

DAVENPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 19, 2021 MEETING

President Steve Imming called to order at 12:02 p.m. the monthly meeting of the Davenport Public Library Board of Trustees on Tuesday, October 19, 2021. The meeting was held in the Large Meeting Room of the Main Library.

Roll call of Trustees: Judie Lance, Tom Engelmann, Naghme Motto (via Go To Meeting), Craig Cooper, Joe Heinrichs, Malavika Shrikhande and Steve Imming were all present. Absent: Sylvia Roba and Amanda Motto.

Others present at the meeting: Amy Groskopf, Library Director; Lexie Reiling, Assistant Library Director; Jennifer Williams, HR Operations Manager; Tracy Moore, Development Director; Kasey Shipley, recorder.

Shrikhande motioned to approve the consent agenda. Engelmann seconded and there was no discussion. Roll call vote had Lance, Engelmann, N. Motto, Cooper, Heinrichs, Shrikhande and Imming all voting yes to carry the motion.

Public with Comment: No one was present.

FRIENDS Report: Groskopf reported the FRIENDS Board had a quorum at the meeting last week and actions was taken on many items. One was to authorize payment to the City for \$400,000 for the Main Renovation Project.

Finance Committee: Engelmann reported no unusual expenses.

Personnel Committee: Cooper reported the Director's evaluation would take place later in the meeting.

Advocacy Committee: Shrikhande said the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) sub-committee for Outreach met last week. There are already things happening with speaking to the hospitals and realtors on partnerships. If any Trustee has a contact to share with a non-profit you work with, she'd appreciate having the information. She will be providing pretzels for the Trunk or Treat event at Fairmount next week.

Director's Report: Groskopf reported that there was a pre-Request for Qualifications meeting yesterday for interested architect or engineering firms at Fairmount for the proposed community center. This is funded by American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) and the selected contractor will provide a conceptual design for both an addition to the Fairmount Library and a stand-alone building on the campus and a cost estimate for each. Initially, it was thought to be 3,000-5,000 square feet and estimated at roughly \$2.2 million. Parks wants a gym that adds a lot of square footage. The funding is limited unless the City adds to it to have a larger facility. The two ARPA-funded library positions, Library Social Worker and Early Literacy Coordinator, began yesterday. The "borrow by mail" trial funded by the FRIENDS begins on November 1. We will encourage anyone that can come to the Library to do so, but it will be up to the user to select their holds be sent in the mail. It will last as long as the \$3,000 funding does, and Groskopf hopes it will get through winter. Shrikhande reported that we are the first library in Iowa to have a social worker on staff. Des Moines has a table staffed twice per week by an outside agency. Groskopf said there is a lot of interest statewide in how we manage it and what we learn. A presentation on it at the Iowa Library Association conference may be in the future. Shrikhande also noted there is an interactive map showing all U.S. libraries that have a social worker.

Council Liaison Report: None.

New Business: The first item of new business is to approve the Special Collections Collection Development Policy. Lance motioned to approve with a second by Cooper. There was no discussion. Roll call vote had Engelmann, N. Motto, Cooper, Heinrichs, Shrikhande, Lance and Imming all voting yes to carry the motion. The second item of new business was to approve the Library FY2023-28 Capital Improvement Program requests. Engelmann motioned to approve with a second by Shrikhande. Engelmann asked about the enhanced self-service in FY24. Groskopf confirmed that is for equipment related to upgrading the self-checks to a kiosk where one could pay for fines, printing, etc. Added projects include the geothermal system maintenance at Eastern in FY26, carpet at Main on the second floor and in Special Collections in FY28, and masonry repair/maintenance at Eastern in FY28. There is a request for additional materials

funding in FY23 and FY24 to enhance the diversity of the collection reflected in the gaps shown in the audit. There is also additional funding request for the electronic equipment replacement budget for FY24 and FY25 due to the anticipated need for computers that can work with Windows 11. Heinrichs inquired about the Fairmount roof as he'd seen a roofing contractor when at that library. Groskopf replied that it is out of warranty and it is patched a few times per year as leaks develop. A roll call vote to approve the requests was held with N. Motto, Cooper, Heinrichs, Shrikhande, Lance, Engelmann and Imming all voting yes to carry the motion. The third item of new business was to approve the FY2023 Operating Budget request for the Library. Heinrichs motioned to approve with a second by Engelmann. In discussion, Engelmann said the comparison field added made it easy to see where the changes were from last year. Imming noted the news that natural gas costs are expected to be very high this year and wondered if the lower utility budget line would cover it. Groskopf hopes it will cover expenses but said the added expense is likely to be a city-wide issue and all buildings will need to maintain heat. The City does have budget reserves that may come into play to cover the inflated cost of energy. Cooper, Heinrichs, Shrikhande, Lance, Engelmann, N. Motto and Imming all voted to approve the FY2023 Operating Budget request. The fourth item of new business was to close the Libraries on April 28, 2022 for a staff training day. Shrikhande motioned to approve and Engelmann seconded. With no discussion, a roll call vote had Heinrichs, Shrikhande, Lance, Engelmann, N. Motto, Cooper and Imming all voting yes. The fifth item of new business was to approve the Library Director's performance review. Imming noted there is not a closed session scheduled for this since the survey comments from the Trustees were all extremely positive and he felt there was no basis to use the clause "to prevent needless and irreparable injury" to Groskopf's individual reputation. Closed session is also more complex with the virtual meeting option, plus the need to create an audio recording and take detailed minutes to accompany the sealed recording. After explaining this, he did make the offer of tabling it and having a closed session at a later time. Cooper motioned to approve the Library Director's performance review and Shrikhande seconded. Imming thanked Groskopf for her fantastic efforts and Cooper added in that it has been a difficult time period. Groskopf said she appreciates the Board's support over the past couple of years in decisions that have been made to keep the public and staff safe. A roll call vote was held with Shrikhande, Lance, Engelmann, N. Motto, Cooper, Heinrichs and Imming all voting yes to carry the motion. The last item of new business was to approve the Library Meeting Room Use policy. Groskopf noted this was not reviewed at the last meeting and it is only adding an asterisk with definition at the bottom for clarity on what is meant by a non-profit organization in the policy. Many home school groups, crafting groups, etc, that are not official 501c3 non-profit organizations utilize the rooms. Engelmann motioned to approve and Cooper seconded. With no discussion, the roll call vote had Lance, Engelmann, N. Motto, Cooper, Heinrichs, Shrikhande and Imming all approving to carry the motion.

Old Business: Imming reported the Board will be reviewing the Library Director applications confidentially. The executive committee and A. Motto will be meeting with Bradbury Miller next week to cut down the number with another reduction in November. They hope to hire a new Library Director in December.

Board Training: Groskopf felt it was a good time to refresh the Board on how the Library handles censorship challenges since some have been in the media lately and spent the next 25 minutes going over what they are and how the Library handles the process with policies we have in place. This is nothing new; there have been censorship challenges for a long time. One example is that German language materials were banned in Iowa during World War I. The Davenport Public Library (DPL) has typically received a formal challenge to an item once every few years. Informal complaints happen a couple of times per year often through a comment card or a conversation about an item. The formal challenge is when the patron fills out the official Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. This is part of a Board approved policy. Engelmann asked if the Board could be notified of any informal complaints, even just through the monthly Director's Report. Once a formal complaint is lodged, it goes to a staff committee made up of the Director, Assistant Director, Youth Services supervisor and Information Services supervisor. They look at reviews, where it is placed in the Library and at the item's content before a determination is made of what to do. They respond to the complainant with the decision. If the complainant wants to pursue it further, it can come to the Board for a final decision. There is no additional appeal beyond the Board's decision. There have been none that have come to the Board in a very long time; in fact, no one could remember an instance. She then reviewed a slide from the American Library Association (ALA) that covers possible reasons for challenges. Some are cyclical and reflect what is going on in the country or politics at the time. About half of the challenges are initiated by parents. Only one percent are initiated by students. Sometimes an organization, usually political or religious, gets behind a censorship push. Many challenges are not so much to get rid of an item completely, but have it moved out of the juvenile section to the teen section, or

teen to adult. Either way, it is a censorship challenge. The next slide showed where challenges take place, with public libraries leading at 43%. Schools (38%) and school libraries (15%) are the next highest categories and Groskopf couldn't say why those were not combined since they are intertwined. The school library has a different role than the public library in supporting curriculums and they are often more restrictive than public libraries. The next slide tracked the "what" is challenged showing that books or graphic novels lead at 73%. Programs come in at 14%. The next slide was the make-up of the 156 challenges tracked in 2020. The year before had around 350 challenges, so it was likely a Covid-impact with the much lower number. The next slide showed the bullet points on how DPL handles challenges through the Request for Reconsideration form, the staff committee and Board appeal. The next slide contained the key provisions of the Materials Selection Policy. Parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide choices made by their minor child(ren) and the Library does not stand in the place of the parents. The next slide included that library materials are selected for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. If a controversy on an author arises years after an item is published, that material will not be removed solely on that instance if the material is of sound factual authority. Heinrichs asked about R-rated DVDs and if children could check them out. Groskopf responded that it falls under the parents being responsible for what their child(ren) check out and view. After the discussion of some on the Board regarding challenges they've seen through the years, Groskopf noted that we want to see the challenges go through the process we have in place. Some silent challenges include items being hidden or purposefully mis-filed within a library, stolen outright or checked out and claimed lost to get them off the shelves. The goal is to have a clear, transparent process to own ones opinion and participate in the process.

With no further business, Engelmann motioned to adjourn at 1:05 p.m. Shrikhande seconded and all approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Kasey Shipley, recorder