

**DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
JANUARY 25, 2023, 7:30 P.M.  
KIDS PROGRAM ROOM**

**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Land Acknowledgment.** President Gigani called the meeting order at 7:30 p.m. and led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance. President Gigani read aloud the Downers Grove Public Library Land Acknowledgement.
2. **Roll Call.** Members present: Trustee Carissa Dougherty, Trustee Dave Humphreys, Trustee Barnali Khuntia, Trustee Marti Sladek, President Swapna Gigani. Absent: Trustee Bill Nienburg.

Also present: Library Director Julie Milavec, Business Office Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis, Media Lab Coordinator Ed Bromiel, Building Operations Director Ian Knorr.

3. **Welcome to Visitors.** President Gigani welcomed visitors and thanked them for their interest in the library.
4. **Approval of Minutes.**
  - a. November 16, 2022 Regular Meeting. President Gigani noted that on page 22, line 4, the word “patrons” should be changed to “patrols.” It was moved by Khuntia and seconded by Dougherty THAT the Minutes of the November 16, 2022 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as corrected. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
5. **Financial Matters.**
  - a. November 2022 Financial Report. At the end of November, the library was at 91.6% through the year. At that time, 104% of revenue was collected and expenditures were 86.8% spent. The Capital Replacement Fund was showing 92% spent.
  - b. December 2022 Invoices. It was moved by Humphreys and seconded by Sladek THAT the payment of December 2022 Capital Replacement Fund invoices totaling \$3,547.11, the payment of December 2022 Operating Fund invoices totaling \$137,866.49, the acceptance of December 2022 Operating Fund credit memos totaling \$33.08, and the ratification of November 2022

payroll totaling \$258,698.90 be approved. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

- c. December 2022 Financial Report. Library Director Milavec announced to the Board that there were no December financials included in the packet because library staff are still unable to access that information. Milavec called on Business Office Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis to explain what has been happening. Katelyn explained that when she ran the December reports, they were not capturing all of the library's expenditures or revenues for the month. She also noted that the November and December Fund Balance Reports were missing from the packet. Those are reports that the Village runs for the library and they are currently down a staff member in the Village's Finance Department. She has been in contact with Village staff and they are working to get everything in order so that the reports can be ran soon.

Katelyn also explained to the Board that the November Capital Replacement Fund Expenditure Report is not accurate. The library has been having issues with its mail and each month after checks are mailed out to vendors, some of them are returned for no apparent reason. TK Elevator's check never made it to them, so a new check was issued. As the Village went to void the initial check, it was discovered that it had been deposited, which means TK Elevator now has received two payments for the same invoice. They are in the process of refunding the library the initial check.

- d. January 2023 Invoices. Library Director Milavec noted that for January invoices, some payments come out of Fiscal Year 2022 and the rest come out of Fiscal Year 2023. It was moved by Humphreys and seconded by Sladek THAT the payment of January 2023 Capital Replacement Fund invoices for fiscal year 2022 totaling \$1,072.68, the payment of January 2023 Capital Replacement Fund invoices for fiscal year 2023 totaling \$4,003.22, the payment of January 2023 Operating Fund invoices for fiscal year 2022 totaling \$72,980.10, the payment of January 2023 Operating Fund invoices for fiscal year 2023 totaling \$119,885.35, the acceptance of January 2023 Operating Fund credit memos for fiscal year 2022 totaling \$39.27, the acceptance of January 2023 Operating Fund credit memos for fiscal year 2023 totaling \$149.16, and the ratification of December 2022 payroll totaling \$378,446.36 be approved.

6. **Public Comment on Agenda Items.** There was none.

7. **Public Comment on Other Library Business.**

Emily Owens moved to Downers Grove in 1981. She came from a town where there was one library that serviced four counties. When she came to Downers

Grove, she was so pleased to have a library for the town. She loves the library. She knows it isn't perfect and part of the reason it isn't perfect is because the world isn't perfect. But she supports the Board and what they are trying to do for the library wholeheartedly. She thinks that everyone should keep in mind that we need to work together to solve the problems. To attack each other is not productive. Specifically, she finds any discussion of banning books very objectionable. She has to wonder what the goal of banning books is. Is it to try to control thought? Because that's impossible and it's not desirable. There are whole genres in the library that she will hold her nose when she walks past but she will not take away people's right to read those books because they love them. Also, if you start banning books, where do you draw the line? You start with something you don't like, and then maybe it just gets bigger. This is a dangerous thing to start. If you truly don't want these books to be available, banning these books is the worst thing you could possibly do. Banned books are now on the best seller lists and that's because people think, "oh, it's banned, it must be great." She knows that with kids, if you tell them they may not do "X," they will figure out a way; they will do it. The worst thing you can do is tell them not to do something – they will do it. She also feels very strongly that opposition to the library's efforts to be inclusive are extremely distasteful. We are a diverse world and it is wrong to try to change people's perception to marginalize those that don't fit someone's cookie cutter ideas. It's a shame that it escalated to the point of threats of violence. It should never get to that point. If you don't want your kid to go, don't send them. Don't give them a ride. Tell them not to go and they'll figure out a way. We support kids and kids are our future. We need to let them be free to explore, to find themselves. Not tell them they must be a certain type of person. It's not going to damage them to know that there's something different out there. It's not going to change who they are. On the issue of patrons who misbehave, she does not want to say that it's only people without permanent residences; there are others who misbehave. It's an issue that needs some work and she supports the library in its effort to deal with that. She understands that the police department is aware and she thinks that an ongoing effort that may need some tweaking. The main thing she wanted to say is that we have different opinions and it's not a bad thing. We don't have to agree. It's not one group winning and another group losing. We have to work together to make it better. Let's not be adversaries; we should all be working for a common good.

Ilene Briner is in attendance to implore the Board to stop with the diversity and equity planning. Equity means active discrimination of certain people. Merit is not to be a determining factor. It's verboten. Equity means everyone ends up in the same place, to quote Kamala Harris. Does the Board not see the Marxism in this? Everyone should be at the lowest common denominator. That's the only way to be fair in this ideology. Diversity achieved by equity will take us to a place no one wants to be. Who would be the appointed arbitrators of human value in

the clans? Who will decide who is given a special privilege or pass on requirements? Who will decide on the equation? How long will the equation be in place before it's re-evaluated? This is Marxist. Equality is the only true barometer to be used. Let's look at DEI applied to sports. The football team would have equal white, black, Asian, Latino, and LGBTQ players, regardless of ability. There'd be no rules for practice or requisites for training. The team will be inclusive but no one on it will be happy because of the lack of discipline or ability to perform or compete. This is what the Board is proposing for the library. We need leadership to stop following the crazy ideology of DEI. It sounds good but it's destructive to the core. High quality service should be the goal and not social engineering. Does everyone remember the show American Idol? The judges were mostly complimentary to contestants but Simon Cowell was honest and fair. He treated people equally. If a performance was bad, he told the person that he needed more practice or should look for something better suited for him to do. This is how the library should be run – fairly. Everyone should know the rules and requirements. May the best person win the positions. America is the melting pot of the world, or so it used to be. Now, there's an effort to divide the country into groups. Everyone gets pigeon-holed into a group; a group that's defined and unchanging. This will never end up well. United we stand, divided we fall. Our library is diverse. Take it and treat everyone the same. Remember, a rising tide lifts all boats, regardless of size, shape, or color.

Laurie Temple has been a library hardcore cardholder in Downers Grove since she moved here in 1994. She wanted to congratulate the Director, staff, and Board for all of the recent awards and accolades that have been bestowed on the beloved library. It's not surprise to those who live here and use this wonderful place regularly, but having others recognize your efforts is always a nice thing. It's been a challenging year and she wants the Board to know how much she supports and appreciates the things they have done and continue to do, including DEI efforts, to ensure that all members of the community are welcomed and treated with respect and kindness in this treasured place.

Terri Williams has lived in Downers Grove for about 30 years. Her book club was talking about the library at their book discussion last month and they want to make sure the library knows how much they appreciate the lengths that the Interlibrary Loan Department goes to to get them their books. They also discussed the fact that the library has been willing to work with book discussion groups to get their books that are sometimes a little difficult to find. They have some from the 50's that came from all over the country and the Interlibrary Loans Department got them for the group and delivered them in a very timely, remarkably, miraculously, timely manner. They want to make sure that the Board knows how much they appreciate that and the fact that at the library, there's no judgement. It doesn't matter what book they ask for; they don't get any looks or

questions as to why they are checking out what they are. They really appreciate that and thank the library.

Noel Manley is the co-chair of the Downers Grove chapter of Awake Illinois, a peaceful organization dedicated to the education and safety of all the children. He sees that the library's native land grab continues to ignore his cousins, the Potawatomi people, who occupied this area prior to Downers Grove's founding. That's just a minor issue. Sadly, as many may know, Sacheen Littlefeather died last fall at the age of 75. If you are not familiar with Ms. Littlefeather, she was a young woman Marlon Brando used to issue a statement at the 1973 Academy Awards regarding injustices to Native people. Throughout her life, Ms. Littlefeather maintained that she was associated with the White Mountain Apache in Arizona. Shortly after her death, New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post, and other news outlets revealed that Ms. Littlefeather was in fact a fraud. Her real name was Marie Louise Cruz and it was discovered that her ancestors were Mexican, German, and Dutch; no Apache. Closer to home, another woman at the University of Wisconsin was exposed for similar fraud. Her name is Kay LeClaire. According to the New York Post, Ms. LeClaire claimed her native ancestry was Anishinaabe in Oneida. In fact, it was none of these. Instead, she leveraged this deceit in order to pass her artwork off as Native. The reason why he raised these two women is that both engaged in egregious forms of cultural appropriation. In this outrageous and racist behavior, as well as the unprecedented level of political activity practice of this library, he naturally went to the fists of rage webpage on the library's website. What did he find there regarding this diminishment of Native culture? Absolutely nothing. These well-published cultural crimes occurred and there's nothing but silence from this library. Why is that? Because Ms. Cruz and Ms. LeClaire did not fit the biased narrative perpetuated by the library and its staff. To be clear, the library's native language statement is meaningless, self-serving, and completely ignores the injustices that Native people suffer today. Shame on you. On another matter, he mentioned a few names: Jordan Dixon, Ramiro Mendez, Bryan McGhee, Demani Bass, Derrick Burnett, Ruben Olivares, Benjamin Lopez, Leticia Zaragoza, Charmaine Davis, Kavatish Wallace, Kadmiel Barney, Dominique Nash, Austin McAllister, Adele Jones, Jacque Kindle, Ulysses Taylor, Jarvis Watts, and 18 other individuals identified as unknown by the Chicago Sun Times. These are African-American and Hispanic people who've been murdered not more than 15 miles from this library in the city of Chicago since January 1 of this year. Again, he went to the fists of rage webpage on the Downers Grove Library website and found no reference to any of these young people. Sadly, they don't get a voice in our activist library, because quite frankly, they don't fit the narrative. He was told by a feckless Downers Grove politician that these matters are crimes, not hate crimes. However, he simply responded by saying that these lives are worth mentioning

and anytime a criminal picks up a weapon and points that at another human being and pulls the trigger, it's not an act of love; it's an act of hate.

Melissa and her family moved to Downers Grove about a year and a half ago. They have loved using the library ever since. It's a really welcoming place. Just this evening, her husband wanted to read a book at their son's school and the library went out of their way to find the book for them in Hinsdale so she can pick it up tomorrow. It's just wonderful service. She also wanted to comment that she really applauds the library for doing diversity, equity, and inclusion work. She thinks it's important that we step back and think about that. Going on a journey of exploration and seeing what is out there is just that – it's a journey of exploration. It does not mean that it is a list of actions and things that we are going to do. It's important. We need to see where we fit into the world of diversity, equity, and inclusion, because we live in a diverse world and we are raising children and members of society that are going to leave this town and want to know those things, and it's important. Also, this idea that we hire candidates that are less qualified because we put out a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement is racist. That is the only way to call it. It is a racist statement to think that someone that does not look like you, does not have the same level of education, and does not have the same anything is somehow automatically less qualified. That is the definition of racism. It is not okay. That is not the way we want to be for our children. She applauds the library for it. Also, when we bring in people of different backgrounds, that is how we learn. It's not because you have an advanced degree that makes you somehow better. It is that you have different experiences and you bring them to the table and that makes us richer, more than we can read in a book. We hear someone's stories from them. She applauds the library for doing that. She doesn't think it fixes everything but it's an exploration in research that the library did and she's thankful that the library has done that on behalf of her as a resident of Downers Grove.

Dave Deal is a proud Downers Grove since 1997 and he applauds and uplifts the Downers Grove Public Library for its embrace of diversity, equity, and inclusion. That's the best thing to happen to this town, ever. It has been proven time and again, look it up in McKinsey or PWC, that any organization and any business that embraces DEI outperforms those that don't. Why is that? It's because people who have different backgrounds, colors, beliefs, and walks of life uplift each other and make each other better thinkers because they're not all thinking the same way. Why is that? Because they are all different. Also, organizations that embrace DEI reflect the diverse nature of our society. He doesn't know if everyone else has looked around lately, but this is not a country of 100% white people the last time he checked. Any organization that embraces DEI more accurately and correctly reflects our society. They are more tuned in to their customer base. That's why DEI makes us a better organization. That mission is

the right thing to do; the right and sensible thing to do. That includes inclusiveness of the unhoused. He applauds the Downers Grove Public Library for including the unhoused in DEI. He's heard it said that DEI is a Marxist ideology. He heard this interesting point brought up tonight asking what would happen if athletic organizations actually embrace this kind of Marxist thinking and awarded people based on inclusive values as opposed to merit. With Black History Month coming up, he thinks now might be a good time to invite everyone to visit the Downers Grove Public Library and look up two words to answer that question: Jackie Robinson.

Tina Chan commented that since she is different from everyone in the room, she hopes that everyone can embrace what she has to say and include her. This Library Board has spent \$86,000 to hire Reesheda Graham Washington to spend a week interviewing library staff to come up with a book report called Equity Strategic Plan. Forty hours of interviews costing \$86,000 equates to about \$2,150 per hour. Many Downers Grove resident taxpayers who pay for this may not earn \$86,000 a year, let alone \$86,000 for a week's worth of work, like interviewing. Now the Library Board is going to pay this woman even more for her to implement the plan at the library. A total waste of taxpayer money and time with a clear goal from the report: Critical Race Theory needs to be taught and everyone is racist. It doesn't matter what you have done or what you've said; the study says everybody is racist, especially those of a certain skin color, which in and of itself is a racist perspective that defines racism. The Library Board and staff are spreading racism to indoctrinate children and adults. Why is this Library Board and staff so laser focused on pushing racism, Critical Race Theory, transgender ideology, and diversity, equity, and inclusion to children? Because when children learn these ideologies, they will become confused, dumber, and more obedient to tyrants and predators so children can be ruled over. Their teachers become their masters and the government becomes their God. World Economic Forum, WEF, openly says that those who were submitted to the COVID-19 lockdowns will also accept smart cities and social credit scores. Communist ideas like equity, that is where everybody ends up in the same place, will accept digital ID, digital crypto, recurring vaccinations, re-education camps, a police state where unarmed citizens are ruled by an armed cartel, and a one-world government are all conned into thinking they are a one-world citizen of the New World Order. That's the Downers Grove Library Board. When the library promotes transgenderism and drag shows, it is promoting Baphomet. Baphomet is both male and female with a goat's head, horns, breasts of a woman, and a penis of a man, wearing a pentagram necklace. Anyone can look it up. The Church of Satan worships Baphomet. The Library Board promotes satanic doctrines through transgender ideology and slave mentality by telling people one race is bad and another race is good. The Board has no right to promote the satanic propaganda and books about racism to influence how children and adults

behave. Don't say that the library is trying to be inclusive by pushing transgender-inclusive math, like two plus two equals five. On this day, January 25, 2023 at this library, she requests the library remove books about transgender life; transgendered surgery; diversity, equity, and inclusion; racism that stems from DEI; Critical Race Theory; abortion; books that promote anti-God, anti-family, anti-country, and anti-freedom; books that promote pornographic material; books about sex; and books that are satanic. They should be replaced with the following: books about the Constitution and Bill of Rights; books that promote family, life, God, patriotism, and good morals; books that promote marriage; books that promote growing food, cooking, working hard, how to do things, how to make things, how to fix things; books that promote common sense; and books like the Bible. The library's events, media, staff, and materials should reflect all that she stated. Get rid of RGW Consulting Group and Reesheda Graham Washington; she needs to go. All who support this consultant's work also need to go. She will not tolerate indoctrination of children and the community.

Werner Kiuntke was born in post-WWII Germany. His parents went through WWII in Germany and there was silence regarding anti-Semitism and book burning. His family came to this country in about 1953. There was silence about Jim Crow, about displacing Native Americans and reservations, about taking Japanese Americans and placing them in concentration camps. There was silence about a lot of things. He moved into the Downers Grove community about four years ago, so he is relatively new. He doesn't know the history of Downers Grove but he's used the library quite a lot. He is really happy to come here. What he would love to see is a greater emphasis upon non-European type literature because that is the focus many times, in terms of what we are talking about. How much do we spend time with Latin America, Asian, Arabic cultures. Those are things he would like to see. He is really proud of this community. In the last meeting and the meetings before that, there were quite a number of loud comments that were made about things that shouldn't be occurring here at the library. Those loud comments are heard by a lot of people but since he's relatively new to Downers Grove, his question is for everyone in attendance and the library. He thinks it's a great example of how much we are a welcoming community. He hopes there is no silence.

Sarah DeMink has lived in Downers Grove since 1966. She's seen a lot of changes in the community. Over the years, she has become more and more proud of the library and what it means. She realizes what an important institution it is for the whole community. It's an essential part of the community. She thinks this library is a perfect example of a place that provides a neutral, third party space besides one's residence and workplace. The library is a third space that's really important for everyone in the community. It provides a place of trust. It also provides a safe place for diverse groups. It doesn't matter who it is, it's a place of



safety. It also is a welcoming place; she can attest to that. She came to the library last weekend with her grandson who's from Riverside. She's been to their library but after bringing her grandson here, he was wowed and acted like the world was opening up for him. It's very friendly and accessible. The staff bends over backwards to find whatever is needed, as somebody else mentioned. The previous speaker who was saying the library should get more books about a list of topics – the library already has these books. The library is an amazing resource. She was reading online and there was a good article that she found by David Morris called the Public Library Manifesto: Why Libraries Matter. He lists all the important criteria that libraries fulfill for a community. This library does it already. Highlights of what were mentioned are that the library is a community builder; it is a community center for diverse populations – anybody can come; it's also a community center for the arts; it provides various workshops. It's a university for the people. It doesn't matter what someone's socioeconomic class is; you can come here and find out whatever information you need on whatever topic. Good or bad, you can find it here. It's also really important to mention that the library is a champion of youth. She says champion because they really are. They provide building blocks for children to learn; even in the playroom here they learn how to share, look up information, access things, and explore their world. Keep up the good work because the library is already doing a lot of these things. Don't let negative comments swerve the library away from what it's doing because the library is such an important cog for the community and she really appreciates that.

Frank Cody has been a resident of Downers Grove for the last 27 years. He's a retired IT manager and a co-chair of EQDG, which stands for Equality Downers Grove. He's also an avid library customer and he's here to support the library. He wanted to start with a quote from Marie Curie. "Nothing in life is to be feared; it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more so that we may fear less." He thought that was appropriate for tonight. For him, he needed to understand why so many people would come here and misrepresent the fine work of the Downers Grove Library and what he found was a concerted effort to mobilize citizens through lies and fear to get them to do their bidding and to get them to come here and attack this library. This effort was organized by a well-funded network of organizations and the message they broadcast is fear. Whatever you're afraid of, they have a message that fits. They have a message that's anti-vax, anti-mask, anti-mandate (no matter what the mandate is), anti-immigrant, anti-black, anti-history, anti-education, and anti-everything connected with LGBTQ. They don't even like rainbows. They are very pro-assault weapon and pro-Marjorie Taylor Greene. All of this is political. The people steering this are the same people that are steering the Republican party and right-wing groups across the country. Many understand the political truths. So what happens if we listen to them, take them at face value, and remove the books that talk about

gender issues, that tell stories of LGBTQ people. His late friend was telling him a story from when he was in his teens. He was desperately looking for stories by or about people like himself; anything that would help him understand what was happening to himself, something he dared not ask about. He wasn't an adult when this was happening; he was in seventh grade. He knew he was different. These people wish that the whole LGBTQ community would just disappear, but they're not going to. They are his friends and they are his neighbors; they are everywhere. They are in every family and we are not shoving them back into the closet. We are not telling them to hide the people they love. The library is the antidote to Dr. Google and its intermittent lies. We need the truth now. He read another quote from Amanda Gorman. "There's always light if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it." Please be the light.

Zoey Rei lives in Downers Grove. She's also an organizational psychology practitioner, which means anything to do with organizations and people at work. She studies topics like selection processes and how to make those performance reviews actually something you want to do. She would like to provide support and validation for the library's investment in DEI and the commitment to doing the work of intertwining them in each part of the organization. It was brought up earlier that the bill was \$86,000. It's really easy to focus on the bill but thinking about the return on investment shows it will be well worth it. It's a sound financial investment. It will position the library to continue to reach and obtain its community and financial goals for the long run. She also mentioned that when someone says a system is racist, it's not an accusation towards someone in the community. It means they found a process that was lifting up one race over another and wasn't meeting everyone's needs. It's horrible but more importantly a great opportunity to take action and change it towards one that is inclusive, equitable, and celebrates diversity. Selection processes have been brought up this evening. Usually with a selection process you might do a job analysis and in the job analysis is where you find what knowledge, skills, and abilities a person needs in order to do a particular job. There was mention of dropping the master's degree requirement for certain positions. If you found in this job analysis that you don't need that because a candidate could get experience or knowledge from other places, that's great. What she's saying is that the library should keep doing the work it's doing. It's challenging and difficult. She's seen the library's work in DEI in multiple areas and she applauds it and supports the continuation of that work. She noted that at the last meeting, there was an invitation for everyone to stay towards the end so trustee comments could be heard. She wants to invite people to stay to the very end and hear what they have to say because it's pretty great.

Julie Brethauer has lived in Downers Grove since 1991. Her husband grew up here and has lived here all his life. They moved to Downers Grove because they

wanted a community that was welcoming, inclusive, and diverse. She supports the library and all of its efforts in reflecting those values that they hold very dear.

**8. New Business.**

- a. Building Operations Department Presentation. Building Operations Director Ian Knorr presented details on his department. The Building Operations Department consists of three areas: facilities, safety, and custodial. He has five members on his team and they serve the community, patrons, and staff by providing an environment for everyone to enjoy. A lot of what they do is behind the scenes, though some of it is visible out on the floor like the light wall and the renovation of the Kids Café. Ian manages the mechanical equipment in the building, including the HVAC equipment, boilers, and lighting. The Building Monitors are here to make the library comfortable and safe for everyone who comes in by enforcing the Code of Conduct.
- b. Libraries Illinois Risk Agency (LIRA) Insurance Renewal – Property/Casualty and Workers Compensation. Library Director Milavec noted that while LIRA originally told libraries to budget for a 20% increase, the library's rate for 2023 will be going down by 3.26%. It was moved by Dougherty and seconded by Khuntia THAT the Libraries Illinois Risk Agency (LIRA) Insurance package renewal in the amount of \$58,524.71 be approved. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None.
- c. Bylaws Update. It is time to review and update the Board's Bylaws and the Policy Manual as whole. Section 1 is the Board's Bylaws. Library Director Milavec asked the Board for direction on how they want to proceed with the revision process. Discussion ensued and the Board decided to review the Bylaws individually prior to the February meeting. During that time, Milavec will gather some sample Bylaws from other libraries that the Board can review.

**9. Unfinished Business.** There was none.

10. **Library Director's Report.** Library Director Julie Milavec presented her report. She began by highlighting the Five Star Library designation that DGPL just received from Library Journal. The library is honored to be named a five-star library. It reflects the hard work of the Board and staff and the wonderful community that supports the library and continues to use it. The Chicago Tribune named libraries and library workers in Illinois the Chicagoans of the Year for Books, as they fought for dignity during a year of challenges. Julie, along with a number of her colleagues, were recognized in that article, which was a great honor. Staff had the strategic planning kickoff meeting with ReThinking Libraries, the library's strategic planning consultant and staff are off and running on survey

development. That survey will go live at the end of February. The QR code that goes directly to the online survey will be in the Discoveries newsletter for March/April that will start arriving in homes in the last week of February. Everyone in the community is invited and encouraged to take the survey. Information will also be coming about focus groups and community forums for the community to give their opinions about the library and to discuss what their vision is for the library. The focus groups should begin at the end of April. The elevator modernization project is done and the library got the final certificate of occupancy. Work on the renovation project continues. The Children's Services staff will be moving into their renovated workroom starting Monday, so everyone is very excited. Access Services will then move into the meeting room while their work area begins renovation. Three Freedom of Information Act requests have been received so far in January. The 2023 Illinois Public Library Per Capita Grant application will be submitted within the next couple of days. That grant is from the State Library and it's the primary source of state funding for public libraries. Julie reviewed the *Serving our Public 4.0: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries* checklist with the Board, which is part of the yearly application process. She also reviewed statistics of PITS Reports since the library began using the system in 2018.

It was moved by Humphreys and seconded by Khuntia THAT Agenda Item 13, Trustee Comments and Requests for Information, be moved before Executive Session. Motion passed by voice vote.

#### **11. Trustee Comments and Requests for Information.**

Trustee Sladek brought a friend to the library yesterday who works at another library in suburban Cook County. She asked if a staff member could give him a tour because he was curious about what all was going on here. He had a terrific tour and a very nice time. He reacted that programs and services are very similar. He was blown away by the little room where all the book club items are kept. After spending a couple hours here, he kept commenting that while the facilities are similar, two things stood out - one was the comparative progress DGPL has made on DEI and the other was how warm, welcoming, and friendly this library is. It wasn't anything particular that he could point to, although every staff member they interacted with was great. There's something about this library. While it's still an institution in a big box building, it has that kind of vibe. Some people take that for granted, but seeing that perspective from an outsider who is a librarian staff member elsewhere made her very proud. That comes from staff. That vibe and atmosphere is not about the color of the walls and what angle you put the bookshelves at, it's just about the overall sense that when you come in here, you're in a really nice, warming, welcoming space. It was presented in an objective observation from her friend and she just wanted that on the record.

Trustee Humphreys repeated the thank you to all who were in attendance and to the members of the community who are showing interest in the library and asking questions and wanting to know more. The Board hears those comments and appreciates that democracy does not work without an active constituency. He's not going to comment too much on any specifics from the night but the comment that sticks out in his head is to please be the light. He also commented that many other organizations are also experiencing issues with the post office. He has spoken with post office personnel and the issue is with the centralized processing centers. He commented on the elevator renovation, noting that while the downtime is inconvenient, it needs to happen to avoid unscheduled issues and necessary repairs. Thanks to Ian for keeping us safe and saving us money.

Trustee Khuntia is proud to be a Board Member of a five-star library. Thanks to Julie and the staff for providing such excellence service. She is incredibly proud of the Equity Plan and is incredibly proud of the diversity, equity, and inclusion that is being done at this library. Someone mentioned raising children for a global world and that's what it is – we are preparing our kids to go out into the world. She is honored to be a Board Member of this library and her job is easy because there is an incredible staff and Library Director.

Trustee Dougherty noticed that some of the invoices from Klein, Thorpe, and Jenkins are starting to come in and that was something the Board was concerned about as all the FOIA requests were coming in. She asked to see details at next month's meeting about where the library's legal fees are at. Trustee Dougherty also echoed what Trustee Khuntia said, that it's amazing to have a five-star library. Kudos to Julie and all the staff. Thanks to Ian for the presentation. She also gave a plug for the strategic planning process. Being a good or bad speaker is not important. The library wants to hear from everyone. You don't have to be a good speaker to share your experience and share what vision for the library is. She hopes that everyone can come and do that. She also appreciates everyone sticking around to hear the Trustee comments this evening.

President Gigani congratulated the library for being five-star. Having been a resident since 2014, it's not really a surprise to her. She has experienced the library in many capacities, from professional workshops to book clubs to activities with her children. It is very well earned and deserved. President Gigani called out the last few pages of each month's Board Packet, which includes monthly reports and accomplishments from each department. She thinks it is important for everyone to pay attention to all that is going on at the library. It is more than many people think. These reports provide so much information and even with how involved she is in the library, she doesn't know all of the things that are happening on a day to day basis. The strategic plan is how the library moves

forward and all of that information comes from patrons and staff. During planning for the last strategic plan, patrons asked for EDI - it came up in the forums. Patrons also asked for more cooperative work with other community organizations. Please look for the QR code and please be a part of what you want the library to be for you and your family.

Library Director Milavec forgot to highlight that the library broke a million circulations again in 2022. That is part of how DGPL becomes a five-star library.

**12. Executive Session.**

- a. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), for discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee. It was moved by Sladek and seconded by Khuntia THAT the Board move into Executive Session. Motion passed by voice vote.

The Board moved to Executive Session at 9:18 p.m.

President Gigani reconvened the Public Session at 10:07 p.m.

- 13. Action for Items Discussed in Executive Session.** It was moved by Dougherty and seconded by Humphreys THAT Library Director Julie Milavec receive a 5% salary increase. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. The Downers Grove Library Board of Trustees unanimously acknowledges Director Julie Milavec's hard work, leadership, and commitment to the library and the library, the library staff, and the Downers Grove community.

It was moved by Khuntia and seconded by Sladek THAT Library Staff move forward with a third party vendor to investigate the employment claims made against the library. Motion passed by voice vote.

- 14. Adjournment.** President Gigani adjourned the meeting at 10:10 p.m.