

**DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
AUGUST 24, 2022, 7:30 P.M.  
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM**

**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Land Acknowledgment.** President Gigani called the meeting to order at 7:32 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 Bill Nienburg, President Swapna Gigani. Absent: None.

Also present: Library Director Julie Milavec, Assistant Library Director Jen Ryjewski, Business Office Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis, Media Lab Coordinator Ed Bromiel, Circulation Services Manager Christine Lees, Downers Grove Public Library Foundation Art Planning Committee Chair Robin Tryloff, Andi Voinovich, Jackie Voinovich, Mary Ann Badke, Ed Pawlak.

3. **Welcome to Visitors.** President Gigani welcomed visitors and thanked them for their interest in the library.
4. **Approval of Minutes.**
  - a. July 27, 2022 Regular Meeting. Trustee Khuntia noted that her name was spelled wrong in Agenda Item 8A. It was moved by Nienburg and seconded by Khuntia THAT the Minutes of the July 27, 2022 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as amended. Motion passed by voice vote.
5. **Financial Matters.**
  - a. July 2022 Financial Report. Library Director Julie Milavec presented the report. The library is 58.3% through the year. The revenues and expenditures are both just over 56%. Expenditures jumped in July, which was related to it being a three-payroll month as well as the 5870 Capital Equipment over \$20,000 line including the reclassification of the study table payment made in 2021. Milavec noted that the 5770 Capital Equipment under \$20,000 line will end up over budget, which is primarily due to the Federal and State grants.
  - b. August 2022 Invoices. It was moved by Dougherty and seconded by Humphreys THAT the payment of August 2022 Capital Replacement Fund invoices totaling \$18,000.00, the payment of August 2022 Operating Fund

invoices totaling \$144,788.66, and the ratification of July 2022 payrolls totaling \$376,609.07 be approved.

6. **Public Comment on Agenda Items.** President Gigani invited comment. Ed Pawlak has been a homeowner in DG for 35 years. Last meeting had a lot of talk about the budget and he has concern about the way the budget is being approached. He does not agree with looking at the levy first and then backing into what the numbers look like. It feels more like a kid getting an allowance. He thinks it is important the library thinks about the budget like a business. Look at what services are being provided and what services we want to provide and then budget accordingly. The gate count is up 10% from last year, which shows people are coming to the library. This year especially, with high prices and harder financial times, the Board should think holistically about the situation. The library is a bargain. If people feel stretched for money, they could come to library programs rather than going out and spending money, use library classes to find a better job, etc. Don't take away these bargains when people are trying to economize. Studies show communities with good libraries have better property values. Ed Pawlak asked the Board to not be shortsighted and make short-term cuts that are really hurting what the community wants. He also suggested that in the future, the strategic plan should be completed before the budget process.
  
7. **Public Comment on Other Library Business.** President Gigani invited comment. Mary Ann Badke has lived in Downers Grove off and on since 1984 and comes to the library frequently. She wanted to complain about the changes to the meeting room setups. She used to send in a list of the nights she needed for a year, as her group uses the room eight months out of the year. This worked well as the whole year was planned and she could pay by one check. Now, the reservations are six months out, so she has to set reminders each month to put in a request, which becomes a separate payment every month. There has to be a better way for people who are long-time users and do not want to do it month by month. She also just found out that the meeting room will be unavailable November through March, as it will be used for office space. It is more and more difficult to use the room.
  - a. Circulation Department Presentation. Circulation Services Manager Christine Lees presented her department report. She has been at Downers Grove Public Library for about six years. The department has about 40 staff. They handle all of the materials that come in and out of the library for the year, which has been over one million items for the past few years. Staff also receive the SWAN deliveries each week, which equate to about 10,000 items a month. The department's main goal is internal and external patron service. Christine discussed the duties of the Circulation department, which include circulating materials, processing holds, filling the holds lockers, and issuing

new library cards. The department holds SOS (start of shift) meetings between shifts every day to encourage communication and teamwork. This year, the department established a wellness goal and it has made a huge difference with decision making in the department.

## 8. **New Business.**

- a. Art Donation by Downers Grove Public Library Foundation. Downers Grove Public Library Foundation Art Planning Committee Chair Robin Tryloff presented a picture of a work of art that the Foundation would like to donate to the library. Robin showed an image of the artwork and noted that the original piece will not have the text on it. Because the Foundation loves the text so much, they are going to frame the page from the book next to the original painting, so that patrons can view both. This will go on the large red wall leading into the Kids Room, near the frog statue.

The Foundation raises private funds for special opportunities and things that are beyond the tax payer budget. Some of the Foundation's funding has gone towards Satellite Stacks, book club bags, Enchroma glasses, and developing the art collection. The Foundation is offering to purchase the artwork, pay for the framing, and then donate it to the library. The Art Planning Committee hired a historian who is writing a three minute script for most of the art in the library that patrons will be able to access via a QR code and listen to on their phones.

It was moved by Khuntia and seconded by Humphreys THAT the donation by the Downers Grove Public Library Foundation of artist Daria People's work *TA DA!* be accepted. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

- b. Suspension of Library Privileges Appeal. On Monday, July 25, there was an incident in the lobby of the library with Diana Schlaman and two young unidentified boys. The boys came down the stairs while Ms. Schlaman was waiting at the elevator. She claims one of the boys touched or poked her. She immediately began shouting at the boys and according to eyewitness accounts, she touched or struck one of the boys. There were two bystanders, one claiming Ms. Schlaman struck the boy and one who witnessed the yelling. A suspension was issued to Ms. Schlaman for one year and she asked to appeal the decision, as she claims the boy struck her.

Trustee Nienburg did not see how this incident constituted a one-year ban. He believes it falls ahead of many other more serious offenses and based on the legal definition, does not believe this to be assault or battery.

President Gigani thinks there needs to be a hard line when discussing touching other patrons. It should not be allowed. Trustee Nienburg reviewed the video many times and does not think Ms. Schlaman made contact with the boy. He wants to make sure the library is following its own guidelines.

The Board agreed that this type of behavior is not acceptable in the library and corrections need to be made, but there was extensive debate on whether or not Ms. Schlaman actually struck the child.

It was moved by Nienburg THAT the penalty be reduced to something in line with abusive and derogatory language of a second offense, which would be a one-week suspension of library privileges. There was no second and the motion was declined.

It was moved by Nienburg THAT the penalty be reduced to a three-month suspension of library privileges. The motion was withdrawn by Nienburg.

It was moved by Nienburg THAT the penalty be reduced to a one-month suspension of library privileges. There was no second and the motion was declined.

It was moved by Humphreys and seconded by Khuntia THAT the appeal by Diana Schlaman for suspension of library privileges for one year be denied. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Gigani. Nays: Nienburg. Abstentions: None. The motion passed.

The Board agreed that the library's internal procedure document for suspensions and bans should be reviewed.

- c. Library Director Evaluation Process and Timeline. Library Director Julie Milavec reviewed the evaluation process and timeline with the Board. In September, the Board receives the Library Director's self-evaluation and ideas for goals and each trustee reviews the documents before the October Board meeting. In October, the Board goes into a closed session where they create a rough draft of the Library Director's evaluation. The Board will confirm that draft in November, discuss salary if necessary, and then the final evaluation will be given to the Library Director in December.

## 9. **Unfinished Business.**

- a. 2023 Budget and Levy. Library Director Julie Milavec presented changes to the proposed expenditure budget, which also impacted the proposed levy request. The most significant change on the expenditure side, based on preliminary information from the insurance broker, was reducing the benefits

lines to a 10% increase rather than the initial 20% estimate. The other large change involved the personal property replacement tax, where the estimated amount was significantly increased. Milavec presented a 3% levy increase, which would maintain the library's fund balance at a level that exceeds the operating reserve amount and mitigates any impact on taxpayers. Property taxes would decrease by \$5.68 for the average homeowner if the EAV comes in as expected. The tax rate would be approximately .1973, while the current tax rate is .203. If the EAV does not increase, taxpayers would see about a 3% increase.

The Board discussed alternatives to the 3% levy increase, thinking about long-term goals, impacts on taxpayers, and the potential risks due to inflation.

It was moved by Nienburg and seconded by Dougherty THAT the levy increase by 1% to the amount of \$5,921,063 and the proposed expense budget be approved as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Dougherty, Humphreys, Khuntia, Nienburg, Gigani. Nays: None. Abstentions: None.

**10. Library Director's Report.** Library Director Julie Milavec presented her report. ILA Trustee Day is October 20 and any interested trustees should contact Business Office Manager Katelyn Vabalaitis. In Service Day is Friday and the library will be closed to the public. There will be active shooter training and wellness presentations. The elevator project has been postponed into September due to supply chain issues. The pre-bid meeting for the workroom renovation project was very well-attended. The construction managers are hopeful there will be a lot of bidders. Milavec noted that on October 11, the library will be hosting a Drag Queen Bingo event for teens. This event will be featured in the Discoveries newsletters that will be arriving at homes later this week and staff have been briefed with some talking points if needed. Saturday, September 10 at 11 a.m. will be the Pierce Downer Heritage Alliance's dedication ceremony for the memorial bush planted in memory of former mayor Betty Cheever.

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

Trustee Khuntia asked about the two retirements that Milavec had mentioned earlier. During the last retirement, the Board had discussed signing a card for any staff member who retires. Milavec noted that these two departing staff did not want any recognition, but Administration will remember to bring cards to the Board meetings moving forward.

Trustee Humphreys noted that he will be working the library's outreach table at the Downers Grove Farmers' Market on Saturday. He had an orientation with PR Manager Cindy Khatri today.

Trustee Nienburg commented that he was bothered by the penalty appeal outcome. We are coming out of a period of unprecedented stress on mental health and in the future, he hopes we can have more of a focus on counseling and de-escalation versus banning someone from a public resource. It would have been more appropriate to counsel her and give her a second chance. He hopes there is more discretion moving forward with handing out bans.

12. **Adjournment.** President Gigani adjourned the meeting at 9:58 p.m.