

**LAKE FOREST LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

360 East Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045

Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

President John Johnson welcomed all and called the meeting to order on April 11, 2023, at 6:31 p.m. in the Kasian Room, Lake Forest Library.

ROLL CALL

Trustees present: Bryan Bertola, Jim Clifton, JoAnn Desmond, Andrea Lemke, John F. Johnson, Sue Shattock, Bob Shaw and Heather Strong. Eight Trustees in attendance; a quorum was present.

Library Staff present: David Seleb, Interim Director, Heidi Kreuger, Head of Patron Services, Lori Rohrer, Head of Youth Services, Jim Lee, Facilities Manager and Sameer Notta, Finance Officer.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Johnson announced that 2023 car stickers will feature the library's 125<sup>th</sup> year logo, and noted that Item 8, the Finance Committee's presentation of the final budget, will be discussed after Item 10 to allow Bryan Bertola, Co-chair of the Building Committee, to report on progress on the Dome repair as he will have to exit early.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

See discussion of RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for Architectural Professional Services below.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT AND PATRON COMMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Shaw made a motion, seconded by Trustee Desmond, to approve the Consent Agenda (omnibus vote of matters 7(a)-7(c):

- a. Approval of the April 11, 2023 Agenda
- b. Approval of the March 14, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
- c. Approval of the March 2023 Financial Report.

The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

## DISCUSS AND APPROVE EMPLOYMENT OFFER TO NEW LIBRARY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Trustee Desmond, Co-Chair of the Search Committee quickly reviewed the search process for a new Executive Director that began in January. John Keister and Associates provided five names, which the Committee narrowed to three for interviews with the Board, staff and public. Out of those three, two were brought back twice for extensive Q&A sessions with the full Board. After this final round, the Board unanimously decided to make an offer to Ishwar Laxminarayan. For 12 years, Laxminarayan was director of the Jackson District Library and William P. Faust Public Library of Westland, both in Michigan. Most recently, he was a Library Consultant with The Ivy Group that assists libraries in areas highly relevant for our own Library: strategic planning, community engagement, and marketing. Laxminarayan has a master's degree in Librarianship from Emory University, and undergraduate degrees from the University of Calcutta in India.

Trustee Desmond made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shattock, to approve the Employment offer to Laxminarayan for Executive Director. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote. Laxminarayan will begin May 1.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Trustee Bertola of the Building Committee shared that the Dome repair is well underway, flashing and waterproofing have been completed. Work is being done by sections, which has revealed some of the supports are more degraded than expected. As of yet, there are no change orders submitted. Recent storms did not cause any leaks so protection from rain was successful. Progress reports are being provided as promised.

Trustee Clifton of the Finance Committee noted that the final 2024 budget compared to previous years includes a surplus (\$921K) primarily due to absence of staff. Other than that, it is not materially different from past years except for the dome repair, and allowances for capital expenditures the library consistently faces ranging from one-time improvements like sidewalk repair, to ongoing upgrades for technology, HVAC and drainage that recur given the age of the building.

Trustee Desmond made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, seconded by Trustee Shattock. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

## DISCUSS AND APPROVE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Each month the library faces some maintenance or repair issue connected with its aging infrastructure that must be addressed, along with continuing space challenges, and lack of access for disabled, the latest of which was the breakdown of the elevator. The Board agreed that a holistic view to solving these problems efficiently for the short and long term, using an outside expert as partner (in the same role that Wiss-Janney has served with respect to the dome repair), is needed.

Rommy Lopat, member of the public, noted that the Board should revisit the RFQ done 5 years ago when the library was considering its expansion as a starting point. She urged the Board to make sure to include historic preservation experience as one of the qualifications for this role.

Susie Athenson, President of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation, also offered to help with this project. All agreed that including public input in this process was essential.

New Director Ishwar Laxminarayan suggested that on a parallel track, the library should submit its building and usage challenges to the Library Journal Design Institute in Durham, NC. There is no cost to participate, and a one-page summary is all that is required. If the Library is selected, a host of experts in all disciplines would provide their opinions on how to solve the Library's challenges. Deadline for submission is April 20, with decisions announced June 1. The Board agreed that this submission should be developed, led by David Seleb.

The RFQ should be completed within 60 days.

Trustee Shattock made a motion, seconded by Trustee Clifton, to approve the creation of an RFQ for Architectural Professional Services. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

#### LIBRARY OPERATIONS REPORT

Heidi Kruger, Head of Patron Services shared that as part of the Read within the Ravines program (a joint nonfiction reading program with the Lake Bluff Public Library), author Ursula Pike will be in conversation with the Director of the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, Kim Vigue. The focus of joint program this year is Native Voices, an initiative to highlight the contributions and experiences of Native Americans in Lake County. The event will be held at the History Center.

The Summer Reading program will return, called Buckets of Fun. Lori Rohrer, Head of Youth Services, announced that on July 8, as part of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the Library will host a family fun fest on the lawn, to include lots of activities including a magician.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Trustee Shaw shared that he will be meeting with the city to provide input into the periodic survey it conducts on a variety of city services. Broad questions about the library are included in the questionnaire, and results could be useful as we work toward developing our new three-year strategic plan. Trustee Shaw invited any trustee interested to join.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Desmond made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shattock, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.



---

Sue Shattock, Secretary  
Amended Minutes approved by the Board on May 9, 2023