluth afloat.

Old Business

Every Child Ready Duluth Update:

The library technician that was funded by the Foundation was laid off in April. The librarian continues to work on Every Child Ready but it's much harder without a tech. The Foundation is currently funding an independent contractor part-time position. The ECRD technician on layoff status applied for it and has been hired in that capacity until she is called back to her technician position. She began work last week.

The library decided to postpone its AmeriCorps Vista position until next year, given current circumstances.

The ECRD "Brain Trust," which is a group of community leaders with expertise in the area of early literacy, continues to work on strategic planning with revised structure. The focus of ECRD has shifted from in-person outreach to getting giveaway books and early literacy information into the hands of children and caregivers.

New Business

Annual Report

Motion by Sperl, seconded by Ramsland, to approve the library's 2019 annual report as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Restoring library staffing levels and services

Due to staffing reductions there is no capacity for increased services without calling back more staff. There is still a lot of uncertainty about what opening up would entail. The current focus is the Main Library rather than the branches, because Main has the most comprehensive collection and provides the best access for people who do not arrive by car. The primary focus is restoring computer access and continuing curbside pickup. The Superior Public Library is currently offering in-person access by appointment and this model is being explored for use in Duluth. Powers has submitted a proposal to city administration to use unanticipated retirement savings to call back a few staff in order to make curbside pickup and returns more sustainable.

Advocacy

Sue Henke will follow up with Carla about getting some information that would help board members highlight what is going on at the library. Matt Rosendahl will outline a strategy and points of contact at the city and on council.

July Special meeting

We will meet again virtually Tuesday July 28.

Election of Officers

Matt Rosendahl's term as Chair is up; Sue Henke has volunteered to be Chair. Betty Ramsland has volunteered to serve as Vice Chair. Michelle Foshay has offered to continue her term as Secretary.

Motion by Sperl, seconded by Luoma, to approve this slate of officers. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Next meeting: July 28, 2020 at 4:30 p.m., on WebEx.

DRAFT

Duluth Library Foundation Report July 2020

The Duluth Library Foundation is planning to move its signature, annual fundraising event online this year. It will be rebranded as "Learning & Libations for the Library – At Home Edition" and will include many features to provide fun and learning (including a presentation about Duluth's history) that people can attend from home or anywhere. The focus of the fundraising will be to generate funds for building library resiliency to serve the community during and after the pandemic.

Unfortunately, there will be no Books & Baseball event at Wade Stadium this year.

Manager's Report to Library Board July 2020

Library Technician Call-Backs. In late June, we received approval to call back 2.5 FTE using budget savings realized from unexpected retirements in April. On July 7 we were able to welcome back the top three technicians on the rehire list. All three are very experienced circulation staff, and they jumped right into curbside pickup. Having a few more staff members has made it possible for us to accept more returns. Beginning Monday, July 14, we opened up the Michigan St. book drop – in addition to a book drop on Superior St. – during curbside hours. The book drops are locked outside of curbside hours because they require frequent attention to keep them from overflowing. As before, returns are accepted only at the Main Library and not at the branches.

Furlough Days. Both unions representing library staff have approved a new agreement with City administration that includes, among other items, six furlough days in 2020 and 12 in 2021. Some of these furlough days will be taken by all staff at the same time, and as a result the library will be closed. The first of these staff-wide furlough days took place on Monday, July 6. Others are scheduled for Friday, Sept. 4; Wednesday, Nov. 25; and Thursday, Dec. 31. The remaining two days for 2020 will be scheduled individually by staff with supervisor approval, similar to vacation time.

Curbside Pickup Update. No-appointment curbside pickup is continuing to go well. On average nearly 150 patrons use the service each day, and the number of items checked out ranges from almost 400 to over 700 in a day. Thursday evening service has been well received by patrons whose work hours don't allow for them to come during the weekday. The chat software that we purchased for this service seems to be intuitive for patrons and is well utilized. Patrons who do not have a cell phone or who are not comfortable texting can walk up and provide their library card to pick up their holds. Curbside pickup is available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and from 1 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays.

Primary Election. Although the Main Library remains closed to the public, it will still serve as a polling place for the August 11 primary election. I have requested security service from APS that day to help ensure that members of the public stay on the Michigan St. level and do not wander elsewhere in the building. The Michigan St. public restrooms will be open that day, and a custodian will be doing extra cleaning. We'll continue to provide curbside pickup as usual. However, I am encouraging any staff not needed for curbside to work from home, work at a branch, or take a vacation or furlough day in order to limit the number of people in the building during the election.

Every Child Ready Duluth Update to Library Board July 2020

Staffing. On June 15, the Duluth Library Foundation hired an independent contractor to help keep this project on track while the Library Technicians are laid off. Currently the contract is for 15 hours of work per week. However, having even a small amount of extra help has made a difference, particularly since the librarian assigned to ECRD is needed for curbside pickup one or two days per week.

Strategic Plan. Work on the ECRD strategic plan has continued with COVID modifications. Consultant Amanda Standerfer from Fast Forward Libraries suggested that the ECRD “Brain Trust,” which serves as an executive committee, use the previously created learning report to develop components for the strategic plan. The Brain Trust recently reviewed a first draft of the strategic plan. Once this group is comfortable with the plan as drafted, there will be six online meetings for the purpose of gathering community feedback. These meetings will include members of the public who would have been invited to the in-person strategic planning summit that was supposed to take place last March.

Story Strolls. ECRD staff is partnering with Parks and Recreation to schedule story strolls this summer. Story strolls are large format picture books staked out page by page at local parks so families can read a story while they walk together. At each story stroll, kids leave with a take-and-make craft kit, a free book, a sheet of early literacy activities to do at home, summer reading information, and library events calendars. A story stroll is taking place at three different parks each month, one in eastern Duluth, one in the west, and one in the central part of the city. The focus is on the neighborhood parks where storytimes were supposed to take place this summer. In conjunction with the story strolls, Parks and Recreation staff is organizing Pop Up Play in the afternoon with special play equipment families can borrow while at the park.

Outreach. In addition to organizing story strolls, ECRD staff is engaged in a number of other outreach activities including:

- Contacting all child care providers currently open in Duluth via email or postal mail to share information about library services and offerings this summer
- Distributing take-and-make kits and library information to partner organizations such as the Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative, Steve O’Neil Apartments, the American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO) and Center City Housing
- Ordering books to give away to partner sites and at other events in the future
- Developing early literacy kits, which include books, games, toys and activities that eventually will circulate to child care providers for use in their facilities