

**Meeting Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: November 17, 2020**

**Call to Order:** At 4:30 pm President Hill called the regular meeting of the River Forest Public Library Board of Trustees to order. The roll was taken:

- Trustees Present: Bevan, Calabrese-Berry, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, Smedinghoff, and Stierwalt.
- Also Present: Joanna Bertucci (RFPL, Interim Co-Director) and Amy Grossman (RFPL, Interim Co-Director)

**Visitors and Guests**

- Ms. Cathy Ruggeri
- Mr. John Schwartz

President Hill made the following announcement at the start of the November 17, 2020 meeting. Governor Pritzker signed Bill 2135, which specifies requirements for meetings of public bodies while Illinois is under a state of emergency and disaster declaration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill states that if an in person meeting is not practical or prudent, members of the public body can call into a meeting as long as one Trustee or the Chief Executive Officer is present at the public body's physical location. All votes must be roll call votes and the meeting must be recorded.

In order to comply with this law, Interim Co-Directors Joanna Bertucci and Amy Grossman are present at the River Forest Public Library building (735 Lathrop Ave., River Forest, Illinois) and the meeting is being recorded via Zoom.

**Consent Agenda:**

- a. Minutes of the Regular Meeting: October 20, 2020
- b. October 2020 Revenue and Expense reports
- c. October 2020 Warrant List
- d. October 31, 2020 Balance Sheet
- e. Resolution honoring Library Director, Sue Quinn
- f. Policy Revisions: Telework policy – date update
- g. Purchase 2 bibliotheca self check machines, \$20,486 – Capital Improvement Fund

President Hill asked if Trustees would like any items taken off the consent agenda. Trustees did not request any items be removed from the consent agenda and did not have any questions.

Trustee Smedinghoff moved to approve the consent agenda, items a.-g. Trustee Long seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

**Roll Call Vote:**

- Ayes: Bevan, Calabrese-Berry, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, Smedinghoff, and Stierwalt.

## Facilities Committee

- Trustee Calabrese-Berry reported that the Facilities Committee met on October 28 to review the space analysis. Trustee Berry also noted that the exterior masonry work, bi-annual HVAC inspection, and the 11-month warranty inspection for the lobby/staff spaces renovation project were completed.
- Ms. Bertucci shared an updated space analysis with the Board.
  - The imperative project that remains is addressing the sliding glass door in the foyer. Ms. Bertucci explained that removing the sliding doors could be completed as a maintenance project, as opposed to a capital one, to be a more cost effective way to provide easier ingress/egress for the public.
  - The meeting room update is categorized as an essential/important project. Ms. Bertucci recommended that the space should be evaluated post-pandemic. At this point, it is hard to know what improvements to recommend. Additionally, the room will be used to quarantine materials for the near future.
  - The public washrooms were assigned a priority level of desirable. Aesthetic updates (new dividers, hand dryers, and lighting) were completed in 2015.
  - Other desirable projects include updating patron furnishings (tables, chairs, etc.) throughout the library, which should not be addressed until full library services are restored.
- President Smedinghoff asked about the status of the plumbing in the public washrooms. Mrs. Bertucci answered that the plumbing and fixtures are original to the 1990 renovation and are currently functioning.
- President Hill asked about the staff washrooms. Ms. Bertucci explained that she and former Director Quinn had planned to address updates to the staff bathrooms in Spring 2020. Director Quinn had obtained an estimate from a local contractor for approximately \$10,000 to update the staff bathrooms. Ms. Bertucci is comfortable deferring this update, as there are more pressing capital needs. The renovation project did include some minor updates to the staff washrooms. Trustee Long suggested that the staff bathrooms should be added to the desirable category.
- Ms. Bertucci moved into discussing updates to the air handler project scope.
  - On November 3, Ms. Bertucci met with the President of Oak Brook Mechanical, Mark Sullivan, to review the scope of the air handler project. A slight adjustment was made to the estimate for an interior like-for-like replacement. Mr. Sullivan recommended that the Library consider adding a redundant heat source to the HVAC system. This could be accomplished in two ways. If the air handler is relocated to the exterior, a gas burner could be incorporated into the exterior unit as a redundant heat source. Alternately, if the air handler remains interior, a supplementary boiler could be added to the South mechanical room. Ms. Bertucci explained that the focus continues to be on the air handler, but wanted to present the Board with Mr. Sullivan's recommendation.
  - President Hill asked if the burner could be installed on the exterior (on RFPL's property), as the burner is approximately \$20,000 versus \$60,000 for a supplementary boiler. Ms. Bertucci did not believe that was an option, but will confirm with Mr. Sullivan.

- Trustee Hopkinson also asked Ms. Bertucci to get some information on the level of noise an exterior unit would produce. Ms. Bertucci will follow-up with Mr. Sullivan of Oak Brook Mechanical.
- President Hill reached out to Eric Palm at the Village of River Forest to ask if he would meet at the library to see the interior and exterior spaces that could be potentially impacted by the air handler replacement. The sense from previous conversations was that the Park District wanted to expand the field in Centennial Park and the air handler exterior relocation would not mesh well with their plans. Mr. Palm, Lisa Scheiner (Assistant Village Administrator) and Cliff Raditz (Building Official) will be onsite in late November to review the project scope with President Hill and Ms. Bertucci.
- Trustee Hopkinson will reach out to Park District Commissioners Cargie and Libera after President Hill and Ms. Bertucci meet with Mr. Palm and his team.

### **Patron Suggestions**

- None

### **Interim Co-Directors' Report**

- Ms. Bertucci and Ms. Grossman explained that as of Tuesday, November 17, 2020, RFPL closed the building to the public. Curbside delivery or vestibule pick-up is available for patrons. This change in service model was recommended to President Hill in light of Cook County's Stay-at-Home advisory, which took effect Monday, November 16. Most area libraries have also moved to this model.
- Ms. Grossman is sending staff weekly communications regarding how COVID-19 is affecting RFPL staff. In the last three weeks, five members of RFPL were under quarantine as they either were presenting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or exposed to an infected individual. Ms. Grossman recommended that current staffing levels remain in place, as we will likely have staff that will need to quarantine in the future.

### **President's Report**

- President Hill read a thank you note to Trustees from former Director Quinn.
- President Hill attended three sessions at the annual meeting of the Illinois Library Association (ILA) in October. Those sessions included a presentation on legal board meetings, new materials, and a breakout session on hiring and onboarding facilitated by Ms. Grossman. President Hill praised Ms. Grossman for her presentation.
- President Hill and Ms. Bertucci attended a meeting regarding the River Forest Civic Center Authority Building project.
  - President Hill reported that at this time the focus is on building a new building on the current Community Center property.
  - The cost for the building is approximately \$43 million dollars. At this point, the funding model for this potential project is unclear. Funding sources could include

upfront contributions from the taxing bodies based on their square footage allocation within the building, donations, and a bond issue.

- The project is still in the feasibility stage and no decision is expected from RFPL's Board at this time.
- Trustee Long thanked President Hill for making contact with Mr. Palm regarding our air handler project as this would give the Village an opportunity to see the constraints and needs of the Library. It would also give President Hill an opportunity to discuss the River Forest Civic Center Authority building feasibility study with a smaller audience.

## **New Business**

- Approval of 2021 Calendar of Meetings
  - President Hill asked for a motion to approve the 2021 Calendar of Meetings. Trustee Smedinghoff moved to approve, Trustee Hill seconded and a roll call vote was taken:
    - Ayes: Bevan, Calabrese-Berry, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, Smedinghoff, and Stierwalt.

## **Committee Reports**

### Finance Committee

- Trustee Smedinghoff reported that the Finance Committee met on November 4, to review the draft audit report. The final audit report was included with the November Board packet. The auditors issued a clean opinion for FY 19-20.
  - The MD&A report prepared by Ms. Bertucci lays the big picture, government wide financial position of the Library. The fund financial statements focus on the library operations and capital funds. For FY 19-20, the excess of revenues over expenditures was \$99,650.
  - Trustee Smedinghoff explained that typically the Board would vote to transfer the excess to the Capital Reserve fund after completion of the audit. In light of the evolving pandemic circumstances and financial uncertainty, the committee is recommending delaying the transfer until spring 2021.
  - Trustee Smedinghoff added that the decision to delay the transfer was informed by the fact that IL State Statute allows libraries to transfer excess revenues into a special fund, in our case the Capital Reserve fund. The law does not provide a provision to transfer those funds back into the operations account.
  - Trustee Smedinghoff also shared that RFPL is well positioned in IMRF. As of 12/31/2019, IMRF was at approximately 94% funded.
- Ms. Bertucci issued an RFP to 8 accounting firms. Responses are due in December and Ms. Bertucci will bring a recommendation to the committee at their January meeting.
- Ms. Bertucci reported that RFPL received a \$500 grant from the IL State Library for PPE expenditures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Trustee Smedinghoff shared that the Village of River Forest received favorable press for freezing their property tax levy request for 2020. RFPL elected to take the 2.3% increase, as property taxes comprise 98% of the Library's revenues.

#### Policy Committee

- President Hill opened the floor to discussion regarding the possible extension of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) as the law is set to expire on December 31, 2020.
  - Ms. Bertucci shared information obtained by HR Source that suggested that the FFCRA received overwhelming bipartisan support at the time of its passage, has not demonstrated a deleterious impact on businesses, and had proved to reduce COVID-19 cases by approximately 400 per day.
  - Trustee Bevan raised the question whether, if the FFCRA is not extended, would the library continue to offer the same benefits to library employees. President Hill said that while she believes this decision lies within the the Director's discretion, she wanted to poll the Board on this idea.
  - Trustee Calabrese-Berry said she would be willing to extend FFCRA if the Federal Government did not and felt this was in the Director's discretion.
  - Trustee Hopkinson requested additional to time to formulate an opinion.
  - Trustee Bevan did not feel the decision to extend the policy was in the Director's discretion, but would be amenable to a temporary provision provided for paid sick time in light of the current public health crisis. The Board will meet in early December and could approve a policy recommendation at that meeting.
  - Trustee Long felt it was unlikely that FFCRA would be extended beyond December 31, 2020 and that from a policy perspective some sort of provision to give the Director more discretion would be appropriate.
  - Trustee Smedinghoff would be in favor of some sort of short-term policy to cover sick time. Without paid time off, Trustee Smedinghoff believes there is a disincentive for staff to stay home from work when they are sick.
  - Trustee Stierwalt agreed that a provision should be put in place.

#### Library Director Search Task Force

- Trustee Bevan reported that the first phase of the library director search is complete. HR Source received 26 resumes, seven of which were phone screened, and six candidates were interviewed by the search task force. At this point, there appear to be two finalists eligible for Board interviews. These interviews are scheduled for Sunday, December 6 at 1 and 3 pm. The format (in person vs. virtual) for these interviews is still being determined. The task force is working on questions and will share a draft with the Board for feedback shortly. The candidate will also prepare and present a 5-10 minute presentation as part of the Board interview.
- The Management team will have an opportunity to meet with the finalists on December 2 and 9. Ms. Bertucci will facilitate these interviews and Trustees Bevan and Long will observe. Staff will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on each candidate, which will be compiled by our HR Source recruiter.

Trustee Calabrese-Berry left the meeting at 6:15 pm.

#### RF Collaborative Committee

- Trustee Long reported that this committee has disbanded for the near future.

#### RFPL Foundation Liaison

- Trustee Long shared that the Foundation met on October 27.
- A \$10,000 grant was awarded to RFPL for the purchase of a new self-check machine.
- The annual appeal letter will be mailed soon.

#### Old Business

- None

#### Adjournment

- At 6:33 pm President Hill asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Smedinghoff moved that the Regular meeting be adjourned and Trustee Long seconded. A roll call vote was taken:
  - Ayes: Bevan, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, Smedinghoff, and Stierwalt.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Hopkinson  
Secretary