

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting

PRESENT: Michele Bria, Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Nik Kovac, Matthew Kowalski, Michael Morgan, Marcelia Nicholson, Mark Sain, Erika Siemsen, Jennifer Smith, Ald. JoCasta Zamarripa, Joan Johnson

EXCUSED: Chris Layden, Teresa Mercado

STAFF: Heather Berg, Kelly Bolter, Maria Burke, Eileen Force Cahill, Sarah Leszczynski, Tammy Mays, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Amelia Osterud, Karli Pederson, Anne Rasmussen, Brett Rohlwing, Marian Royal, Rebecca Schweisberger

OTHERS

PRESENT: Budget and Policy Division: Dennis Yaccarino, Mason Lavey
MPL Foundation: Ryan Daniels, Pat Swanson
Wisconsin Historical Society Press: Kate Thompson

President Michele Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:00 p.m. on March 22, 2022 with a quorum present. All Trustees participated by video conference.

Rebecca Schweisberger, Administrative Assistant IV, introduced Heather Berg, new Office Assistant IV in Library Administration. Ms. Berg started at MPL on December 1, 2021 and has proven to be a valuable asset to the department. Ms. Berg shared a brief overview of her background and expressed her appreciation for being part of the MPL team. Informational item.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Budget Outlook**. President Bria introduced Budget and Policy Manager Dennis Yaccarino to present the outlook for the 2023 budget. The anticipated budget deficit caused by pension payments has been tempered by a higher than expected rate of return in the pension fund. Federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will help stabilize services for the next two years. The Budget Office anticipates a cost to continue budget for MPL. President Bria thanked Mr. Yaccarino for his work on the Library budget and advocacy for MPL. Informational item.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes January 25, 2022**
3. **Committee Reports**
 - a. Building & Development Committee Meeting Minutes – March 3, 2022
4. **Administrative Reports**
 - a. Financial Report
 - b. Library Director’s Reports
 - c. Statistics

REPORTS

5. **Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board Meeting.** Trustee Kovac reported on the March 21, 2022 meeting. Judy Kaniasty, MCFLS Business Manager, will retire within the next several months. The Board moved into closed session to discuss a salary increase for MCFLS Director, Steve Hesper. After returning to open session, the Board authorized the increase and praised Mr. Hesper's job performance. The Board approved new MCFLS goals for 2023. MCFLS Board sub-committees have been reinstated and Trustee Kovac is Chair of the MCFLS Finance Committee. Informational item.
6. **Library Services & Programs Committee Meeting.** Co-chair Smith reported on the March 9, 2022 meeting. The committee moved the following items for approval, detailed in the meeting minutes listed as Attachment B of the agenda:

Policies

- Policy Updates: Programming Policy; Truancy Policy; Code of Conduct Policy
- New Policy: Guest Pass Policy

Trustee Coggs moved to approve the policy changes; Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.

Contract awards

- Cargill Community Kitchen Consultant – The Committee moved to award the contract to Sherrie Agee, up to \$30,000
- Circle Keeping Consultant - The Committee moved to award the contract to Aveonne Simpson, up to \$50,000

Trustee Sain moved to approve the contracts; Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

7. **Grant Funding Award Approval.** Library Director Joan Johnson presented four grants for approval, as described in the memo listed as Attachment C of the agenda. Trustee Sain moved to approve the grants; Trustee Zamarripa seconded. Motion passed. The Board offered congratulations to Director Johnson and the MPL staff on securing the grants. Director Johnson acknowledged the support MPL received from Alderwoman Coggs.
8. **Nohl Manuscript Agreement.** Library Director Joan Johnson presented a summary of the history of the Max Nohl manuscript and MPL's publishing agreement with Wisconsin Historical Society, listed as Attachment D of the agenda. Director Johnson introduced Kate Thompson, Executive Director of Wisconsin Historical Society Press (WHSP). In 2018, WHSP contacted MPL to express interest in a partnership to publish the Max Nohl memoir. Introductory meetings took place in 2019 and early 2020 but the project was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions resumed in early 2022 and MPL worked with the City Attorney's Office and private legal counsel to ensure any agreement with WHSP protects the City from litigation over copyright issues. The agreement also ensures that MPL benefits from any future revenues generated or realized as a result of the publishing of this work. Trustee Sain moved to approve the publishing agreement; Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.
9. **State Annual Report – Review Data and Ratify President's Approval.** MPL prepared and submitted the annual report to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), listed as Attachment E of the agenda.

President Bria reviewed and approved the report and entertained a motion for the Board to ratify her approval. Trustee Kovac moved to approve; Trustee Nicholson seconded. Motion passed.

10. **Freedom to Read.** Anne Rasmussen, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives and Public Services, presented a report on the freedom to read as a principle of librarianship. The American Library Association (ALA) created a Library Bill of Rights to protect patrons' freedom to read and combat censorship of materials. In accordance with this, MPL's collection development is deliberate and intentional; our staff strives to ensure patrons have access to a wide range of subjects and viewpoints. When a request to remove an item is made, MPL staff ask the requester to complete a form detailing their objection(s) to the material. The Technical Services team reviews the request, discusses the merit, and informs the patron of the outcome in a timely manner. The Library Bill of Rights also protects patron privacy. With the exception of overdue or recently returned items, MPL cannot view patron borrowing or library use history. Per Wisconsin State Statute, library records are confidential documents and MPL retains very little specific data of patron activities. The Board thanked Ms. Rasmussen for her presentation and concurred with the need to preserve patrons' privacy and access to the library and collections. Informational item.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of March 22, 2022 was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.
