

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Meeting Room Side A
Monday, July 17, 2023**

Present: Rachael Armstrong (Chair), Elizabeth Greenberg (Vice Chair), Monica Cataldo (Secretary), Margaret Ives, Lorraine Lindenberg, Victoria Austin (Trustee Alternate), Meryle Zusman (Trustee Alternate), Eric Stern (Director), Lisa Carvalho (Recording Secretary)

Absent: Caitlin Powers (Treasurer), Pete Marcotte, Erin Spencer (Town Council DPL Liaison)

The Meeting was called to order at 6:32 by Trustee Armstrong.

PUBLIC SESSION:

Amendments to Agenda:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Motion to accept the Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting, held on June 12, 2023, by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to accept the Minutes of the Policy Committee meeting, held on July 12, 2023, by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.

Treasurer's Report:

- Director Stern noted that we are going to be looking at transferring funds from the fine account to the Capital Reserve with that vote for approval on the agenda.
- Trustee Cataldo inquired of being "87% through" the materials budget. Director Stern confirmed that this is true as it includes fine account funds that are added to General fund. Director Stern estimated that it will likely finish closer to 90%, as a few more FY23 invoices are trickling in. We will keep this in mind as we set the "all-in" materials budget for FY24.

Director's and Staff Reports:

- Director Stern noted that there was a supplemental report filed by Alex of Circulation. It has been a busy summer. With the loss of Diana and some substitutes it has been all hands on deck for the Circulation Department.
- Trustee Cataldo commented on how great the pollinator garden looks and requested that we label the plants. Director Stern will follow up with the Garden Club. She also commented that while there have been fewer programs, there have been more participants.

Gifts:

There were no unusual gifts.

Motion to accept any and all unrestricted monetary gifts received between the last Board of Trustees meeting and this meeting by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.

Correspondence:

There was no Correspondence.

Announcements:

There were no Announcements.

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Approve hire of new substitutes:

Motion to approve the hire of Andrew Sullivan, Crysta Arnold, Tami Sciola, and Anisha Mendonca at a rate of \$15.12 as part-time substitutes Library Assistant-1 (LA-1) by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Ives. Motion passed 7-0.

- Review recommendations from Policy Committee meeting of 7/10: Trustee Cataldo reported on a discussion of the benefits of going fine-free. From the perspective of the policy committee, the pros of going fine-free far outweighed the cons. As of September 1, 2023, DPL will not charge late fees for any loaned materials except Museum passes, Unique Items, and items borrowed from other libraries that retain fines. Homebound patrons, minors ages 12-17 and Derry residents in transition will not accrue any late fees, regardless of item type. An item is considered “lost” and will be billed if it has not been returned 4 weeks from its final due date. The Policy Committee proposed adoption of this language. Trustee Cataldo suggested a “soft lead in” to the policy in August. Director Stern stated that we wanted to avoid summer reading and Aspen Discovery going into place in August to give staff time to acclimate to the new system. Trustee Alternate Victoria Austin voiced confusion on the suggestion of “soft lead in”. Director Stern suggested giving staff the discretion to implement the policy before September 1st, 2023, as a courtesy. He also stated that of the \$15,634.60 noted in the “fines” line of the Special Fund Monthly Budget Report, \$7,229.43 would remain of this line once late fees are excluded from that total, which is a significant number.

Motion to accept the recommended updates to the Circulation Policy – eliminating late fees for all materials except for Museum Passes, Unique Items, and items borrowed from other libraries that continue to collect fines – by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.

- Director Stern commented on the return of Unique Items by people who are not the signer of the Borrower form. Director Stern discussed the issue with the Circulation Staff. We want to preserve flexibility while maintaining borrower accountability. It will not be an issue unless there is damage to the item. There is no change to this part of the Circulation Policy.
- Trustee Armstrong outlined the changes to the Meeting Room Policy. An applicant must stay in the room reserved. Applicants may not reserve rooms more than three (3) months in advance, and are limited to one (1) reservation per month. Library programs take precedence.

Motion to accept the updates as written to the Meeting Room Policy by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Update on sprinkler system repairs: Director Stern inspected the old attic, at the front entrance of the old library. Access was difficult. There is a ceiling above the renovated ceiling. The “dry” sprinkler system runs through the attic of the old section of the library upstairs and extends below the new ceiling. These pipes would freeze in the winter if they had water in them as this section receives no heat in the winter. The air compressor that keeps the water at bay has been firing a lot more than it should, which means that there are air leaks in the pipes. There is very poor access to the sprinklers that need to be inspected and there is no access to the inspectors test valve which would enable the system to be drained and tested. The blueprints show a valve in a location where it does not exist or is inaccessible. More investigation is needed, and Director Stern will document this. If we can verify the location, a hole (2’ x 3’) would be cut in the Circulation office wall to allow access to the valve. To avoid catastrophic failure, relocation, or installation of access to enable regular (annual) inspection is needed. Trustee Greenberg expressed concern about Director Stern having to climb up to a potentially dangerous area. Director Stern noted that the companies seem reluctant to work in the attic, due to its access limitations. Former DPL employee Ron Goldthwaite has experience exploring this attic area, and he has not found a valve. Director Stern will exercise caution in doing this investigation when the weather is a little cooler. We have also located an obstructed pipe in the chiller pump room which will need to be replaced. When we cut into the wall around the pipe, we found an entire space that can be opened and used for storage. Director Stern will investigate creating a usable storage room in that area. Trustee Lindenberg inquired if the Fire Department is responsible for the inspection of the sprinkler system. They are not. The onus is on the sprinkler company to test and inspect these systems. The new company that took over from ASAP Sprinklers seems to be more diligent in finding these issues. Director Stern will follow up with quotes for the work.
- End of FY23 – on to FY24!: Director Stern stated his belief that when all the invoices are tabulated, DPL will just barely exceed the FY23 general fund budget, likely requiring the transfer of some funds for materials purchases. He recommended taking a vote on 2 contingencies: 1 where excess funds remain; and another where there is a shortfall requiring the reclassification of materials purchases and the transfer of funds from the Special Fund to the General Fund. Votes will give us authority to move funds as needed toward the end of the FY.

Motion to authorize Director Stern and/or Caitlin Powers to transfer remaining surplus, including revenues for FY23 to Capital Reserve by Trustee Greenberg. Seconded by Trustee Armstrong. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion to reclassify materials expenditures in the general fund, if needed, to the fine account, and to transfer fine account funds to the general fund to cover any FY23 budget shortfall by Trustee Greenberg. Seconded by Trustee Armstrong. Motion passed 7-0.

DCYF update: Director Stern met (virtually) with DCYF on June 26, 2023. Their general reaction to the situations relayed was one of surprise. He is waiting to hear back from them. Director Stern conveyed that the goal is to do what is right for libraries and for families. He spoke on behalf of DPL, ULAC and libraries across the state who have been dealing with the ramifications of increased court-ordered supervised visitations in our libraries. DCYF stated that they would not send visitations of the “top tier” level of concern. No visitations should require security, separate entrances/exits, waiting areas, etc. However, this does not support what the Director has heard from other libraries. Trustee Armstrong inquired as to what level of management the Director is communicating with. He replied that it would be comparable to a Communication Coordinator. They likely have the ear of the top people, but since

that conversation, he has had no reply. DCYF has received letters from attorneys from other libraries and communities demanding that they not use libraries for visitations. This may be compounding our discussion. As Director Stern noted, DCYF may be frustrated that they don't not have access to previous locations, but this does not mean that they should be shifted to public libraries. He feels that discussion at the legislative level about opening the former centers is needed. As an example, Director Stern spoke with the Jaffrey Library Director, whose library is across the street from a closed visitation center and are having very negative experiences with it. They have been dealing with this situation rather than library programs and business. The Derry Police have been very supportive of our concerns and agree with us but want us to take a very "hands-off" approach to observe and contact them if we see a problem. This is why libraries have had issues with the court-ordered, supervised visitations happening in public libraries. The people in them are treating the library like it is a visitation center and it is not. Director Stern is trying to drive the conversation toward reopening the proper visitation centers. Trustee Alternate Austin asked if we should make a policy to stop the meetings library-wide. Director Stern commented that this could create conflict and result in angry social media posts. Some libraries that have stopped visitations altogether have been criticized online by people who have been impacted, claiming that libraries are not "family-friendly" locations. The next step is hearing back from DCYF. Director Stern is meeting with the ULAC group next week, assuming they will want to take further action. This will remain on the agenda for next month.

The question of video footage of visitations: Trustee Lindenberg raised concerns about requests for video surveillance footage in libraries, particularly parents and guardians who were seeking to prove another parent should lose visitation rights. DPL has had no such request but other libraries have. DPL's surveillance cameras were installed years ago in specific areas where there was theft occurring, and to monitor certain entrances/exits. DPL currently lacks a video surveillance policy, and Director Stern suggested that one be created. Trustee Lindenberg asked if there is required signage when video is in use. Director Stern will follow up. Discussion followed. Trustee Lindenberg reiterated her concern about the visitations, and was disturbed by these video requests. Director Stern stated that he understands that requests are originating from attorneys that are trying to establish or reestablish custody or to deprive a parent of custody. Director Stern iterated that there is no situation where DPL would hand over any surveillance footage to anyone other than law enforcement or officials pursuant to a valid subpoena/court order. We have never had a request for video footage from inside the library, but have had law enforcement inquire about exterior cameras that point to the street and Mason building, where there was a break-in in the past. Director Stern will take up creation of a surveillance policy with the Policy Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.

- Public meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Next meeting is Monday, August 21, 2023, at 6:30pm in Meeting Room Side A
Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Carvalho, Recording Secretary