

**DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY
1050 CURTISS STREET
DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2023, 7:30 P.M.**

BOARD TRUSTEES:

Swapna Gigani	President
Carissa Dougherty	Trustee
Dave Humphreys	Trustee
Barnali Khuntia	Trustee
Bill Nienburg	Trustee
Marti Sladek	Trustee

GUESTS:

Julie Milavec	Library Director
Jen Ryjewski	Assistant Library Director
Katelyn Vabalaitis	Business Office Manager
Ed Bromiel	Media Lab Coordinator

Minutes prepared by Landon Leone of Minutes Solutions from a video recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and the Trustees having been given adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Swapna Gigani led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance and read aloud the Downers Grove Public Library Land Acknowledgement.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved that the minutes of the Board of Library Trustees meeting held on October 18, 2023, be approved as presented. Motion carried.

4. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

a. Financial Statements for the Period Ending October 31, 2023:

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved to accept the unaudited financial statements for the period ending October 31, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

The November 2023 and December 2023 financials will be presented, reviewed, and approved at the January 2024 Board of Library Trustees Meeting.

The October 2023 revenue and expenses report noted that the library is 83% through the financial year, with 75% of the expense budget reached and in good financial standing.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Marcia Prichason, a Downers Grove resident, thanked the Library Trustees for maintaining a robust LGBTQ selection of readings in the library. She did express concern about other residents having issues with this LGBTQ selection of readings. She presented a solution involving additional resources should anyone decide to seek further knowledge and clarity on the topic.

Ilene Briner, a Downers Grove resident, reiterated her concern with the Land Acknowledgement and the role of the Catholic Church as noted in the acknowledgment. She requested that the acknowledgment be edited to read “Christian Churches” not “Catholic and other Christian Churches”, and thanked the Trustees for their time.

Linda Elsik, a Downers Grove resident, noted her support to have the Land Acknowledgement kept as is, but with a reference list added to the end should anybody seek further information on the historical context of the acknowledgment.

Noel Manley, a Downers Grove resident, presented further opinion that the Catholic Church should be removed from the Land Acknowledgement statement.

Werner Kiuntke, a Downers Grove resident, requested that the motion to re-write the Downers Grove land acknowledgment be unanimously rejected. He also requested that his request and others be added to the library records for future reference.

Ed Briner, a Downers Grove resident, voiced fears that the Downers Grove Library may not be safe for children in the community as, in his understanding, police are not allowed in the library campus building. He reviewed the current safety and security procedures and voiced the opinion that they are inadequate.

Julie Brethauer, a Downers Grove resident, supported the current Land Acknowledgement statement being kept as is.

Kathryn Deiss, a Downers Grove resident, expressed her support for both the library staff and the Trustees.

Norm Sidler, a Downers Grove resident, noted that the library currently encompasses over 10% of the Village's total budget. He proposed that the library be classified as its own entity for budget purposes via a signed petition.

Robin Tryloff, a Downers Grove resident, opposed the current motion to further re-write the library's Land Acknowledgement statement.

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved to extend the Public Comment section of the meeting by a further 15 minutes. Motion carried.

Laura Hois, a Downers Grove resident, seconded Norm Sidler's request for the library to be a separate entity within the Village with an elected Board of Trustees.

Janet Winningham agrees with the historical facts of the Land Acknowledgement and stated that

history is important to learn from. She thanked the Board for Coffee with the Trustees and encouraged them to hold more of those events.

Audrey Staron, a Downers Grove resident, voiced her support for not re-writing the current Downers Grove Land Acknowledgement statement.

Hillary Denk, a Downers Grove resident, thanked the library staff and Trustees for their hard work and opposed the motion to remove the Catholic Church from the current Land Acknowledgement statement.

Dennis Kirk, a Downers Grove resident, supported the proposed motion to amend the Land Acknowledgement statement to remove the Catholic Church from the statement.

6. **TRUSTEE COMMENTS**

Trustee Nienburg reiterated his proposal for the motion to amend the Land Acknowledgement statement to remove the words “genocide” as well as “Catholic Church” from the current Land Acknowledgement statement. His research shows that Catholic schools encompassed roughly 10-20% of Residential Schools across the United States. He noted that his main request was to have the Downers Grove Land Acknowledgement read as a more positive statement to encourage further research into the issue.

Trustee Nienburg presented a motion to suspend the Land Acknowledgement statement until a committee can be formed to work towards amending the statement to reflect the values of all Downers Grove residents.

The proposed motion was discussed again later in the meeting.

The Trustees agreed that Julie Milavec, Library Director, has done a fantastic job and that the Downers Grove Library is seen state-wide as a well-run community library – per the Illinois Library Association.

The Trustees reiterated their desire for the library as a workplace to remain a safe and harassment-free workplace.

7. **LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Julie Milavec reported that the library staff are working on a new, more graphical statistical report and template to be rolled out over the coming months.

The Land Acknowledgement citations have been confirmed and all links to such citations are now live on the Downers Grove Public Library website.

Julie Milavec reiterated that library security staff are on-site every hour that the library is open to ensure a safe environment for every member of the Village community.

Regarding library funding, the Downers Grove Public Library is funded by 95% property taxes. The library would be forced to pay for electricity, among other utilities and expenses, should the library be classified as its own entity within the Downers Grove Village.

Julie Milavec addressed the increasing negativity of Board meetings in recent months, which has bred negative encounters outside of the workplace towards library staff by some community members. She asked that verbal harassment cease as it is also negatively affecting staff applications and is hurting the hiring process for the library.

Julie Milavec cited all-time highs in digital checkouts and 10,000 kids attending library events over the past year.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Professional Architectural Services for Planning Study Proposal:

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved to approve the Professional Architectural Services for planning study proposal, as presented. Motion carried.

Julie Milavec outlined the current proposal for the Professional Architectural Services planning study.

b. Personnel Policy Update: *ACTION – The Personnel Policy updates will be sent to HR Source before they are presented to the Board of Trustees for final review and approval.*

Julie Milavec highlighted Personnel Policy updates, including the section on vacations, holidays, paid parental leave, and tuition reimbursement. Trustee Nienberg requested clarity on the cost associated with these Personnel Policy updates before the Trustees vote.

c. December Board Meeting:

On a motion duly made and carried, it was resolved to approve the cancellation of the December 2023, Board of Trustees meeting. Motion carried.

d. DGPL Land Acknowledgement Statement Rewrite: The proposed motion for the Downers Grove Public Library Land Acknowledgement statement rewrite will be voted on at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. FY2024 Work Plan:

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved to approve the FY2024 Work Plan draft document, so long as the proposed budgetary costs fall within the current and previously approved budget. Motion carried.

The FY2024 Work Plan draft document was reviewed by the Trustees. Trustee Nienburg noted that the budgetary costs for these items are not clear. Julie Milavec reiterated that the FY2024 Work Plan fits into the already approved budget from earlier this year.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved that the Board recess to an Executive Session.

The Board recessed to Executive Session at 9:56 p.m.

11. **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Library Trustees meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2024, at 7:30 p.m.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director

Director

Date

Date