

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Omaha Public Library

Present: Carol Wang, President
Lenora Isom, Vice President
Caitlin Davis, Secretary
Adrian Suarez-Delgado
Jesse Sullivan
Ervin Portis
Mike Kennedy
Kathleen McCallister

Absent: Beverly Thompson

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of Omaha Public Library was held on Wednesday, December 21, 2016 at Benson Branch Library, 6015 Binney St. Omaha, Nebraska. The Library certifies publication notice of the meeting in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the City of Omaha, on December 14, 2016.

Wang called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. Roll was taken.

Consent Agenda

MOTION by Kennedy, seconded by Isom, to approve the item in the Consent Agenda. Yeas: Davis, Isom, Kennedy, Portis, Suarez-Delgado, Sullivan, Wang. Nays: None. Abstain: McCallister. Motion carried 7-0.

Resolution

2017 Budget. Marlane presented the 2017 budget to the Trustees, this budget includes both the City funds that have already been appropriated to the library by City Council, as well as private funds promised by Friends of Omaha Public Library, Omaha Public Library Foundation and the trust fund. Some trust fund money has been moved to discretionary funds to help cover the cost of updating the facilities master plan.

MOTION by Portis, seconded by McCallister, to approve the 2017 budget. Yeas: Davis, Isom, Kennedy, McCallister, Portis, Suarez-Delgado, Sullivan, Wang. Nays: None. Motion carried 8-0.

Branch Manager Report.

Benson Branch. Branch Manager Karen Pietsch welcomed the Trustees to Benson Branch. Benson had no permanent library until residents advocated for one in 1942. Because of the War, the original building, which can still be seen on the library's east side, was made out of recycled materials. The architects who did the renovations and additions in 1998 saved the facade of the old building and incorporated elements of it into the new structure.

Benson is one of the most diverse branches in the system serving retirees, young professionals, new parents, high and low income and refugees from multiple countries. Teens are the fastest growing population in the area, so Benson is working on adjusting their teen services to better fit the rising demand.

Benson Branch is also the location that started the Common Soil Seed Library, as urban agriculture and gardening is very popular in this neighborhood. This program has expanded to Bess Johnson Elkhorn and South Branch Libraries as well.

Board Development

United for Libraries. The Trustees viewed a 10-minute video from United for Libraries titled, *Board Meetings*.

Committees

Finance Committee. Suarez-Delgado reported the committee met with Assistant Director Rachel Steiner and Office Manager Lori Arends to discuss possible changes to the budget reports. The committee doesn't feel that the Trustees need to see line item budget every month. Marlane suggested organizing a committee to look at exactly what the Trustees want in their monthly reports, for both finance and statistics.

Portis agreed that the current reports, especially the statistical reports, hold little value for the Trustees, he feels they need to see the bigger picture and would like the data presented in an easy to read format. Marlane stated that the board needs to decide what they want first, then staff can see how much work the proposed changes would create. The reason reports are given in their current format is this is how the data is needed for grant, state and national reports.

McCallister asked about the library's reporting structure, in most organizations, like retail, staff just need to select what data they want to pull and the system will run that report. Marlane clarified that it isn't that easy as there is no one library wide program. Data is kept in many different programs that do not talk to each other. When staff want to create a report they spend a lot of time pulling data from each individual program to compile it together. McCallister asked how many systems the library used. Marlane didn't know off hand.

Portis stated that the data does exist, the Trustees need to decide what they want so staff can come up with a way to present it. Portis also stated that, for the financial reports, the City already does most of the work when it comes to the line item budgets. He asked if there was a concern with what the Finance Committee had asked for from Arends. Steiner responded that the only issue was that numbers are set up as lump sums by years, breaking those numbers down by month or quarters might be difficult. Steiner stated that, like statistics, the numbers exist, they just aren't all in one place. Suarez-Delgado agreed that he doesn't want staff to do too much work until the trustees know what they want.

Facilities Committee. Isom reported that that committee had reviewed the RFP and the three proposals received for the facilities master plan update. The committee is recommending Himmel & Wilson for the plan update. The committee feels the plan was all inclusive and met with their budget requirements. Of the other two, one didn't include onsite visits and the other allowed for a re-evaluation of the cost midway through the process. The board will be asked to vote on this at the January meeting.

McCallister stated she didn't remember seeing the RFP or the proposals and would like to review them before a vote. She also asked how the process was done. Wang explained that the RFP went to the organizations who had bid on the RFP for the

facilities master plan seven years ago; other originations that requested the RFP also received it. Wang clarified that, because private funds are being used for the RFP the Trustees didn't need to follow the City's process.

McCallister asked Peters how close the Trustees were to the City process. Peters stated that the Trustees were very close to the City process, the only exception being the RFP wasn't posted publicly.

Isom stated that Himmel & Wilson are library specialists, so know the trends in the library community. Because they did the original plan, they are also already familiar with Omaha. Kennedy pointed out that knowing what's happening in the larger library world is great, but they really need to tell the Trustees what is needed for Omaha specifically. Isom and Wang agreed. Kennedy also stated that the Mayor is willing to allocate CIP money for library facilities, such as a new southwest Omaha library, but she needs the numbers to back that up. Davis agreed, stating the Trustees need to understand what libraries in Omaha will need to look like in 10-15 years, and plan for that.

Wang stated that the RFP and three proposals will be distributed to the Trustees to review. A vote will be called for at the January meeting.

Community Engagement Committee. Wang reported that the committee needs to look at how to gain public comment and input for the facilities master plan update. They will also be working on the director's evaluation process.

Reports

Friends of the Library. Wang reported in Hosier's absence. The Friends Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 14 at the Community Engagement Center at UNO.

Omaha Public Library Foundation. Townley thanked several new donors including the Gilbert C. Swanson Foundation and Criss Foundation for their generous support. Kennedy asked if this had been a difficult year for fundraising. Townley reported that it has been a little challenging. The community can easily get behind major projects such as the Omaha World-Herald digital database in 2014, which raised \$650,000 total. Townley went on to explain that most of her job is making connections with prospective donors and foundations and understanding what types of projects they most interested in supporting.

McCallister asked how the Trustees are engaged in her fundraising process. Townley responded that Wang sits on the Foundation board, she is able to answer any questions about the library and Trustees that may come up at their meetings. Wang added that the Foundation can raise capital for major campaigns, but needs things like a timeline for a major project, such as a new building.

Library Director Report. Marlane reported that Network Nebraska won't have a price tag until January 19, but the launch date is still set for July 1. This change should elevate many ongoing issues. Marlane thanked the website team for their many hours of hard work on the new website.

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Several library staff members will be presenting at the American Library Association's midwinter conference in Atlanta in January. Library staff members are also working on the National Neighborhood conference that is coming to Omaha in May.

Omaha Connects is scheduling a symposium in April to bring all stakeholders together to discuss moving forward and best practices.

Presidents Report. Wang had no report.

Library Liaison Reports. Suarez-Delgado attended the Wells Fargo Family Festival, and was impressed by the hard work the staff at W. Dale Clark put in to this event.

Public Input, Comments and Questions. None.

MOTION by Kennedy, seconded by Isom, to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Omaha Public Library at 6:31 p.m. Yeas: Davis, Isom, Kennedy, McCallister, Portis, Suarez-Delgado, Sullivan, Wang. Nays: None. Motion carried 8-0.

Kyle Porter, Recording Secretary

Caitlin Davis, Secretary