

Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees

360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, IL, 60045

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

President Clifton welcomed all and called the meeting to order on January 21, 2025 at 6:30pm in the Kasian Room, at Lake Forest Library.

ROLL CALL

Trustees present: President Clifton, Vice President Desmond, Trustee Jackson, Trustee Pearson, Trustee Shaw, Trustee Sparrow, Trustee Strong, Trustee Van Bel. A quorum was present.

Library Staff present: Ishwar Laxminarayan, Executive Director, Heidi Krueger, Director of Patron Services, Lorie Rohrer, Head of Youth Services, Kate Buckardt, Head of Adult Services, Joy Schmoll, Head of Communications, Leo Hamza, Business Manager and Facilities Manager Jim Lee.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Clifton welcomed everyone and cited his intent to keep the meeting expeditious citing the frigid weather outside.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Lake Forest resident Romy Lopat addressed the board citing her thoughts on the upcoming courtyard restoration project. She encouraged the board to accelerate hiring a landscape architect as part of the Wis Janey design plan. She argued that the landscape architect is central to the project and her opinion, is not something that should be delayed to late Spring.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Director Laxminarayan briefly touched on the Director's Summit he attended. Noting that a summary of his experience was included in the board packet. He mentioned several patron concerns around the lack of space for the children's play area. Given the popularity of the space, Director Laxminarayan noted that staff is considering opening the Kasian room to accommodate the play crowds. He also highlighted positive feedback from patrons on the 3D printing as well as the recent cooking programs which saw over 60+ attendees.

CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Sparrow made a motion, seconded by Trustee Desmond to approve the Consent Agenda. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

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BUILDING COMMITTEE

Trustee Strong began the discussion reminding the board members that as the centennial of the library approaches, how can we best position the library for the next 100 years? Trustee Strong went on to discuss the maintenance and restoration projects that have happened since 2018 (Phase I) and how the Committee is currently transitioning from repairs to restoration and revitalization (Phase II). Completed projects of Phase I included the dome restoration (completed 2023) and the mural restoration (2024). Phase II will include (but not limited to) restoring the 1931 public spaces as well as the courtyards. As it relates to the courtyard restoration, Wiss Janney is currently preparing construction documents for review, with an end goal to have the courtyard restoration complete by late Summer or early Fall.

With respects to the revitalization of the 1931 spaces, Trustee Strong presented the RFQ for the project. To summarize the RFQ, the intent is to seek out an interior designer/architect with civic and library preservation experience (ideally). The goal is to finalize a recommendation by March 15. The building committee will look both national and locally; with collaboration and partnership with the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. She also noted that in addition to the building committee, two library staff members will also be included on the selection committee.

Trustee Strong briefly touched on Phase III of projects which would include a full architectural and landscape master plan with hopes to begin this part late Spring/early Summer of this year.

Trustee Van Bel emphasized the building committee's dedication to delivering a result that patrons and staff can see and enjoy. The building committee wants to deliver to the patrons a visible, tangible improvement. Trustee Jackson agreed and supported the decision to start with the courtyards and 1931 rooms for Phase II projects. Trustee Shaw posed the question of whether or not the building committee would partner with a local architect for the project? Trustee Strong responded that we do not want to limit the search to just local people and instead, open up the pool to any and all qualified parties.

There was discussion from the board about the timeline for the RFQ submission deadline. President Clifton sought a motion to approve posting of the RFQ. Trustee Sparrow moved to approve, seconded by Trustee Shaw. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

Mr. Lee provided an update on the elevator modernization. He noted that the project is progressing well with the minor motor issue resolved. Temporary usage has begun for staff with public use pending a final inspection. Mr. Lee felt confident about meeting the completion deadline of January 29th.

LANDCAPE CONTRACT REVIEW

Mr. Lee cited a continuation of the landscape contract with Mariani Landscaping. He noted overall satisfaction with the level of service and sees no need to make changes. Trustee Desmond made a motion to accept the contract as written, seconded by Trustee Van Bel. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Sparrow talked about a productive finance meeting which focused on upcoming projects and timelines as reviewed from a financial lens. Trustee Sparrow also noted that City Council is finalizing approvals from investment changes (higher cap and longer terms). Most noteworthy is the library is currently ahead of budget, crediting the increased investment income. Trustee Sparrow also noted the capital project timing difference on the financial reporting. President Clifton sought a motion to finalize and approve the additions to the MOU as laid out in the board packet. Trustee Jackson made a motion to accept, seconded by Trustee Desmond. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

FY2025 CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATION

Director Laxminarayan summarized the ask would focus on technology investment as well as some other capital improvement needs. The application is due January 30th. The grant total is expected to be around \$28,000 (based on population as of the last census). A motion to approve the submission of the grant application was made by Trustee Sparrow, seconded by Trustee Jackson. The vote was approved unanimously by all Trustees in attendance.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Director Laxminarayan touched on some new materials introduced to the library, including to the media lab, a car diagnostic tool and knitting machine. Both of which have been very popular with patrons. He also highlighted the very successful Gingerbread House event which welcomed over 100 families. Exam Escape was again a success with positive feedback from parents and students. The holiday event at the West train station was successful and Director Laxminarayan mentioned a few upcoming events.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Desmond, seconded by Trustee Jackson. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.



Emily Van Bel, Secretary

Submitted for approval by the Board on March 18, 2025