

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
Tuesday April 24, 2018
Central Library Community Room 1
814 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233**

PRESENT: JoAnne Anton, Michele Bria, Ald. Milele Coggs, Sharon Cook, John Gurda, Ald. Nik Kovac, Chris Layden, Joan Prince, Dir. Mark Sain, Paula Kiely

EXCUSED: Ald. Cavalier Johnson, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Jennifer Smith

STAFF: Rachel Arndt, Ryan Daniels, Eileen Force Cahill, Barbara Henry, Joan Johnson, Dawn Lauber, Sarah Leszczynski, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Judy Pinger, Rebecca Schweisberger, Crystal Sura, Kelly Wochinske

OTHERS Susan Benton, President and CEO of the Urban Libraries Council

PRESENT: Eric Pearson, Budget and Policy Division, City of Milwaukee

President John Gurda called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:32 p.m. on April 24, 2018 with a quorum present. Trustee Kovac and Trustee Layden participated by conference phone. The agenda items were taken out of order; however, these minutes are presented in numerical sequence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Staff Recognition.** President Gurda presented a resolution honoring and thanking Crystal Sura for her thirty-seven years of service to the library. Informational item.
2. **Trustee Recognition.** President Gurda presented a resolution honoring and thanking Board member JoAnne Anton for her three years of service. Informational item.
3. **Teen Interns.** Education and Outreach Services Coordinator Kelly Wochinske introduced four of the Teen Interns employed through the city's Promise Zone fund. The Interns answered inquiries from the Trustees and explained several of the programs they facilitate in the Northwestern Mutual Foundation Studio M, the maker space at Mitchell Street Library. Informational item.
4. **Board Photograph.** The Trustees took a brief recess for the annual official photograph of the Board. Informational item.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes March 27, 2018.**
6. **Committee Reports.**
 - a. Nominating Committee Meeting Minutes March 28, 2018
 - b. Innovation and Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes April 11, 2018

7. **Administrative Reports.**
 - a. Personnel Actions
 - b. Financial Report
 - c. Library Director's Reports

President Gurda asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 3-80 of the agenda. President Gurda entertained a motion to approve. Trustee Cook moved and Trustee Bria seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed. President Gurda noted that the Nominating Committee's recommended slate is: Michelle Bria for President, Joan Prince for Vice-President, and Chris Layden for Financial Secretary. The vote will be taken in May.

REPORTS

8. **MPL Foundation Report.** MPL Foundation Executive Director Ryan Daniels provided a report on fundraising. To date the Foundation has raised over \$300,000. The Foundation has established a relationship with Cargill, who has underwritten the Cargill Community Kitchen at Mitchell Street. There was an increase in the percentage of money raised for the Foundation through the 2018 City of Milwaukee Visions campaign. The Library Friends group has a new agreement with the Foundation to employ a part-time staff person to manage the Bookseller. The Friends of the Library Literary Luncheon will be held on May 11, 2018 and will feature author Luis Alberto Urrea.

Foundation Director Daniels announced that the annual Benjamin Franklin Award celebration will honor Jay and Madonna Williams. Mr. Williams has served on the MPL Foundation Board as President and Vice-President. The event will be held on October 11, 2018. Informational item.

STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

9. **Race & Social Equity and Board Leadership.** The Trustees were honored to welcome President and CEO of the Urban Libraries Council (ULC), Susan Benton. Ms. Benton was introduced by Trustee Prince, who served on the ULC Board when Ms. Benton was selected to lead the organization. Ms. Benton explained the role of the ULC in helping its members connect with their communities and bringing together like-minded leaders. She distributed four informational handouts published by the ULC; they are attached at the end of these minutes. Ms. Benton highlighted several strategies the ULC recommends to member libraries to better serve patrons and the community.

Education for everyone. Public libraries are uniquely positioned to offer a neutral, judgement-free space to learn. Adults who may have had negative experiences with school feel comfortable learning in the library. Children benefit from organized programming and summer learning initiatives that introduce new ideas and ways of learning. The ULC recommends collaboration between public libraries and public schools. Both institutions can work together to support education goals.

Digital Inclusion. Ms. Benton emphasized how vital digital inclusion is to the community. Access to computers and training to use new technology are particularly important. A significant portion of Milwaukee residents do not have access to the Internet, which impacts their lives in many ways, including education and employment. Digital inclusion and

literacy initiatives should include patrons of all ages. Maintaining updated equipment and offering public technology classes are very important.

Healthy, sustainable communities. This is a broad term that encompasses many ideas and projects. Specifically, the ULC is focusing on two areas:

- Examining the role of public libraries as agents of racial and social equity. Libraries are trusted entities and should use this ‘social capital’ to benefit their communities and create new alliances. This includes exploring ways that the library can bring people together and convene difficult conversations.
- Engaging the library as an entrepreneurial hub. Patrons can use library technology and resources to learn how to create, expand, and manage their business plans.

Board Governance and Responsibility. Ms. Benton indicated that the Library Trustees have a responsibility to assess and meet residents’ needs and also reset the image of the library. Trustees have connections with local business and civic leaders that can be leveraged to dispel the outdated image of libraries as only book repositories.

President Gurda asked if Ms. Benton had any specific observations about MPL. She noted that Director Kiely was a leader in crafting the public statement issued by the ULC about race and social equity. Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and MPL’s partnership is also an excellent model of partnership. In addition to accepting the White House Library Card Challenge and working together to get a library card for every student, MPL and MPS are collaborating to analyze the data from the library card campaign.

Trustee Prince asked if the ULC will provide any training or guidance on Board governance. Ms. Benton mentioned that all Trustees are invited to attend the ULC annual forum. She spoke about the benefits of having a Board with diverse careers and backgrounds.

Trustee Anton asked for examples of early childhood education initiatives that the ULC is working on. Ms. Benton noted that it is important to initiate positive interactions with the community in places outside of the library, such as: community health centers, daycare centers, and other places where young families may be. Ms. Benton will share a list with Director Kiely of other libraries that have been successful in their efforts to engage families and what they have done.

Trustee Cook asked if Ms. Benton had examples of library collaboration on workforce training. Ms. Benton spoke about the role of the public library in relation to other agencies, training centers, and colleges. Libraries can use computer access and technology training as a point of entry into the area of workforce training.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of April 24, 2018 was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.
