

**Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees**  
360 E Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
6:30 p.m. March 10, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

President Carrie Travers called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Trustees Present: Germaine Arnson, Wendy Darling, JoAnn Desmond, Elizabeth Grob, Andrea Lemke, Ron Levitsky, Todd Puch, David Rose, Carrie Travers. Staff Present: Catherine Lemmer, Library Director; Ed Finn, Director of Operations. Guests Present: Russ Hodge, The Hodge Group; Bharat Krishman, The Hodge Group. Public Present: Tish Borkowski (arrived 7:28 p.m.).

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Trustee Levitsky made a motion, seconded by Trustee Puch, to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD, AND CORRESPONDENCE

No request to address the board, nor was there any new correspondence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Levitsky made a motion, seconded by Trustee Lemke, to approve the February 19, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Lemmer presented the highlights of the February 2020 financial report. After discussion, Trustee Levitsky made a motion, seconded by Trustee Puch, to approve the February 2020 financial report. The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

LIBRARY PROJECT UPDATE

Prior to discussion, President Travers asked Board members to declare any conflicts of interest and report any ex parte communications not previously disclosed. Hearing none, discussion of the Library Building Project commenced.

Rush Hodge and Bharat Krishman, The Hodge Group (THG), began their presentation by applauding the efforts of Library Director Lemmer and recognized her solid reputation in the community. They also commended her staff on their work on the case statement and coordination of community interviews.

The project report was presented, including a review of the feasibility study process, interview feedback, and recommendations. The overall consensus confirmed the need for a public/private partnership, strong leadership by the Library Board with support from the City, and the creation of a foundation to support fundraising and an endowment. Communication of a clear vision for the Library's role in the community, a flexible design that can adapt to future technology and space needs, creative service delivery plans for the west side, and a respect for the history and tradition of the current library building and site were all viewed as key requirements for a successful campaign. Capital campaign actions and a target number for the project were outlined.

Trustee Levitsky expressed concerns about how the current financial uncertainty would impact the project timeline. Mr. Hodge recommended that the process keep moving ahead as much as possible, with consistent and regular communication with the City and key stakeholders. The original timeframe for campaign committee involvement was set to begin in April, proceed throughout the summer, with a target start date set for early fall to coordinate with the City budget calendar.

Trustee Travers asked about creating an endowment and THG indicated that would be a responsibility of the new foundation. Trustee Rose inquired about the Friends of the Lake Forest Library's role in relation to the foundation. Ms. Lemmer indicated that the Friends had declined to act as a 501(c)(3) foundation desiring to focus on their book sale efforts. They remain a passionate supporter of the library and want to do what is best to support the Library and the Building Project.

Trustees Desmond and Rose inquired about bond issuance by the Library as part of the funding package. Ms. Lemmer noted that Illinois state law prohibits the Library from issuing bonds and paying off any bonds issued by the City. Trustee Levitsky asked about how the Board and City Council would be equipped to share consistent project and campaign messaging. THG would provide in-depth training for the Board and campaign committee and a broader orientation program for the City Council.

Further discussion of capital campaign actions and Stage 3 of The Hodge Group contract was continued until the March 11 Special Meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE FY2021 BUDGET

Ms. Lemmer presented the proposed FY2021 budget and commentary. In preparing the FY2021 budget, the Library examined each aspect of its operation to determine the best and most cost-effective method for providing Library services without compromising the high level of service provided to the community.

Revenues reflect the 2.1% CPI-based levy increase and estimated growth of \$29,533, increasing revenue by \$79,385 over FY2020. Revenues from fees were negatively impacted by the elimination of fines. In addition, the Library will receive no TIF funds from the Laurel & Western development.

Operating expenses are expected to increase by 2%. Salaries, wages, and benefits continue to comprise a large part of the budget. A Special Projects line was added to cover architectural and capital campaign expenses. In addition, the allocation to the capital equipment fund was increased in anticipation of upgrades to the offsite availability/delivery of materials and services.

Trustee Rose requested that capital equipment funds not be specifically earmarked without a cohesive plan in place. Trustee Levitsky asked about how the budget was constructed to reflect the changing dynamics of the next 3-4 years. Ms. Lemmer addressed both concerns by stating that there is flexibility built into key capital accounts to allow the Library to maintain and improve the high level of service while planning for the potential of a short-term relocation.

Trustee Levitsky made a motion, seconded by Trustee Puch, to approve the FY2021 budget. The motion carried with a roll call vote.

#### TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Ed Finn, Director of Operations, presented specific plans to evaluate and upgrade Library technology infrastructure. System upgrades will improve current service delivery and position the Library for a smooth transition in the event of a temporary relocation. Contracting with a managed service provider and a move to more cloud-based operations are in the works. Other efforts include a pilot of Windows Office 365, as well as a pilot of internally-developed self-checkout technology. In addition, quotes are out to implement internet access via existing fiber optic cable. RFID capabilities are also being researched for various applications.

Trustee Rose inquired about the ability to access Library services via smart device app, noting the cumbersome website-centered process currently in place. Mr. Finn will research this with CCS and provide an update at a future meeting.

#### LIBRARY DIRECTOR REPORT

The Library is continuously monitoring the coronavirus situation and implementing plans to keep staff and patrons safe. One key service the Library offers is providing timely and accurate information to the public. The website is updated regularly to reflect changes. Staff has created operational documentation to assist in the event of a staff shortage due to illness. Normal operations will continue as long as they are appropriate.

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The PLA Conference offered a good opportunity to research new technologies that can enhance service delivery, including book dispensers, locker systems, and RFID tagging. It also provided time for meeting with Jane Dederling, HGA, and Penny Hummel Consulting to get a head start on onsite meetings scheduled for the week of March 9.

The Library was able to remain open during the planned ComEd outages required to allow repair of the transformer; however, it was learned that existing safety lighting did not function properly when the power was briefly off to the building. Because this is a safety issue, repairs and replacements began immediately.

Trustee Levitsky asked what the Library was doing to promote community participation in the 2020 Census. Ms. Lemmer mentioned that, in addition to posting informational signage in the building, the Library provides a dedicated terminal to be used for online completion of census forms. A program, Everything You Need to Know About the Census, was offered in February. Trustee Grob noted an error in the Jan 2020 Reference Readers Advisory statistics. Ms. Lemmer will update with correct information.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Levitsky made a motion, seconded by Trustee Desmond, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Upcoming Meetings:

**Special Board Meeting: March 11, 2020, 6:00 p.m., Reed Room**

**Regular Board Meeting: April 14, 2020 7:30 p.m., Reed Room**

**/s/ Germaine Arnson (signed electronically due to COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place order)**

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Germaine Arnson, Secretary

Minutes approved by the Board on April 14, 2020.