



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
3939 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
BOARD OF TRUSTEES: SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 1st, 2021

Drafted
9/3/2021

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public who wished to attend could do so in-person, by calling 1-312-626-6799 and entering **meeting ID 832 1433 7849** and **passcode 654514**, or by Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83214337849> at the scheduled meeting time. For questions please call the library at 763-706-3690.

The meeting was called to order in the Library Community Room by Secretary Teresa Eisenbise at 5:30pm.

Members physically present: Tricia Conway; Christopher Polley; Teresa Eisenbise; Carrie Mesrobian; Gerri Moeller; Nick Novitsky (Council Liaison). **Members remotely present:** N/A. **Members Absent:** N/A. **Also present:** Renee Dougherty (Library Director); Nick Olberding (Recording Secretary); Ben Sandell (CH Communications Dept). **Public remotely present:** Paul Cram (Patron/Volunteer).

1. The **Minutes** of the **August 4th, 2021** Board Meeting were **moved and unanimously approved**.
2. The **Bill Lists** were reviewed, **moved, and unanimously approved**.
 - a. ACL Purchase Selectors are generally receptive to suggestions and requests; the public may submit requests through the ACL Catalog website.
 - b. Ear Buds: Item offered for re-sale; \$5.
 - c. 21st Century Grant: These expenses require no Board approval; financed by a 3-year grant program (currently the final school year) received by ISD-13, and shared with the CHPL/Parks & Recreation Dept.
 - d. Somali Books: Very happy to see these more diverse purchases for our community.
3. Operating Budget Review: We're in good shape in most categories; approximately 52% spent in 67% of the year.
 - a. If we under-spend, the remainder carries over in the Library fund. We are required to maintain a fund balance of 45% of our annual budget to cover expenses between bi-annual tax payments and unforeseen expenses.
 - b. Line 2025: was eliminated, and those funds were split up between Line 2170 and 3050.
 - c. Line 2170/3050: Close to used up, and may need to borrow from other Lines. With less standard programs, we are spending more on program supplies for take-home craft kits and self-directed programs such as story and poetry strolls.
 - d. Line 4000: almost spent due to the first year of ongoing support for Self-Check Stations (previous maintenance and support were included in the initial contract agreement).

Old Business: N/A

New Business:

4. **Conversation with City Communications Coordinator (Ben Sandell):** Introductions were made, and the Board expressed their intent to network with appropriate individuals/groups in order to promote the Library, improve engagement with the community, clarify roles as Board or Commission members, and discover channels to strengthen the Library's bond with the community (mainly via social media and online channels, in addition to receiving feedback via a community survey). **What are the social media platforms available to us from the city (CM)? What is the process/degree of difficulty involved in getting messaging through regarding either the library or the Board through the city's communications channels (CM)?** The City has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and SurveyMonkey; additionally, individual departments (Library, Police, Fire, Parks/Rec, and Liquor) have their own Facebook Pages; departments may request that posts be cross-promoted on the main City Page, but only the most priority items (to avoid over-saturating the public). **Could we have our own social media presence/page to receive community feedback as Library Board members (CM)?** A Board Facebook Page could be created, but you need to be careful not to violate Open Meeting Laws, and fewer Pages

are better in regards to management and follower base. **Could we have our own city email addresses that could also be public for citizen communication (CM)?** No immediate answer and they were advised to not use their regular personal account, but could possibly create a dedicated Board e-mail address (which would be subject to public data requests, and could also violate Open Meeting Law if used incorrectly). **Would the Communications Department be able to assist with building a dedicated chpl.org library website?** It is not advised to build an external dedicated website because it would require a serious financial and management burden; the City is in the process of refining the City website and may be able to add in aspects that we feel are missing (e.g. accessible buttons for Catalog, Events, and MyAccount and being less text heavy and include more images. For a community survey, we should use SurveyMonkey, which the city already has an account for, rather than Google Forms. **How long will the survey be open (TE)?** Ben suggested a good timeframe is two weeks. **How will the Library Board access the data from the survey (TE)?** The Board would likely not have direct access, but receive a breakdown from the City/Library after the survey wraps up. **How will the survey be shared and advertised (TE)?** It is advised to time the survey with one of the City's print or digital newsletters (more likely the print version with QR Code, unless the e-newsletter boosts its subscriber numbers, which is only at around 200 so far).

- 5. Talking Points for Eliminating Overdue Fines:** It is the intention of the CHPL Board to eliminate overdue fines starting January 1st, 2021. This would only include existing overdue fees currently on the books, and eliminate fines in future. Replacement costs for lost and damaged items would still be assessed and collected from patrons. In 2020, fine revenue was \$4,403 (~0.42% of the annual budget). Members discussed that overdue fines cause more harm individual library users for very little revenue. Overdue fines can create a barrier to learning, and in many cases, they bar library use to the community members who need our services the most. Additionally, some feel a stigma related to late fees, which may result in a patron just keeping the late item and never coming back; it's our mission to circulate materials with equity. Getting items back so they may go to the next patron is more important than punishing someone for being tardy. Renee has put together a document with key points to present to the City Council at a November City Council Work Session about the Library Budget; there will likely be additional statistics and map of current fine-free library systems included.

For Your Information:

- 6. May/June Operational Reports:** Included in Agenda Packet for informational purposes; no review.
- 7. Library Board Guests:** We'll know at a later date if guests will be able to attend, but it's our hope that we will have a representative(s) from the CHPL Foundation in October, and from the Friends of the Library in November.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 6:46 pm, and seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas P. Olberding
Recording Secretary, CHPL Board of Trustees