July 7, 2018

Minutes of the special meeting of the Board of Library Trustees of the Village of Oak Park held on Saturday, July 7, 2018 in the Scoville Room of the Main Library. The meeting was called to order at 9:16 a.m. by President Matt Fruth.

Present: Library Trustees Ted Foss, Matt Fruth, Christian Harris, Janet Kelenson, Carmenza Millan, and Mary Anne Mohanraj.

Also present: David Seleb, Executive Director; Lori Pulliam, Director of Public Services and Programs; Elizabeth Marszalik, Director of Collections and Technology; Rob Simmons, Director of Social Services and Safety; Jodi Kolo, Director of Communications.

Absent: Trustee Sarah Glavin; Deputy Director Jim Madigan.

No public comments.

Executive Director Seleb began the meeting noting the agenda was built from trustee suggestions and the library’s current strategic priorities (informed by Harwood Community Conversations) of engagement, learning, and stewardship.

Seleb said the morning would focus on staff sharing updates to inform the board’s afternoon conversation about 2019 goals. Seleb also reiterated the unique financial situation the library is now in, as it comes closer to retiring bond debt in 2020.

Director of Collections and Technology, Elizabeth Mars zalik, summarized recent technology improvements. “Invisible/behind-the-scenes” improvements have included an updated phone system, implementation of an emergency notification system, staff software and hardware updates, and the organization’s migration to a cloud-based, virtual
server system. Additional work will include a new system to manage equipment, licenses, patches and updates, WiFi improvements in Scoville Park and the branch libraries, staff remote access, and public computer upgrades.

Marszalik talked about equity and inclusion initiatives related to the collection, including diversity audits and the expansion of Oak Park Creates. She shared that work is informed by what is happening in the publishing world, and what is happening globally, national, and locally.

Director of Public Services and Programs, Lori Pulliam, talked about programs and how spending on them is typically seasonal. Pulliam shared updates on early literacy initiatives (summer reading, 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, the Collaboration of Early Childhood, Erikson Institute’s kindergarten readiness study results coming this fall) and One Book, One Oak Park. Pulliam also previewed fall programs focusing on civic literacy.

Director of Safety and Security, Rob Simmons, talked about stronger partnerships that his team is building with Housing Forward, around outreach and case management, and with additional area agencies on a community-wide task force to address area opioid addiction.

Director of Communications, Jodi Kolo, shared a brief impact report related to two June 2017 policy changes: the removal of overdue fines on certain materials checked out at the Oak Park Public Library and the extension of loan periods through SWAN’s automatic renewal process.

Director of Human Resources, Billy Treece, shared a series of staff reports related to his team’s analysis to address wage market equity adjustments for exempt and non-exempt library staff.
Executive Director Seleb shared two financial report memos prepared by Deputy Director Jim Madigan: one summarizing the library’s current financial position with the anticipated retirement of the levy/bond debt in 2020 and the second detailing status and spending around current and upcoming capital projects.

Just after noon, the group took a break for lunch, resuming formal discussion around 12:40 pm.

Executive Director Seleb introduced the afternoon’s intended focus around the strategic priorities of engagement, learning, and stewardship.

Trustee Millan asked about future senior citizen programming at Dole Branch Library, and suggested a study investigating seniors’ interest and mobility and transportation be conducted.

Trustees Foss and Mohanraj suggested consideration be given to displays, resources, and services for patrons with disabilities (visual, sensory).

Trustee Kelenson suggested exploring educational opportunities via video and the Main Library’s green roof.

Trustee Mohanraj asked about reaching non-users, and the potential of expanding the book bike program.

Trustee Millan asked about staff’s 2019 plan for the use of Harwood engagement tools, and if trustees should be facilitating future conversations.
Trustee Harris asked about increasing diversity of full-time staff, and the potential for an expanded tuition reimbursement and/or scholarship program specifically tied to diversity and equity. Harris also asked historically why teen services is not its own department.

Trustee Kelenson requested conversation around the potential of intergenerational programming.

Trustees Fruth and Millan asked trustees for consensus around expanded library hours so staff can prepare scenarios comparing budget, audiences, and potential impact.

Trustees Fruth and Kelenson asked trustees for consensus to provide staff with future direction on addressing market equity adjustments, and to consider a five-year plan to address staff wages beyond 2021.

Trustee Fruth adjourned the meeting at roughly 2:45 pm.