

Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees
360 E Deerpath Road, Lake Forest IL 60045
Executive Session Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson called the Executive Session to order at 9:11 p.m. on February 8, 2022.

ROLL CALL

Trustees Present: Germaine Arnson, Bryan Bertola, Jim Clifton, JoAnn Desmond, Elizabeth Grob, John F. Johnson, Andrea Lemke, Sue Shattock, and Heather Strong

9 trustees in attendance, a quorum is present.

Staff Present: Catherine Lemmer, Executive Director; Ed Finn, Director of Operations.

PRESIDENTS REMARKS

President Johnson stated that the Executive Session was for personnel matters pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1): The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.

Director Lemmer informed the Trustees that Felicia Song, Assistant Director and Head of Adult Services, will be retiring at the end of March after 33 years. Ms. Song will be very difficult to replace due to her expertise in the community and her professional skills. Because of this pending retirement, discussions are ongoing about the Library's organizational structure.

Mr. Finn reported that he had completed a benchmark study for the Library and shared the results of the study with the Board. The last study occurred in 2017-2018. He used four comparable libraries in the Northshore: Deerfield Public Library, Glen Ellyn Public Library, Lisle Public Library, and Winnetka-Northfield Public Library. The metrics considered were population size, budget, total number of staff, and percentage of salary to budget. After looking at this data it was concluded that the Library needed to evaluate job descriptions and ranges and make midpoint and salary adjustments in the current fiscal year. The information from the four libraries used for comparison was provided by HR Source, from the annual state-wide library survey. HR Source gathers salary and benefits information from most libraries in the state of Illinois.

Issues discussed by the Board are summarized as follows:

Benefit costs were not benchmarked because this information is not provided in the survey and the Library's benefits are negotiated and administered by the City of Lake Forest. The Library's benefits are generally in alignment with other libraries. Add-on benefits to consider that are becoming more popular to offer are employee EAP benefit programs or tuition reimbursement.

Salary increases occur yearly based on merit and annual evaluations. The predicted salary increases this year, based on comparisons to Northshore libraries and the City's input, will be between 3-5%. The Library eliminated across-the-board, and longevity payments a few years ago moved to merit-based pay. This process allows the Library to recognize the employee contributions.

Illinois Library cardholders can visit any library in Illinois. Members of other communities, in particular Lake Bluff, use the resources of Lake Forest Library.

To recruit the best candidates, Lake Forest needs to be competitive in salary, benefits, and working conditions. Mr. Finn provided a spreadsheet of titles and their salary ranges. The salary ranges provide for beginning staff through experienced staff.

Most of the Library's part-time staff lives locally, while only two full-time staff are Lake Forest residents. Recently, the Library lost two full-time employees due to opportunity and commute time. One employee left the Library to pursue a position in a larger library with more management responsibility. The other full-time employee left, in part, due to halving their commute time.

The Library is asking the Staff for their input on how to alleviate the impact of the commuting distance and how to best provide opportunities for growth in a small library among other things.

A strong draw for candidates to work for the Lake Forest Library is the opportunity to experience all aspects of librarianship. Opportunities for professional growth include paying fees for leadership opportunities and conferences and providing projects to learn project management and leadership skills.

This year's budget reflects midpoint salary increases. Six full-time and 12 part-time employees will receive increases. The mid-year salary and wage increase is approximately \$8,000 total, retroactive January 1 through the end of FY2022 (April 30, 2022).

The Hodge Group contract will be terminated at the end of the month. They have been helpful in working with the Lake Forest Library Foundation to ensure a smooth transition.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was sent to the Friends and the Foundation last February. The Library has concluded its discussion with the Foundation, and the Foundation has agreed to sign the MOU. The Friends have not agreed to sign the MOU.

Trustee Arnson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shattock, to adjourn the Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote. President Johnson adjourned the Executive Session at 10:00 p.m.

/s/ Elizabeth Grob

Elizabeth Grob, Secretary

Minutes approved by the Board July 12, 2022.