

WEST CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023  
7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: President Weninger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Pat Weninger, President; Frank Fokta, Vice President; Diane Kelsey, Secretary; Richard Bloom and Scott Grotto, members.

STAFF PRESENT: Ben Weseloh, Library Director; Amanda Ghobrial, Adult Services Manager; Gabe Cardenas, Circulation Services Manager; Melisa Martinez, Youth Services Manager.

PUBLIC: Brian LeFevre, Sikich, LLP

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

1. Board Meeting - January 23, 2023: Mr. Grotto moved to approve the Minutes of the January 23, 2023 board meeting as amended; seconded by Ms. Kelsey.

- Page 2, Communications No. 2 Mr. Weseloh is the person who contacted the Library's attorney.

D. RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC: None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

F. AGENDA - ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Mr. Weseloh asked to move Item J-3-a, Fine-Free Presentation, to Item L, New Business, 2, Library Card and Circulation Policy.

G. PRESENTATION:

1. Annual Financial Report (Audit) Year Ended June 30, 2022: Mr. LeFevre covered the Annual Financial Report, including the following: The independent auditors follow the guidelines of the American Institute for Certified Public Accountants and the Financial Reporting Standards from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

Sikich is presenting an unmodified opinion on the Library's financial statements, which is the highest level of opinion the Library can receive. The Management Discussion & Analysis is the executive summary of the financial statements.

The statement of net position was reviewed, including the capital assets of the district, depreciation, and long-term liabilities. The statement of activities shows expenses, charges for services, program revenues, operating grants, including Per Capita Grant, property taxes, replacement taxes, and other income. Overall the Library had a change in net position of \$310,950, indicating it is economically better off as a result of the year of operations.

The dollar amount difference between assets and liabilities is the fund balance. The revenues for the fiscal year were \$2,425,000, with expenditures of \$2,170,000. The fund balance increased by \$255,000. The notes of the financial statement provide more information supporting the financial statements that were reviewed. The first note is the summary of accounting policies

The District has an arrangement to make sure that its deposits are always fully collateralized. IMRF shows the actual determined contribution versus the contribution the District made. The employees have a deduction of 4.5% that comes out of their checks. The Library's plan is 97.5% funded. The State calculates the Library's employer pension contribution rate, which is to be fully funded by 2040.

As of June 30, 2022, the Library collected 46.91% in property taxes extended by DuPage County. The Library collected 99.07% of its property taxes -- its most significant revenue stream -- for FY21-22.

#### H. TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. Approval of the Bills for February 2023: Trustee Bloom moved to approve expenditures of the bills in the amount of 233,487.32; seconded by Ms. Kelsey. Roll Call Vote - Yes: Bloom, Fokta, Grotto, Kelsey, Weninger. Motion carried.

2. Financial Statements for January 2023: Mr. Weseloh addressed the January Financial statements in his report, Item J-2.

#### I. COMMUNICATIONS: None

#### J. REPORTS:

1. President: Ms. Weninger stated the Strategic Planning Committee met before the February 27, 2023 Board Meeting to approve the Minutes from the Committee's October 20, 2022 meeting. Those Minutes were approved, and the committee has been disbanded.

President Weninger appointed an ad hoc committee to review and update the forms that will be used to perform the Director's review.

Ms. Jakacki will chair the committee, and Mr. Grotto and Ms. Kelsey

will also serve on the committee. The review is expected to be completed by the end of March.

President Weninger reassigned Ms. Kelsey and Mr. Fokta to the Closed Session Minutes review.

2. Library Director: Mr. Weseloh reported that the Library is 58% through the fiscal year elapsed. The Library has collected 99% of its total budget, with approximately \$18,000 left to be collected, not including the second installment of the PPRT or the annual Per Capita Grant totaling an additional \$120,000.

Facilities maintenance is at 56% of the budget. Additional facilities and outdoor upgrades will be undertaken as the weather gets warmer.

The Library's investments are doing very well; \$34,000 of interest income has been received this year against a budget amount of \$1,000. The Library received a check from LIMMRiCC for \$704.03 from the unemployment compensation group account as a dividend.

Delta Technologies was on-site January 24, 2023, to install a cloud controller for the building automation system, which will allow management to connect to the Library remotely.

The railing on the stairway that goes to the basement entrance is being reviewed for repair or replacement. Mr. Weseloh is awaiting a quote for this work.

A QuestMark flooring representative was onsite to view a couple of flooring areas where the tile gets very slippery when it is wet; one area is a staff entrance, the other is the basement landing. Mr. Weseloh would like to install Dur-A-Flex flooring. Cost quotes are expected for the work.

Kellenberger Electric was onsite February 15 to discuss electrical needs, including a couple outlets and switches, a few light fixtures, and adding seven new pole lights in the parking lot. The parking lot fixtures project is an expenditure that the Library Foundation has indicating some willingness to help fund.

Mr. Weseloh met with a representative from Miller Concrete to discuss concrete projects: replacing the pavers outside the front door with concrete; knocking down the wall with the bike rack and replacing the rack in a new strip of sidewalk; replacing two sidewalk squares that are sinking and cracked by the handicapped parking; and replacing the concrete pad and walkway for the drive-up dropbox. Mr. Weseloh conducted 11 personnel performance appraisals in January.

The Library has participated in a variety of WeGo Together activities. This is Mr. Weseloh's last year as chair of the WeGo Together steering committee.

Mr. Weseloh attended a quarterly business review meeting with a Sikich representative, the IT librarian, and the HR manager.

The Library Foundation met on February 6; and the Foundation is seeking new members. The Foundation board meets a few times a year. The Foundation will be present at the Blooming Fest on May 20, 2023.

The Library reviewed and submitted the ballot form for the library trustees for the April 4, 2023 consolidated election.

The Library staff met with SWAN staff to talk about going fine-free. Staff reviewed the Library Card Circulation Policy and added language that would be applicable for going fine-free.

Interviews were held for the position of public relations specialist. An offer was extended to an individual who has accepted the offer.

The annual library certification that is required by the Illinois State Library for library system membership was completed on February 10, 2023.

### 3. Department Managers:

Adult Services: The department did a lot of outreach in January for seniors: The program "Device Advice" was presented at the Wayne County Senior Center; and staff visited Wood Glen Senior Residences and did a craft project there.

Young Adults: Staff did a lot of outreach in January: Visited Leman Middle School twice, one for a book group where a craft was done; and one in a self-contained classroom visit with a story and an art craft. A WCPLD librarian attended the West Chicago High School Library to promote programming and resources at the West Chicago Public Library

District. She had a button activity where students made buttons; and she had over 250 students visit the table that day.

Circulation: Last month 13,963 items were checked out, a 8.05% increase from the previous year; 3,699 electronic items were checked out, an increase of 15.09% from the previous year; and the Library had 4,379 visitors to the building, a 5.32% increase from the previous year.

The Library has staff who serve as notaries on a regular basis for patrons.

A the solar eclipse will be visible in the area on October 14, 2023, and again next year on April 8, 2024. The Library has requested 2,000 eclipse glasses, which arrived last week. A previous eclipse program was held in 2017 and was the most popular program that year.

Youth Services: The department had a total of 23 programs for this year with a total of 272 kids attending, including story time, music and movement, pop culture week, crafting, and sensory story time. Programs were held that highlighted holidays and different cultures, such as the Hispanic and Asian cultures; and two bilingual programs were held which utilized both English and Spanish languages.

February programs were attended by 162 children, and two bilingual visits were made utilizing Spanish and English. Ms. Martinez speaks some Arabic and has been speaking to some of the local Arabic refugees.

The winter reading program is wrapping up, and staff gave out to the community 175 winter reading starter bags. Final numbers will be reported at the March board meeting.

One of the employees attended a great webinar on diversity and inclusion.

4. Finance Committee: Ms. Kelsey reported the Finance Committee met Thursday, February 23, 2023. Present were Pat Weninger, Scott Grotto, Diane Kelsey, and Ben Weseloh. The committee discussed the process for selecting a new firm to perform the annual audit; and an RFP was prepared through which to solicit bids. The RFP will be posted on the Library's website and also in the Daily Herald.

The committee created a process for creating the new budget, with drafts developed in April and May, and the budget presented to the

board in June.

5. Policy Committee: Mr. Bloom reported the Policy Committee met on February 16, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Present were Pat Weninger, Mr. Bloom, Ben Weseloh, Gabriel Cardenas, and Melissa Martinez.

It was determined that a quorum was not present; the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

L. NEW BUSINESS:

1. New business: Mr. Bloom moved for the board to approve the revised Library Conduct Policy; seconded by Mr. Grotto. At line 7 there should

be a comma after "tax credits." Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

2. Library Card and Circulation Policy: Mr. Bloom moved for the board to approve the revised Library Card and Circulation Policy; seconded by Mr. Grotto.

Gabriel Cardenas provided a presentation to the board on the prospect of the Library going fine-free, including topics of anticipated outcomes, removal of overdue fines, other library experiences, checkout timeline, the current versus the proposed, the budget, and a fresh start.

The primary goal is reduce the barrier for library card use, increase user activity, establish consistency with policies, and improve the user experience. Library cards are used at each checkout, to access computers, and to place holds. West Chicago patrons may still accrue fines when using other libraries, and they are subject to that library's policies.

Salt Lake City Public Library has been fine-free since 2017 and experienced a 3.5% increase in the number of new cardholders in the year following the fine removal. Item return increased by 16% from the previous year when fines were charged; and fines accounted for .3% of the library budget.

The Chicago Public Library has been fine-free since 2019, experienced 240% increase in returns after going fine-free, and a 7% increase in circulation in the five months after the policy changed. Fines

accounted for .7% of Chicago Public Library budget.

The Library is receiving returned books that they then don't have to replace, and the returned books are generally in good condition. Because the books are returned, other patrons can then check out those same books.

Director Weseloh would support the fine-free policy 100%. Chicago Ridge Public Library has been fine-free since 2020. At the beginning of 2020, only 24% of SWAN libraries were fine-free.

The proposal for the new policy states that fines are not charged, but when materials are two weeks overdue, the patron will receive notification that their account will be blocked, which is meant to encourage the patron to return the items.

Mr. Cardenas collected the data for fines imposed by West Chicago Library for the years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021: \$17,000 in fiscal year 2017, which was 6% of the budget; \$9,538 in 2018, which was .39% of the

budget; \$6,975 in 2019, which was .31% of the budget; and \$1,933 in 2021-22, which was .08% of the budget.

The maximum fine amount a patron can accrue in fines when the account will be locked was changed from \$5 to \$10. 70 percent of the West Chicago Library cardholders have overdue fines, with an average fine of \$1.20 per account, and 92% of the fines are three years old or more.

If the board of trustees approves the new structure of going fine-free, it will allow the Library to waive \$18,657.72 in current overdue fines and give the patrons a fresh start. The process will take 30 days to accomplish.

Discussion was had regarding going fine-free will eliminate a lot of barriers to active members among the community, and it will eliminate a lot of unpleasant staff-patron interaction at the desk. The revenue gained from fines for late materials is a minimal .3% of the Library's budget. Patrons are more likely to return books if the late fees are waived; however, if they ruin a book or lose it, they have to pay for it.

The Library does use a collection agency for larger amounts outstanding on cards with late fees, but only five people who owe more than \$20 in fines are currently in contact with the collection agency. These

patrons do not owe more than \$30. Mr. Fokta sees the fine-free policy as a reward for bad behavior. The Library will gather metrics going forward.

Roll Call Vote - Yes: Bloom, Fokta, Grotto, Kelsey, Weninger. Motion carried.

3. Internet and Digital Services Policy: Mr. Bloom moved that the board approve the Internet and Digital Services policy as is; seconded by Mr. Fokta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Act: Discussion was had regarding the Library complying with Public Act 102-1088 to create the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency, which takes effect on June 10, 2023. The committee will need to prepare a written report.

The committee will be comprised of the entire board, Mr. Weseloh as the Executive Director, and at least two members of the community. Mr. Weseloh would like to have the committee members identified by the May 2023 board meeting. If the board members would like to have an interview process to fill the community-member positions, they should let Mr. Weseloh know. Otherwise, Mr. Weseloh could interview prospective community members, make recommendations to the board, and

the board could approve the community participants.

Discussion was had regarding the committee, its purpose, and an ask for volunteers to be posted on the website. Mr. Weseloh will list this item on the March agenda and provide additional information to the board.

L. CLOSED SESSION: No closed session was held.

M. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION: No return to open session needed.

N. ADJOURNMENT: President Weninger adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.