

**MINUTES OF  
HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING  
March 22, 2017**

The Hennepin County Library Board met Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at the Minneapolis Central Library.

**Present:** Adja Ann, Katherine Blauvelt, Caitlin Cahill, Chris Damsgard, Barbara Fenton, Jonathan Gaw, Sandy Johnson, Margy O'Neill-Ligon, and Samuel Neisen  
**Hennepin County Staff:** Commissioner Linda Higgins, Commissioner Debbie Goettel  
**Public:** Maria Baca, Ben Brown, Johannah Genett, Kristin Harley, Samantha Jekot-Graham, Lois Lenroot-Ernt, Janet Mills, Anna Sheppard, Lois Langer Thompson, Ali Turner, and Ann Woodson-Hicks  
**Public:** Kari Corter, Rose Prullage, John Ligon

**CALL TO ORDER**

Library Board Vice President Caitlin Cahill called the Hennepin County Library Board meeting of March 22, 2017 to order at 5:04 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER**

Vice President Caitlin Cahill asked new Library Board Member Margy O'Neill-Ligon to introduce herself. Margy is a long-time library advocate who ran the Friends of Minneapolis Public Library from 1994-2000. She spent her career in education, first at Walker Art Center as director of education and more recently the University of Minnesota in Continuing Education. "Libraries and lifelong learning are my top priorities and I'm delighted to be here," she said.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Jonathan Gaw made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Katherine Blauvelt. Motion passed.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Jonathan Gaw made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 22, 2017; seconded by Aja Ann. Motion passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** None

**GREETING FROM HENNEPIN COUNTY COMMISSIONER LINDA HIGGINS**

• **Hennepin County Commissioner Linda Higgins, District 2**

Hennepin County Commissioner Linda Higgins, elected in 2012 and Vice-Chair of the County Board, represents a district that goes from Plymouth to St. Anthony. District Two includes Golden Valley, North Regional, Northeast, Pierre Bottineau, Plymouth, St. Anthony, Sumner, and Webber Park Libraries. Commissioner Higgins' priorities are responsible budgeting, transportation and transit, Health and Human Services, healthcare reform, and safe and affordable housing.

Two significant milestones in District 2 will be the grand opening of the new Webber Park Library on May 18, 2017 and the opening of a much-needed grocery store next to the library later in 2017. The new library is the result of good planning, partnerships, contributions by talented local artists, and an enthusiastic community that has been looking forward to the addition of this vital amenity to North Minneapolis.

Commissioner Higgins chairs the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA). Her latest project involved partnering with Hennepin County's Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES) to move 90 vacant, tax-forfeited houses more efficiently into the hands of residents. Commissioner Higgins and RRES asked the Minnesota Legislature to approve alternatives to current tax-forfeited property disposal procedures to sell rehabilitated, move-in ready housing to local residents. The project employs small, local contractors who are predominantly people of color and women. Nine of these former tax-forfeited properties will soon be available for sale. Commissioner Higgins added that Hennepin County listened to the contractors' concerns and revised their procedures to pay them promptly because smaller contractors cannot float the amount of overhead that larger contractors are often able to do. This program also changed unwieldy rules regarding liability insurance. The rehabilitated houses are located in Golden Valley, Crystal, and Minneapolis.

Commissioner Higgins introduced Hennepin County Commissioner Debbie Goettel. The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners has reorganized their committees to align with County lines of business. The Library is now under the Operations Committee, which is chaired by Commissioner Higgins.

Katherine Blauvelt thanked Commissioner Higgins and said she was excited to hear Board Member Sam Neisen's report about the new Webber Park Library's public art project. She is interested in the capital projects timeline presented at the last Library Board meeting. She appreciated hearing the ongoing discussion on when to refurbish high-use libraries and the importance to "get the schedule right". Library Director Thompson replied that the Library Board members are invited to a County Board briefing on the capital plan on June 1, 2017. Previously the plan was to refresh a library every 10-12 years. However, Hennepin County Library (HCL) buildings are different ages and are used at different levels. Instead of refurbishing libraries on a fixed schedule, HCL is reviewing the Capital Plan using an equity lens to renovate libraries based on usage impact. Commissioner Higgins commended the work recently done at the Brooklyn Park, St. Anthony and Golden Valley Libraries to create 21<sup>st</sup> Century libraries.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- System Services Division Manager Ali Turner confirmed there are community engagement sessions for the public art projects at the Webber Park Library on Saturday morning, March 25, 2017, and Tuesday, March 28, 2017, from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Director Thompson will email that information to the Board.

## **Ignite Presentation by Anna Sheppard**

- Anna Sheppard, Adult Services Librarian at the East Lake Library, presented a five-minute "Ignite" session titled, "Deepening Community Connections Through Local Programming." She outlined the local programming project's components: Reach Out, Celebrate, Be Thought Partners, Encourage Interaction and Reach Out Again. She said that community events connect organizations (and residents) with each other. Local businesses recently involved in library programming included the Hack Factory Maker Space, Ballare Teatro, Migizi Communications – American Indian Technology Center and Youth Education Projects, Du Nord Distillery, Gandhi Mahal Restaurant, Hook and Ladder, the Longfellow Art Crawl, Hi-Lo Diner and Open Streets. The program is in its third year. Sheppard encourages natural partnerships while welcoming intentional efforts to build community connections.
- Board Members asked if exempt and hourly library staff are able to attend these events; are similar outreach initiatives available at other libraries; what opportunities did this initiative provide for cross-group communication between businesses and community groups. Director Thompson said that each library is responsive to the community it serves. The emphasis is on establishing true community partnerships, whether it's with a local business or community group.

## **Library and Community Updates**

- Laurie Brickley was recently hired as the new Communication Manager and will start in April. Maria Baca, Hennepin County Communications, is embedded in the library to help tell the Library's story. She's worked with the Star Tribune and Channel 12 on news stories about the "All Are Welcome Here" campaign, Homework Help, and the Teen Tech Squad.
- The first round of interviews for the Director's Administrative Assistant are complete. Over two hundred qualified candidates were screened to 33 semifinalists while retaining diversity in the applicant pool. HCL will continue to use the self-reported demographics portion of the application to ensure a diverse applicant pool.
- Two new Library Board members; Tim Dolan, former Minneapolis police chief, and Erin Vrieze Daniels, Richfield Planning Commission chair, are not able to be here tonight but will be with us in April.
- Director Thompson serves as ex officio member of the Youth Coordinating Board (YCB). On March 9 YCB asked youth to read a welcoming statement to the City of Minneapolis. Commissioners McLaughlin and Greene, along with Mayor Hodges, County Attorney Freeman, and Cam Gordon, Minneapolis City Council Member, also serve on the board. HCL staff developed a resource list for immigrants and students who may not be aware of all of the resources the library has for them.

- The library worked with the MLA lobbyist and the MELSA executive director to secure a hearing for additional Regional Library Basic Systems Support (RLBSS) funding. Although not included in the House or Senate budgets, the Library community will continue to advocate for the additional funding.
- A briefing on the capital budget will be held with the County Board on June 1, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the County Board Room at the Hennepin County Government Center. Library Board members are invited to attend.
- Over 100 people attended the outdoor grand opening for the Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center on March 12. The library presented its pop-up event and staff from the Hennepin County Law Library were there. Commissioners McLaughlin, Callison, and Greene also attended. Sara Zettervall will be the librarian, and interviews for the community liaison position are underway.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Announcements

- **Library Board Fee and Fine Policy – Lois Langer Thompson and Lois Lenroot-Ernt**

Chris Damsgard announced that the Fee and Fine and Use of Library Spaces policies will be revised this year. The Fee and Fine policy requires updating before the 2018 budget is submitted in June, so it will be discussed tonight. Director Thompson requested that the Board act as a Committee of the Whole to consider the revised policy. Lois Lenroot-Ernt explained the changes shown in red in the Board Members' packet:

- Under **Principles:**
  - The word "limited" was removed from the first bullet so the statement reads: *Hennepin County Library serves the community as a whole and strives to make its collection and services freely accessible to all.*
  - The phrases: "new or changed" and "Hennepin County Board of Commissioners" were added to bullet point three to clarify the public hearing process. The revised statement would be: *The library is a publicly funded institution and will establish new or changed fees and fines only after a Hennepin County Board of Commissioners public hearing.*
- Under **Roles and Responsibilities**
  - New language in the second paragraph clarifies the process to change fees: *The Library Director, as part of the annual budget process, briefs the Library Board regarding any proposed fee and fine changes and then advances proposed changes to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners for review and approval.*
- Under **Policy History**
  - "Next Review Date" will be changed to 1/2021 to coincide with the previous review time-span.
  - However, the Board is able to reconsider the policy if changes in the Fee and Fine policy are proposed prior to the next review date.
  - "Last Reviewed" dates will be updated after the Library Board approves these changes.
- Board members raised the following questions: 1) Will the fine amounts change with the policy update and 2) Do the changes give managers and staff enough discretion to resolve patron questions? Director Thompson said fee changes are not part of the policy review but will be addressed as part of the budget. Regarding staff discretion to resolve fine questions, Director Thompson said that Patron Experience Lead, Samantha Jekot-Graham, has just updated the administrative guidelines for staff to make them easier to understand, more equitable and more flexible. Administrative Policy, "Collecting Fees and Fines for Library Material Policy," is available on the HCL website.
- Three questions were posed to the Library Board: Is anything unclear or confusing; Is anything missing or left out; Is anything unnecessary. Board Members responded with the following comments and questions:
  - The proposed changes made sense.
  - Under **Scope and Application**
    - Topics about fees and fines bounced around. Make separate sections for Fines and Fees.

- Resolve contradictions in the statements, “All patrons are subject to overdue fines” and “The Library Director may authorize some library programs or services (e.g. Outreach Services) to be exempt from overdue fines.”
- Strengthen the statement, “Circumstances may warrant staff to waive a patron’s fees and fines. Library staff will apply fee and fine waivers fairly and equitably according to established practices.” Suggested substitute language: “according to practices established in the administrative policy.”
- **Under Roles and Responsibilities**
  - Review the use of the terms “post” and “posted” in paragraphs three and four for clarity.
  - Link to the “Collecting Fees and Fines for Library Material Administrative Policy” that outlines patron responsibilities for checked out library materials and describes procedures relating to outstanding fees and fines. Suggested change, “The Library Services Division Manager (or designee) ~~posts~~ communicates the “Collecting Fees and Fines for Library Material Administrative Policy that.””
  - Change “Authorized fees and fines are posted on the public homepage” to “Authorized fees and fines are posted on the Hennepin County Library website.”
  - Revise the second sentence in the last paragraph to read: “Library staff collect fees and fines, resolve disputes in a timely manner, and work with patrons to restore borrowing and library use privileges.”
- Question if this policy needs to address automatic renewals. Director Thompson replied that staff would research that question.
- Information relating to fees and fines requires two to three clicks to link to subpages. Director Thompson have staff review the location of the link to make it more accessible.
- In April, Director Thompson will bring back a marked-up copy to the Board as a first reading.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### ● **Nominating Committee – Adja Ann**

The Nominating Committee meeting is scheduled to start after this evening’s Board meeting. If any Board members want to opt out of the nomination process, let Adja Ann know.

Chris Damsgard noted that the annual meeting will be in April. Since new Board members are already appointed, a vote on the nominations could come at the April meeting as well. Director Thompson said that the slate of officers will be included in the April packets. There will be a call for nominations for each office from the floor.

## NEW BUSINESS

- Katherine Blauvelt said that the Friends of Hennepin County Library’s goal this year was to break the million-dollar fund raising threshold. Board Members should have received an email announcing the *Talk of the Stacks* lineup. The Minneapolis Foundation is the presenter, and the Minneapolis Star Tribune is a sponsor. Author Andrew McCarthy will give the first talk on April 12. All *Talk of the Stacks* events are tied to the library’s strategic goals. She invited everyone to attend.

## ADJOURN

There being no further business, Cahill made a motion to adjourn the Library Board meeting at 5:55 pm; seconded by Johnson. Motion passed. The next Library Board meeting is Wednesday, May 24, 2017, 5 p.m. at Minneapolis Central Library, Doty Board Room, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis.

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Sandy Johnson, Secretary