

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

Video Conference Call by GoToMeeting

PRESENT: Michele Bria, Joan Prince, Chris Layden, Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Nik Kovac, Matt Kowalski, James Marten, Mark Sain, Paula Kiely

EXCUSED: Dir. Larry Miller, Ald. Michael Murphy, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Jennifer Smith

STAFF: Rachel Arndt, Eileen Force Cahill, Joan Johnson, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Judy Pinger, Anne Rasmussen, Rebecca Schweisberger, Kelly Wochinske

OTHERS

PRESENT: MPL Foundation: Ryan Daniels, Pat Swanson

President Michele Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:05 p.m. on May 26, 2020 with a quorum present. All Trustees participated by video conference.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes April 28, 2020.**
2. **Committee Reports.**
 - a. Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes April 28, 2020
3. **Administrative Reports.**
 - a. Financial Report
 - b. Library Director's Reports

President Bria asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 4-14 of the agenda. Hearing no objection, the Consent Agenda was approved.

ANNUAL MEETING

4. **Welcome to Trustees.** This item was held for the June 23, 2020 meeting.

5. **Election of Board Officers.** This item was held for the June 23, 2020 meeting.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

6. **COVID-19 Response and Recovery.** Library Director Paula Kiely provided an update on the status of library services, staffing, and recovery efforts.

Ongoing Services

MPL implemented materials request and pick-up service at the Central Library Drive-up and curbside at Washington Park and Tippecanoe branch libraries. Developing, coordinating, and implementing these services was a significant undertaking. Staff participated in a one day orientation session which included information about safety protocols as well as service transaction instructions and practice.

Wi-fi service continues to be available outside all MPL locations and MPL is included in a statewide map of free wi-fi locations. MPL purchased 150 Hot Spots, some of which will be offered to MPS families in need of internet service. Hot Spots are also available for staff members who have been redeployed to Milwaukee Health Department (MHD).

Approximately 100 MPL employees are assisting MHD with contact tracing, research, data entry, and phone calls regarding COVID-19 test results. MPL's IT department coordinated with the City's Information and Technology Management Division (ITMD) to ensure city and library staff had the necessary equipment for this work. A total of 17 MPL staff members have been furloughed, including 7 full-time employees. The remainders of MPL employees are classified as essential and have been working on digital services, building cleaning and maintenance, managing ongoing projects, and planning. Regular work and services have been paused or modified as needed. The City's Department of Employee Relations (DER) is exploring staff eligibility for hazard pay and some MPL staff may be eligible based on the DER criteria.

Online programming has increased and this year the Summer Reading Program and Teen Summer Challenge will take place entirely online. The focus of the Summer Reading Program will be to read, create, and discover. All participants will receive books at the beginning of the program while incremental prizes will be discontinued. Books will be distributed with the help of local partners, including MPS meal sites. Information about summer programming will be available on mpl.org, shared on social media, and sent to area schools, parent coordinators, and school media specialists. MPL is working with community partners to provide virtual programs and some live visits if possible.

MPL is working with the tenants at Central Library regarding their return to the building. Tenants include: the Library Foundation, MCFLS, ABLE, and the Library Friends Bookseller. City orders, protocols for safety and cleaning, and the return of MPL facilities staff will need to be in place before expanding operations to include tenant return.

Reopening the Library

MPL Administration continues to plan and prepare for reopening, which will be phased in an organized manner. Not all locations will open at the same time.

The first step in reopening will be modification or lifting of the City's safer at home orders. Safety protocols, equipment, and supplies will need to be in place before reopening. Due to increased demand, supply levels are low and some purchases have been backordered, limited, or cancelled by the supplier. In addition to regular cleaning supplies, MPL has also ordered Plexiglas shields and personal protective equipment (PPE). A hazard assessment, completed and approved by MHD, is also required before reopening. Individual hazard assessments will be needed at each branch library. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has created guidelines and formulas which will be useful in determining how many people to allow in a building at the same time.

The return of redeployed and furloughed staff is also a critical part of the reopening timeline. There is currently no indication how long MPL staff will be needed to support MHD work.

Library services, including collection browsing, digital resources, technology, and employment assistance, will be assessed and phased in as needed. MPL staff will be prepared to work in new and different ways, including remote work if necessary.

MPL is working with the Foundation to seek funding through various grants. MPL has applied for a grant through the National Endowment of the Humanities to cover staff salaries and fringe benefits while completing an archiving project. MPL is also eligible for a competitive grant through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which, if awarded, would provide funding for a recovery plan designed to strengthen the community and build resilience for the future. The grant would allow MPL to build capacities through staff development, technology enhancements and remote work infrastructure, and increase public access to information, online learning resources, and virtual social services access.

MPL is on pace with our national counterparts and comparable urban library systems. Urban Libraries Council (ULC) has been a great resource and has created workgroups to write position papers for best practices. Public Services Area Manager Anne Rasmussen was nominated for the workgroup exploring long-term outcomes from the pandemic. Director Kiely has been meeting with other Wisconsin Resource Library directors and many medium-sized libraries have set dates for reopening. Locally, some MCFLS member libraries have resumed regular services. MCFLS delivery services will resume on June 1, 2020 and MPL will accept deliveries for Central Library, Washington Park library, and Tippecanoe library. All returned materials will be quarantined for 72 hours before processing. The due date for MPL-owned materials has been extended to September and patrons will soon be able to request holds online.

MPL will continue to bring controversial items to the Board for consideration and support.

President Bria commended Director Kiely for her leadership and the work of the MPL team.

Informational item.

REPORTS

7. **MCFLS Board Meeting.** Trustee Kovac reported on the April 20, 2020 and May 18, 2020 meetings. The MCFLS Board conducted their annual review of MCFLS Director Steve Hesel and is pleased with his leadership. Inter-library delivery contracts were renewed and most member libraries are prepared to receive delivery. MCFLS has extended materials due dates through June 15, 2020; MPL has further extended the due date for its materials through September 15, 2020. On June 1, 2020 Hoopla checkouts will revert from 8 checkouts per patron to 4 checkouts. The MCFLS marketing contract has been delayed. MCFLS coordinates some digital services and all materials delivery, but members have autonomy to make decisions regarding reopening and available services. MCFLS staff is mostly working remotely and practicing social distancing while in the office. Informational item.

8. **Services & Programs Committee Meeting.** Chair Coggs reported on the May 4, 2020 meeting. The Committee received Security Reports for Quarter 4 (2019) and Quarter 1 (2020).

The Committee heard details about a security incident leading to the recommendation of a permanent ban. The Committee moved to issue a permanent ban of library patron Johnny Birkley. Trustee Sain seconded. Motion passed.

The Committee reviewed a new Materials Handling Policy, created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee moved to approve the policy. Trustee Sain seconded. Motion passed.

The Committee heard a recommendation from Library Administration to change the Sunday open-hours locations from Central Library, Capitol branch library, and Zablocki branch library to Central Library, Good Hope branch library, and Tippecanoe branch library. The Committee moved to approve the change. Trustee Marten seconded. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

9. **2021 Requested Budget.** Assistant Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns presented a summary of the Library's requested 2021 budget. MPL submitted a cost-to-continue budget to the Budget office and was also asked to submit a budget model with a 3% decrease, which amounts to approximately \$530,000. Appropriate increases were made to account for higher cleaning supply and security costs. The salary budget increased by 3.5%, as a result of city-wide pay progression increases from 2019. Although energy rates increased, MPL will likely see a decrease in consumption and costs due to recent lighting and HVAC upgrades. Overall, 2020 costs are expected to be significantly under budget due to adjustments made during the temporary closure. MPL will work closely with the Budget office to prepare the 2021 proposed budget. Ms. Meyer-Stearns thanked Library Business Manager Sarah Leszczynski for her work on budget preparation. Informational item.

10. **Bylaws Revision.** President Bria introduced the revised Bylaws draft for review and Director Kiely explained the revisions. The primary revision relates to Trustee participation in closed sessions when attending meetings remotely. As a result of the current closure and distancing measures, the proposed Bylaws makes virtual meetings permissible and allows for closed sessions during video or telephone meetings. Trustee Kovac recommended contacting the City Clerk's office to inquire about the closed session procedure during virtual Common Council meetings. Another revision states that newly elected Board Officers will assume their office immediately following the vote. The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing to the full Board at least 30 days before the designated vote. The Bylaws will be presented for vote at the June 23, 2020 meeting. Informational item.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of May 26, 2020 was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.
