

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

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2024, 7:00 P.M.**

BOARD TRUSTEES:

Swapna Gigani	President
Carissa Dougherty	Trustee
David 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 Rebecca Ernewein of Minutes Solutions from a video recording and edited by Business Office Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis

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 7:02 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President 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 made by Barnali Khuntia, seconded by Marti Sladek, it was resolved that the minutes of the Board of Library Trustees meeting held on November 15, 2023, and the December 13, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting be approved as presented. Motion carried.

4. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

On a motion made by Carissa Dougherty, seconded by David Humphreys, it was resolved to approve the payment of December 2023 Capital Replacement Fund invoices totaling \$37,104.00, approve the payment of December 2023 Operating Fund invoices totaling \$177,751.26, approve the payment of FY 2023 January 2024 Operating Fund invoices totaling \$85,991.01, approve the payment of FY 2024 January 2024 Operating Fund invoices totaling \$125,233.24, accept December 2023 Operating Fund credit memos totaling

\$164.66, accept FY 2023 January 2024 Credit Memos totaling \$89.98, accept FY 2024 January 2024 Credit Memos totaling \$10.39, ratify November 2023 payrolls totaling \$273,209.55, and ratify December 2023 payrolls totaling \$402,026.02, as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

The "Other Equipment" account listed in the expenditure report was confirmed to be the repair and maintenance for projects that do not have formal contracts. Library Director Julie Milavec noted that the Capital Replacement Fund expenditures are at 100.6% and the slight overage is due to the cost of VAV replacements.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Wool, a Downers Grove resident, expressed concern over alleged unethical behavior from Julie Milavec and Jen Ryjewski. He alleged that he sent emails that provided evidence and thorough detail of each incident, and only received a response from Swapna Gigani, who allegedly did not provide a reason for refusing to censure the staff members. The unnamed resident stated that he believes the Board lacks the ability to hold their members accountable for their behavior, and is pushing a radical progressive ideology. He also stated that he believes the provided definition of genocide in the November meeting is a mockery of victims of genocide.

Marsha Prichason, a Downers Grove resident, stated that she was subject to ridicule for using a cane, and noted the person who ridiculed her was also responsible for multiple complaints about the library's overall security. She stated that one of the Board Trustees had contributed to the land acknowledgement statement controversy, and said that Trustee prioritizes their own self-interests over the interests of the library. She reiterated her concern from the previous meeting over individuals who are trying to remove LGBTQ-related material from the library, and stated that Downers Grove should be a safe and inclusive space for all.

Ilene Briner, a Downers Grove resident, raised concern over the land acknowledgement statement, noting the wording creates confusion as to whether Downers Grove is on ceded or unceded land. She noted the land acknowledgement statement also includes some contradictions and political hyperbole and it should be adjusted. She shared the sentiment that the land acknowledgement statement should not be read at Board meetings immediately after the Pledge of Allegiance as it is insulting to those who have lost their lives defending the country.

Noel Manley made a statement in support of David Humphreys, who had stated at a November meeting that he wished there were fewer people in attendance at Board meetings, but noted that more people continue to attend now due to Downers Grove Public Library allegedly engaging in what is perceived to be a progressive political agenda. Noel Manley stated that the exploitation of Native injustice in the land acknowledgement statement is painting Downers Grove as a racist community. Noel Manley stated that he and members of his tribe have been able to vote since 1934, and what is mentioned in the statement is portraying a false narrative. He stated that he believes the statement fails to mention important Native achievements or adversity and that the statement should be rewritten.

Ethan, a member of Boy Scouts Troop 57 in Downers Grove, thanked the Board for allowing him to attend the meeting to listen in and work towards earning his merit badges.

Debbie Anderson Philips, a representative of EQDG, announced their second annual One Book One Town selection: **The House in the Cerulean Sea** by T. J. Klune, a book that was selected

due to its narrative of celebrating the differences among human individuals. She noted that there will be events discussing books held between March 11 and 14, 2024, consisting of parties at various local restaurants and the library.

Ed Briner, a Downers Grove resident, raised concern over the safety of children in the library. He stated there were 36 incidents in the library where the police were called. He also requested a correction in the November minutes. He stated that he did not review the safety procedure guide as there were allegedly no safety procedures for the library in place.

6. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Bill Nienburg clarified Ilene Briner's concerns with the land acknowledgement statement. He advised that his initial motion was to create a statement that acknowledged the views of the entire community. He noted there were no plans to revise the statement after adjourning in 2023, and believes there is no communication that the statement is being revised.

He mentioned that in November 2023, he raised the motion of suspending the current statement and placing it under the supervision of a newly formed committee with local Native patrons to help modify and improve the statement; however, DGPL staff took it upon themselves to work with the original people who made the problematic statement, inclusive of the offending statements about the Catholic Church. Bill Nienburg advised that he was not informed of these decisions and that his initial motion was discarded for 2023, raising concern with newer revisions being passed immediately and without any input of public opinion.

Barnali Khuntia mentioned appreciation that numbers were up in regards to library attendance. She noted an app that was promoted by the library that allows anyone to download books in any language. She expressed thanks to staff for listening to the community and updating the land acknowledgement constantly as new research is being discovered.

Carissa Dougherty noted Ed Briner's comments regarding the safety of children in the library, and pointed out discrepancies in the amount of police encounters that were brought up. Upon review, it was discovered only 15 police-related incidents occurred. It was noted many calls to the police were outside of the library's jurisdiction and were mostly traffic and parking disputes. Carissa Dougherty raised concern over the allegations that the library does not take child safety seriously, and requested ideas from the Board on how to counteract the spread of misinformation, and what recourse can be taken as needed.

Marti Sladek appreciates when staff take initiative. It is the Board's job to give direction at times but also accept recommendations from staff.

David Humphreys expressed gratitude to local communities who assisted those in need of food and shelter during the cold weather. He agreed that the land acknowledgement is designed to be altered, and that some research on the subject has changed over time. He noted that significant changes have been made to the library's safety protocol, but they are open to suggestions from the public. He mentioned that a police officer cannot be hired full time, but based on the library's recent survey, it indicated that most people believe the library is a safe place.

7. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Julie Milavec stated that library has no control over the Downers Grove Police Department's use of the library's business name and address within the dispatch logs, and noted that the numbers

are frequently used for calls not made by library staff and not occurring in the library. She stated such incidents should not be handled by library staff due to the nature of the incidents, and any such incidents not captured by the report would be on police record.

Julie Milavec highlighted the 2024 work plan tracker available on the library website. One of the projects includes installing additional security cameras, along with new access control methods within the building. David Humphreys noted a Building Operations Monitor is also on duty whenever the library is open and if an incident occurs, the monitor will go over the incident and it will be logged in the system.

Julie Milavec also asked the trustees to look at the new statistical reports included in the packet. She noted the Incident Tracker reports and commented that there were 15,000 more kids attending library programs in 2023.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. In-Service Day Closing:

On a motion made by Carissa Dougherty, seconded by Barnali Khuntia, it was resolved to close the library on the date of March 22, 2024, for a staff in-service day. Motion carried.

b. Libraries Illinois Risk Agency (LIRA) Insurance Renewal:

On a motion made by David Humphreys, seconded by Marti Sladek, it was resolved to approve the Illinois Risk Agency insurance renewal at a cost of \$66,169.06. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Julie Milavec stated that the coverages are very robust and are tailored to the needs of public libraries, and noted the 13.25% increase is mostly due to the unpredictable weather over the past year. LIRA advised libraries to budget for a 20% increase, so the actual increase is well within the budgeted amount for 2024.

c. Bibliotheca Annual Service and Maintenance Agreement Renewal:

On a motion made by David Humphreys, seconded by Barnali Khuntia, it was resolved to approve the Bibliotheca Annual Service and Maintenance Agreement renewal at a cost of \$38,138.96. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

The maintenance agreement includes all software that powers the equipment, such as the sorter, self-check units, and RFID pads, along with ongoing upgrades and a bi-annual tune-up of the sorter. The service includes priority scheduling in the event the sorter goes down. The sorter is also at the end of its lifespan, so it is difficult to get parts from the manufacturer, and the library is looking into options for replacing the sorter entirely.

d. Land Acknowledgement Statement Update:

On a motion made by David Humphreys, seconded by Marti Sladek, it was resolved to approve the Land Acknowledgement Statement update. Motion carried.

Staff have begun the process of updating the statement after reviewing the FAQ with input from Dr. Lowe, a professor of Native American Studies at Ohio State University, and the data has been amended multiple times since release and as new research comes forward. Bill Nienburg raised concern over amendments being immediately moved for approval instead of being reviewed by the Board, and Julie Milavec confirmed that first readings are not generally done as a rule. She also noted that all concerns should be directed towards the organizations presenting the data.

The amendments recently made were due to an update to the FAQ section, which resulted in a recommendation from the staff to adjust the statement, but the FAQ and resource links are not a part of the extended version of the statement.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a. **Personnel Policy Update:**

On a motion made by David Humphreys, seconded by Carissa Dougherty, it was resolved approve the Personnel Policy updates. Motion carried.

Julie Milavec noted that following the update approval, August 1, 2024, would be the first deadline for staff to submit for any potential tuition reimbursement in the next budget year, and overall expects two or three requests for reimbursement per year, depending on the program taken.

b. **DGPL Land Acknowledgement:**

On a motion made by Bill Nienburg, seconded by Marti Sladek, it was resolved to approve the motion to rewrite the Land Acknowledgement Statement. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Nienburg. Nays: Humphreys, Khuntia, Sladek, Gigani. Abstentions: None. Motion failed.

The following amendments to the proposed motion were discussed and approved via voice vote:

- The statement “The current statement shall be immediately suspended and removed from the library website and, where practical and feasible, from display; and immediately suspend recital of the statement at library Board meetings,” is stricken
- The statement “To develop a new statement” is amended to “to revise the current statement”
- The statement “Local residents with Native American lineage, library staff, and one or two members of the Board” is amended to “local residents with Native American lineage, library staff, and one or two members of the Board, and the equity advisory team”
- The statement “That the sub-committee shall be made up of no more than seven members,” is amended to “That the sub-committee shall have access to and utilize library resources, additional Native American representatives and sources, and past material that was referenced in development of the current statement”
- The statement “That the sub-committee shall develop the statement without allegiance to or undue influence from the ILA or ALA guidelines on creating a land acknowledgement statement, and shall instead develop the statement based on local history, input from local stakeholders, and the sincere and true desire to honor the strength, resiliency, and rich heritage of Native Americans” is stricken
- The statement “It shall be provided to the Board for final deliberation, public review and comment, and passage” is amended to “It shall be provided to the Board for final deliberation, public review and comment, and consideration for passage”

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion duly made, it was resolved that the Board recess to an executive session. Motion carried.

The Board recessed to an executive session at 10:05 p.m. and reconvened at 10:44 p.m.

11. **EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION ITEM**

On a motion made by Marti Sladek, seconded by David Humphreys, it was resolved to approve a 5% pay increase for Library Director Julie Milavec. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Sladek, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

12. **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Library Trustees meeting is scheduled for February 28, 2024 at 7 p.m.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:46 p.m.

14. **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.