



**Rochester
Public Library**

More Than You Think

115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

**Meeting of the RPL Board of Trustees
Central Library, Kusler-Cox Auditorium
January 25, 2023
Minutes**

RPL Trustees Present: Katherine Baynes, Donna Benjamin, Ellen Brenner, Glenn Gardner, Richard Hamilton, Daniel Karin, Marilyn O'Connor, Sharon Salluzzo, Erick Stephens (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: Alinda Drury

Staff and Guests: City Legal Dept. Liaison, Johanna Brennan; City Council Liaison, Mitch Gruber; FFRPL Executive Director, Donna Borgus; staff members, Brie Harrison, Melanie Lewis, Debi Mansour, Jennifer Smathers, Ana Suro, Patricia Uttaro; former trustee, Carolee Conklin

Call to Order

Mr. Hamilton called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the board.

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Benjamin MADE A MOTION to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2022, meeting as presented. Ms. Brenner proposed a correction. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Personnel Changes

Ms. Suro called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for the period November 10, 2022 to January 6, 2023. Ms. Baynes MADE A MOTION to approve the personnel changes. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Reports

Ms. Harrison reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer questions. Ms. Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to approve the monthly financial reports as presented and approved by the RPL Finance Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Recommendation for Appointment to the Board

Mr. Karin MADE A MOTION to forward the name of Mr. Jim Kraus for recommendation to the City Council for appointment to the RPL Board of Trustees effective immediately and expiring December 31, 2027. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER DEBATE.

Proposed Revision to the Bylaws (Discussion Item)

Mr. Hamilton reviewed the proposed amendments to the RPL Bylaws creating a Trustee Emeritus position. The proposed change will be up for vote at the next meeting. Trustees are encouraged to review the proposal before then.

RPL FY22 Audit

Ms. Harrison presented the report from the library’s auditors, Freed Maxick CPA’s for the audit of the 2021-22 RPL fiscal year. The RPL Finance Committee is recommending approval of the audit report. Ms. Benjamin MADE A MOTION to accept Freed Maxick’s audit of the 2021-22 fiscal year. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER DEBATE.

Agreement, Conflict Management Training

Ms. Smathers presented the item to the trustees. Ms. Benjamin MADE A MOTION to authorize an agreement with the Center for Dispute Settlement to provide conflict management training for the terms described. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER DEBATE.

Rundel First Floor Early Closing

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. Ms. Baynes MADE A MOTION to approve closing the first floor of the Rundel Memorial Building at 3:00 on May 27, 2023, to accommodate the set-up for a wedding. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER DEBATE.

MCLS-RPL Service Agreement

Ms. Uttaro presented the item to the trustees. She reminded everyone that this agreement is traditionally for three years. Last year, the Board approved a one-year agreement, and this is a two-year agreement to complete the standard cycle. Ms. Benjamin MADE A MOTION to approve an MCLS-RPL Services Agreement for the period January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2024. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Community Advisory Board for the Archive of Black History & Culture

Ms. Uttaro introduced the Project Manager for the Archive of Black History and Culture, Antoine McDonald. She then gave the board a brief history of the project. Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to establish a Community Advisory Board for the library’s Archive of Black History as a committee of the RPL Board and appoint the following 10 people to one-year terms as members:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Carolyne S. Blount | Darien Lamén | Ernesta Walker |
| Mauricio Marc Coombs | Shanterra Mitchum | Rodney Allen Young |
| Calvin Eaton | Quiana Joseph-Muhamma | |
| Xavier Holiday | Jean C. Pryor | |

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AFTER DEBATE.

Tummonds Report

Ms. Benjamin MADE A MOTION to approve the Tummonds Fund report for 2022. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Rochester Public Library Liaison to the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) Board

Ms. Uttaro reminded new President Hamilton that he will need to appoint an RPL trustee to serve on the MCLS Board. She then reported that the MCLS Board approved the standard items as well as the MCLS-RPL Services Agreement. The MCLS Board also started a discussion on moving its meeting times to later in the afternoon to make attendance easier on current and future trustees. They are also looking at the option of attendance via teleconferencing under extraordinary circumstances which is a complicated process. She also reported that the conversations about collection diversity and equity have continued in the MCLS Board meetings and it appears they will be moving forward with producing a position statement on the matter with the understanding that they do not have the authority to set collection policies for the MCLS member libraries.

Friends and Foundation of Rochester Public Library (FFRPL)

Ms. Borgus invited everyone to review and share FFRPL's Annual Report for FY2021-22 available on their website. She reported that the Annual Campaign is performing well, and she shared some notes of thanks from donors.

FFRPL has recently submitted grant proposals for various Library needs totaling over \$115,000

After meeting with two current donors, Borgus received notification of each of their intended planned gifts. The FFRPL recently processed the receipt and release for an estate bequest of \$151,507.

She reported that the library store closed its doors for the last time in its current location on Thursday, December 22nd. It will be closed the entire month of January to execute its move, with an anticipated re-opening in the new location (the nearby glass-enclosed room) on February 1st. All the books remaining in front of the bookstore are advertised as "free giveaways" from January 4th until gone.

She reviewed the upcoming calendar for Tuesday Topics and reminded trustees to attend if they can.

Next, she shared that the Tummonds Committee met on January 19, 2023, and approved the allocation of \$285,333 to eligible libraries in the MCLS, OWWL, and Nioga Library Systems. The required annual reports from the libraries are due by February 15, 2023, to be eligible for the next cycle of grants.

Director's Report

Ms. Uttaro offered to answer questions about the director's written report. She then shared a letter from a patron expressing her support for the elimination of late fees across the RPL. The elimination of late fees will be presented to the board for a vote next month as part of the budget proposal.

In response to a question about access to free books for children to keep, she shared that the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is being made available to every child in the city through the Rochester Education Foundation. Little Free Libraries around the city are also sources of free books. At the Arnett Branch, the First Tuesday Book Club pays for books from Hipocampo Children's Books that are given to families in the library. There is also a program through ROC the Future that distributes free books through multiple city elementary schools.

She reported that the County awarded the County Historian Services contract to RPL for a one-year term. The RPL will be relocating the collection from St. John Fisher College to the Central Library. They will also hire a consultant to study the feasibility of a joint County-City Historian's office.

Next, she shared that the grant from RRLC for an Emerging Leaders Program has been fully funded. She will begin working with several regional directors to develop the year-long course for Finger Lakes Emerging Library Leaders.

Lastly, she asked trustees to reach out to her with their thoughts on the Mobile Library concept she included in her report on page 16.

Central Library

Ms. Smathers offered to answer questions about the written report. She reported that the Technology Center has had to bring in substitute staff due to a couple on long-term medical leaves. The department is too critical to the public to close when there is a staff shortage, so folks have been stepping up.

Next, she shared that the Central Library e-sports team, The Liberators, will be playing against the Rochester Police Department later this day. Everyone is invited to view the stream on Twitch.

Community Libraries

Ms. Lewis offered to answer questions about the written report. She reported that George Carter of Safe to be Smart was recently describing some challenges they have had in their program recently. The model is to connect with younger kids and pre-teens and then maintain close connections with them as they grow. The pandemic disruptions broke many of those connections and that combined with parents keeping kids in due to the increases in violence has caused STBS staff to find it difficult to create those mentor relationships with the teens. Mr. Carter worked with the Ryan Center staff to create an event to help jumpstart their programs. They worked together with help from the Franklin Foundation to take a group of teens to see Marvel's Black Panther movie. He described many parents who were extremely wary of letting their kids go and who wanted lots of information and reassurances regarding safety. Ultimately, the outing was a success with about 20 younger teens attending along with some of their parents.

She then shared an anecdote of meeting a well-dressed, well-spoken young man when she went to the advocacy meeting with Assemblymember Harry Bronson at the Sully Branch. The young man was one of Harry Bronson's legislative aides. Mr. Carter then shared a picture with her of the same young man at about 14 years-old holding a Safe to be Smart plaque for winning a spelling bee. Ms. Lewis described Mr. Carter as being thrilled, humbled, and so proud of his former STBS teen.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:58 a.m.

Submitted by Debi Mansour