

Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees
360 E Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045
Regular Meeting Minutes
7:30 p.m., November 9, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

President John F. Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Kasian Room of the Lake Forest Library and asked Trustee Desmond to serve as secretary *pro tem* and take the minutes of the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Trustees Present: Germaine Arnson, Bryan Bertola, Jim Clifton, JoAnn Desmond, John F. Johnson, Andrea Lemke, Sue Shattock, and Heather Strong.

Absent: Elizabeth Grob.

8 trustees in attendance, a quorum is present

Staff Present: Catherine Lemmer, Executive Director; Ed Finn, Director of Operations; Sameer Notta, Finance Officer; and Chris Wheeler, Facilities Manager.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Johnson welcomed everyone, including the Friends of the Lake Forest Library and their co-President Tish Borkowski who was in attendance to share a Friends Report at the meeting.

President Johnson reported that although there was no Building Committee report at this meeting, the Building Committee is hard at work reviewing all the qualified RFQ responses and conducting interviews. Further details will be forthcoming.

President Johnson indicated that the meeting's Finance Committee report and discussion will be the first of several that the Board will have regarding the FY2023 budget.

He then shared that he has begun reading the minutes from the Library Board since its inception in 1898 starting with a letter to the City Council from Mayor Edward F. Gorton nominating the first nine Board members. The first meeting of the Library Board was held in City Council Chambers on July 6, 1898.

Regular Meetings of the Library Board were subsequently held on Saturday evenings in the home of President Halsey until the Library was established on the second floor of City Hall. The Opening Night of the Library on June 24, 1899 was filled with music, speeches, and inspections of all the books! During the early 1900's library visitors averaged 900 to 1000 per month in the winter with 60% of the visitors during the day and 40% during the evenings. The number of monthly visitors in the summer months dropped down to approximately 600.

On January 2, 1906 Mayor Gade attended the Library Board meeting where Sunday hours were discussed. The Library Board approved Sunday afternoons and requested a larger appropriation from the City Council to fund this need.

Of special note in 1906 was at the meeting on November 13, the Librarian spoke of the need for adding to the reference lists books about certain questions as well as special books on mechanical engineering, blacksmithing, electricity, and other useful arts and sciences to attract working men to come to the library. Special reading and reference lists were prepared for home reading by students, for teachers, and for the Women's Club.

At the same meeting the Board authorized the Librarian to hire an "expert organizer to put the books in a perfect running order...on a working basis at this point in its history so that it may not be a dead mass of books but a living and working organization from now on." The purchase of a typewriter was also approved.

At a Special Meeting of the Library Board on December 17, 1929, the Library Board voted to accept a gift of \$250,000 from Helen Shedd Reed and Laura Shedd Schweppe to be used for a library building as a memorial to Kersey Coates Reed. At a Special Meeting of the Library Board on February 18, 1930, the suitable site for the Library provided by the City was approved for purchase at an estimated cost of \$70,000.

In the Annual Report for 1930 these were interesting statistics:

- Population Served: 6,627 (including students)
- Total number of volumes at the Library: 27,825 (Because of crowded shelves, 500 volumes were withdrawn and sent to state institutions, State Penitentiary Library, and Geneva School for Girls)
- Total number of registered borrowers: 2,631 Adults, 716 Juvenile, Totaling 3,347
- Total number of volumes lent: 51,538
- Cash on Hand April 30, 1929: \$554.05
- Total Annual Receipts: \$11,000 from local taxation
- Total Annual Expenditures: \$10,613.51

At the Board Meeting on September 24, 1935, it was announced that the Library would be known as the Lake Forest Library. In the minutes from November 29, 1939, there were references to "conditions of the roof and frequent repairs."

President Johnson indicated that the meeting minutes in the first five decades were filled with discussions about budget, books to be added, shelf space and types of shelving required, personnel matters, and maintenance. Also, there were many considerations discussed about accepting various book collections from a variety of private libraries.

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He has now completed Volume 1 of the Library Board Minutes for this formative period from July 1898 to May 1951 and is moving on to Volume 2!

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

The Board received all correspondence in the board packet and there no questions or comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

President Johnson asked if any Trustee wished to remove an item from the consent agenda. There being none, President Johnson then asked if there were any questions. There being none, Trustee Arnson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Lemke, to approve the Consent Agenda items as follows:

1. the November 9, 2021 Agenda;
2. the October 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes;
3. the October 19, 2021 Building Committee Meeting Minutes;
4. the October 2021 Financial Report; and
5. the Illinois Libraries Present: Intergovernmental Agreement for Joint Purchasing of Library Programming, Events and Services.

Motion passed on roll call vote with 8 yea votes.

COMMITTEES REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Committee: None

Finance Committee: Trustee Lemke and Trustee Clifton, members of the Finance Committee, provided background on the Committee recommendations. Trustee Lemke reported that the Library had received the Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP audit of the Lake Forest Library's financial statements. The Library's audit is part of the overall City audit and reflects a fiscally well managed institution. The audit process did not reveal internal accounting actions that differed from the audit findings. Trustee Lemke reported that the auditor had issued an unmodified opinion dated as of October 21, 2021 and that the Finance Committee recommended the Library Board accept and acknowledge receipt of the audit.

Trustee Clifton and Ed Finn walked the Library Board through Finance Committee's recommendation regarding the levy process. The Library's levy is subject to the 1991 Property Tax Extension Limitation Act (the "Act"). The Act limits the annual increase in property tax

extensions to the lesser of 5% or the increase in the CPI, plus allowances for new construction and voter-approved increases. The City of Lake Forest and the Library follow the Act by choice as the City is a Home Rule municipality. Mr. Finn provided an explanation of the Library's FY2023 preliminary forecasting and how it supports the Finance Committee's recommendation for the levy. The Finance Committee recommended a 2021/FY2023 Levy of 1.4% CPI plus growth. The proposed 1.4% levy plus new growth estimated at \$27,310 would generate funds for FY2023 of \$4,022,273 for Library operations and \$435,009 for Building/Site operations, for a total of \$4,484,592 representing a change of \$88,681 over FY2022. In response to questions from Trustee Strong and Trustee Desmond, Ms. Lemmer clarified that under the Local Library Act, an Illinois state law, the Library is an autonomous unit of local government. The Local Library Act vests the power to set the Library levy in the Library Trustees. The Local Library Act also requires the City to implement the mechanics of the Library levy. Even though the Library levy is presented as part of the City levy, similar to the park district and school district levy, City Council does not approve the Library levy.

Trustee Lemke explained the rationale for the transfer of \$1.2M from the general operation fund to the capital improvement account to pay for the dome repair and other building improvements. Trustee Clifton explained this action would not impact the Library's policy to maintain a 35% fund balance for operations and more importantly, provided financial flexibility for the Library.

After discussion, President Johnson called for a vote on the Finance Committee recommendations. Trustee Bertola made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shattock, to approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee to:

1. Accept and acknowledge receipt of the FY2021 audit of the Library's financial statements by Baker Tilly Virchow Krause LLP;
2. Approve a 2021/FY2023 levy of 1.4% plus growth that would generate funds of \$4,022,273 for Library operations and \$435,009 for Building/Site operations, with estimated growth of \$27,310 for a total of \$4,484,592 representing a change of \$88,681 over FY2022.
3. Transfer \$1.2 million in funds from the general operating fund to the capital improvement account for building needs.

Motion passed on roll call vote with 8 yeas votes.

REPORT FROM FRIENDS OF LAKE FOREST LIBRARY

Co-President Tish Borkowski thanked the Board for permitting book donations again. She shared that the volunteers are very excited and that they are pleased with the number of books being donated. The Friends provided the Board with an update for the meeting packet and emphasized that the Book Sale was a resounding success with over 2,600 people in attendance and generating approximately \$94,000 in gross sales.

Ms. Borkowski also informed the Board that the City of Lake Forest invited the Friends to again join the pop-up holiday shop at the East Train Station. The Friends are scheduled to staff the pop-

up shop on the afternoon of December 19. She invited the Board and Library staff to attend to share information about the Library.

REPORT ON PER CAPITA GRANT REQUIREMENTS – SERVING OUR PUBLIC 4.0 STANDARDS FOR ILLINOIS PUBLIC LIBRARIES

There were no Trustee questions on the comprehensive report in the Board packet about how the Library addresses and meets the Standards for Illinois Public Libraries.

LIBRARY OPERATIONS REPORT

President Johnson commended Chris Wheeler, Facilities Manager, for his leadership and work on the Kasian Room roof leak and other building repairs. Trustee Shattock reflected that she was impressed with the programs being offered, in particular, the youth coding classes. She noted it was a great idea that the coding programs complement and go beyond the school curriculum. Ms. Lemmer noted that adding STEM programming, especially for young women, was made a priority by the Library starting in 2017. She also reflected that at the Library the learning happens outside of the pressure of academic competition and performance making it more fun to try something new. Trustee Arnson also noted how pleased she was that the Library keeps evolving and offering new ideas and programs for the community.

In response to President Johnson's question about the status of RFID, Ed Finn provided an update noting that the collection is tagged except for items being returned and that the equipment delays will likely push off the RFID roll-out to year end. He also confirmed that the current gates in the Rotunda and Children's Library would be replaced with new RFID gates in response to Trustee Strong's question.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Trustee Desmond made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shattock, to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote.

Upcoming Meeting: Regular Board Meeting, December 14, 2021



JoAnn Desmond, *Secretary pro tem.*

Minutes approved by the Board on December 14, 2021.

