

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, May 23, 2023**

**Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT:** Chris Layden, Teresa Mercado, Michele Bria, Ald. Milele Coggs, Matthew Kowalski, Michael Morgan, Erika Siemsen, Ald. Scott Spiker, Sup. Kathleen Vincent, Joan Johnson, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns

**EXCUSED:** Mark Sain, Felicia Saffold

**STAFF:** Maria Burke, Chantel Clark, Tammy Mays, Joseph Moretz, Karli Pederson, Jacki Potratz, Marian Royal, Rebecca Schweisberger, Kelly Wochinske

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Vice-President Chris Layden called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:04 p.m. on May 23, 2023 with a quorum present. Trustee Coggs participated by conference phone. Deputy Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns served as Secretary until 4:40, when Director Johnson joined the meeting in progress. The agenda items were taken out of order but are presented here in numerical sequence.

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**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes April 25, 2023**
2. **Administrative Reports**
  - a. Financial Report
  - b. Library Director's Reports
  - c. Statistics

Vice-President Layden asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 3-16 of the agenda. Trustee Morgan moved to accept the consent agenda; Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.

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**REPORTS**

3. **MPL Board Building & Development Committee.** Committee Chair Michael Morgan reported on the May 4, 2023 meeting. The Committee received updates about the Bookseller and Café at Central Library and discussed the potential redevelopment of the Capitol branch. As part of an update on the Martin Luther King branch redevelopment project, the Committee granted approval for MPL to declare the former Martin Luther King branch building, supplies, and equipment as surplus and to grant MPL the authority to offer surplus materials to community partners for the purposes of moving forward on the development. Trustee Morgan moved this item for Board approval, Trustee Bria seconded. Motion passed.
4. **Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board Meeting.** Trustee Siemsen and Karli Pederson, Associate Library Director - Library Information Technology and Technical Services, reported on the May 15, 2023 meeting. The Board discussed a timeline for the new MCFLS

Strategic Plan. Planning will begin in May 2023 and the plan will be implemented 2024-2028. The MCFLS budget will be submitted to the County in July 2023. MCFLS is establishing a new Library Systems Technician position which will be responsible for providing after-hours services to MCFLS members. Informational item.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

5. **2024 Requested Budget.** Deputy Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns presented a summary of MPL's 2024 requested budget. As directed by the Budget Office, MPL submitted a cost-to-continue budget. The proposed 2024 budget is \$25.79M, which is a 9.7% increase over 2023 and includes adjustments for inflation. The majority (9.6%) of the increase is due to salaries funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in 2023 which will revert to the MPL budget in 2024. The proposed budget maintains the current services and hours in 2024. MPL will invite Budget Director Nik Kovac to attend the June Board meeting to present an overview of the budget process and the City's fiscal status. Deputy Director Meyer-Stearns commended Mayor Johnson and the Common Council for the progress made in budget discussions with State legislature. Informational item.
6. **Urban Libraries Council (ULC) Declaration of Democracy.** Vice-President Layden referred to the ULC Declaration of Democracy, listed as Attachment C of the agenda. The Declaration was introduced by Trustee Bria at the April meeting. At that time, the Board recommended taking official action to affirm it. Library Director Joan Johnson and Trustee Bria reviewed the origin of the document and its intent. The Declaration of Democracy was created by the ULC Board as a response to recent efforts to ban library materials. With Board approval, MPL will sign onto the statement and publicly declare its commitment to intellectual freedom and the preservation of democracy in our communities. Trustee Mercado moved to adopt the Urban Libraries Council Declaration of Democracy Statement; Trustee Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

7. **Annual Bylaws Review.** Vice-President Layden referred to the MPL Board Bylaws, listed as Attachment D of the agenda. No changes were recommended. Informational item.
8. **Summer Reading Program.** Kelly Wochinske, Library Public Services Area Manager – Education and Outreach Services, presented an update on the MPL Summer Reading Program (SRP), which starts on June 1<sup>st</sup>. A primary goal of SRP is to offset reading skill loss and opportunity gaps that can occur when children are out of school and child care during the summer. Community partnerships are a foundation of SRP and MPL is working with approximately 150 school-age sites to register children and distribute materials. Partners have access to library resources, including book collections, lesson plans, and staff training provided by MPL. Every child that registers for SRP will receive a new book. AmeriCorps members will provide service at several school-age sites, delivering programs and acting as 'Book Buddies' to encourage independent reading. Early childhood educators will facilitate Story Times at childcare centers and various playgrounds in Milwaukee. The Teen SRP program will offer a series of photography programs, including digital photography, Polaroid photos, and photo shoot styling. Weekly and bi-weekly story times will be offered at all MPL locations. Drop-in stations and take-home activity kits will also be available. Ms. Wochinske expressed appreciation for the MPL Foundation (MPLF) support of these initiatives, as a large portion of SRP is funded through the MPLF. Informational item.

#### **BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

9. **Dublin Literary Award.** Jacki Potratz, Collection Development Librarian, shared information about MPL's role in the annual Dublin Literary Award nomination process. The award promotes excellence in world literature and is entering its 28<sup>th</sup> year. Award nominations come from libraries worldwide

and are by invitation-only. Participating libraries nominate a single work of international fiction written in or translated into English. Formerly, participating libraries submitted 3 titles for consideration. Starting in 2021, libraries may now only submit 1 title. A panel of judges narrows the candidates to a short list of 10 and selects a winner. MPL was invited to submit nominations in 2009 and has participated each year since. In 2011, Ms. Potratz's nomination won the award and her selections made the short list in 2013, 2015, 2019, and 2020. Informational item.

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With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of May 23, 2023 was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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