

City of St. Helens
Library Board
Minutes from Monday, November 8, 2021
St. Helens Public Library via ZOOM

Members Present

Dan Davis, Chair
Rob Dunn, Vice Chair
Jana Mann
Jessica Sturdivant
Diana Wiener

Councilors in Attendance

Stephen Topaz

Staff Present

Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Dan Dieter, Library Board Secretary

Members Absent

Becky Bean
Melisa Gaelrun-Maggi, Past Chair
Amanda Heynemann

Guests

Rachael Barry, City of St Helens



CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:16 pm by Chair Davis.

INVITATION TO CITIZENS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: Minutes were reviewed and approved.

UPDATES: NATIONAL NOVEL WRITING MONTH – NOVEMBER: Member Mann gave an update on this year's event. The local participants miss the ability to meet in person, which is still not allowed by the national organization. Most of the writers are 'on' their wordcount. There are 7 members participating, but there may be more out there on their own. LIBRARY BOOK CLUB – NOVEMBER 18, 7PM: Director Jeffries stated that the next Book Club meeting is Thursday, November 18 and the theme will be 'food'. There were 7 participants at the last gathering.

STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION: BOARD MEMBERS' ENVIRONMENTAL SCANS: Rachael Barry, the Government Affairs & Project Support Specialist asked board members how their inquiries about the Library and Library resources were received. Member Dunn stated that he talked to a number of people and the majority said that books and youth programs were what came to mind when they thought about the Library. Library programs offer a choice other than team sports activities in the community. There was a comment that the Library should be a place where you can find out about community

resources, like how to get help with paying a bill, etc. Chair Davis stated that he received good feedback, and that the feeling was that the Library is necessary because not everyone can afford to buy their own books. There was also a sense that holding a paper book was better than an electronic book, something about the feeling of paper, being able to turn pages, etc. Member Wiener stated that she received feedback from parents with young children who appreciate the affordable resources, access to computers for schoolwork, access to educational materials, etc. Member Sturdivant stated that she received feedback from parents who were concerned about the cost of lost and damaged materials, and that they would rather wait until their children are reading on their own and can be more responsible for checked out items. The risk associated with having to be responsible for those costs can give some parents pause. Also, two working parents can find it difficult to attend programs. Member Sturdivant also stated that it is an invaluable service for teachers to use the library as a resource for getting material for themes used in the classroom, and to have access to new titles on racism, etc. Councilor Topaz stated that he had talked to someone in the community about Community Action Team (C.A.T.) and the need for partners like the Library to offer pathways to benefits in the community. Director Jeffries mentioned that C.A.T. used to print a Resource Guide but has not been active in that publication because of the pandemic. Chair Davis mentioned that he found a link for the 2020 publication of the Resource Guide. Director Jeffries also mentioned the bulletin boards in the hallway at the Columbia Center (Library building) that are populated with flyers and brochures for community organizations. Director Jeffries also mentioned that the Library has been a traditional place for people to find resources available on the public computers.

REVIEW OF CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN: Rachael Barry stated that the Library staff performed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis and she would like to do the same with the Board. Perhaps this analysis could be done at the next board meeting if the Board is able to meet in person. There was a question of whether this is the best time to work on the strategic plan given that there is a change in leadership on the horizon. The group discussed this dilemma. Director Jeffries stated that it is a good idea to give the basis of expectations for the new director, and that is much preferable to have done the work in getting a direction identified. Rachael Barry stated that it is important to be clear on values and mission statements, as those statements will help the new person get acclimated. Councilor Topaz agreed that having a new director come in with the work being set up by Director Jeffries will be helpful, as we don't want to lose our horsepower. Rachael Barry stated that the core values need to be clear so that foundation is available when the recruiting begins, so she recommended that Board members look over the current Strategic Plan as well and the current mission statement and underline key words that indicate values that can then be used to help formulate future values statements.

REVIEW LIBRARY STATISTICS: Director Jeffries shared statistics for Library use over the past five years. The statistics show the impact of the pandemic, specifically the drop in circulation of materials (i.e., books and DVDs), and the rise in digital downloads of materials (i.e., music, books, and audiobooks.) Since the Library has reopened things are slowly picking up. Statistics for programs in the current period will be tallied at the end of the year for statistical reporting.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT: RETIREMENT: Director Jeffries announced her retirement as the Director of the Library. The official last day of service is January 31, 2022. 'Congratulations' has been the overwhelming response. Director Jeffries plans to spend more time with family. The group discussed the changes that will occur with a transition to a new Director. Director Jeffries stated that City Recorder Kathy Paine mentioned that there may be a 'teams' approach to interviewing candidates, and that would allow participation by board members and community partners, as well as City staff and Library staff. Director Jeffries stated that it is unlikely that a new Director would start before she leaves, but that an interim Director has been assigned in the past, and that would likely happen again if needed. Youth Librarian Kolderup filled that role in late 2019. The group discussed the plan and offered to help where they could. WHEN TO RESUME IN-PERSON MEETINGS?: The group discussed meeting in person at the next board meeting to work on the SWOC with Rachael Barry as part of the regular board meeting. Members who are absent at this meeting will be asked if they would be available to meet in person. CHANGE DATE OF JANUARY MEETING: Director Jeffries asked that the January Board meeting be moved from Monday January 10 to Tuesday January 11 because of a conflict in scheduling.

CITY COUNCILOR'S REPORT: Councilor Topaz stated that given the Makerspace is a milestone for the Library and Director Jeffries, that it is also important to look back at the many milestones in the past.

BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS / COMMENTS / QUESTIONS: N/A

SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS: Chair Davis identified the following items: Update from the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) activities; update from the Book Club meeting in November; Board members should read the Mission Statement and be prepared to work on changes; Board members should read through the current Strategic Plan and highlight elements to discuss; and think about ways to support Youth Librarian Kolderup if she is selected as the interim Director.

NEXT MEETING: The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, December 13, 2021 at 7:15 p.m. in person at the Columbia Center.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm.

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Respectfully submitted by:

Library Board Secretary, Dan Dieter

2021-2022 Library Board Attendance Record

P=Present E=Excused Absence U=Unexcused Absence

Date	Bean	Davis	Dunn	Gaelrun-Maggi	Heynemann	Mann	Sturdivant	Wiener	VACANT
07-12-2021	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	
08-9-2021	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	
09-13-2021	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	
10-11-2021	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	E	
11-8-2021	E	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	
12-13-2021									
01-10-2022									
02-14-2022									
03-14-2022									
04-11-2022									
05-9-2022									
06-13-2022									