

Irondequoit Public Library Board of Trustees  
Monthly meeting (via teleconference)  
Minutes of Wednesday, October 21, 2020

**Call meeting to order:** 6:31 pm

**Present via teleconference:** Collene Burns, president; Susan Kramarsky, vice president; Terri Dalton, secretary; Tyler Kwolek, treasurer; Betty Brewer-Johnson, Phil Harriman, Rachel Snyder, Cicely Strickland-Ruiz, and Rosa Vargas-Cronin, trustees at large

**Guests:** Greg Benoit, library director; Patrina Freeman, town board liaison; Stephanie Schubmehl, library bookkeeper

**Approval of agenda:** Approved.

**Approval of minutes**

- Regular board meeting, September 16, 2020: Approved with three abstentions.
- Special board meeting, October 6, 2020: Approved with three abstentions.

**Attendance:** Next meeting Wednesday, November 18, at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

**Public forum (comments submitted through email):** None.

**Board president's remarks**

- Welcome to new trustees Betty Brewer-Johnson, Phil Harriman, and Rachel Snyder! All three bring much-needed experience to the board. Each incoming trustee will be matched with a veteran board member as part of the onboarding process. Greg will compile contact info, bios and photos for new trustees to be added to the library website.
- Board meeting focus: October, November, December 2020: The pandemic has forced the board and library staff alike to be flexible and rethink spending. With the end of the year approaching, it's important to ensure everything is in place to fulfill the promise in 2021. For the next few meetings, agendas will focus on organizing trustees to ensure that the library is able to deliver on 2020 priorities. Tyler will coordinate board members to provide support and accountability to the library team.

**Finance committee, vouchers, financial report**

Financial report and vouchers

- Revenue: Revenue is unchanged since the previous month. We reopened the library bookstore and resumed taking payments for fines, hold fees, printing, and copying in the last week of September. This revenue will be reflected in next month's report.
- Expenses: With 75 percent of the year elapsed, overall library spending stands at 64.4 percent of our budget (68.8 percent for salaries, 52.5 percent for library materials, 57 percent for services and supplies). The town has begun compiling COVID-19 expenses for potential reimbursement. As covered in the "COVID expenditures" spreadsheet, support for distance

learning (specifically, the wifi hotspots) and telework have been our two biggest pandemic-related expenses, and reimbursement for these categories would have a significant impact on our budget.

- Vouchers of note: #187, Boston University Center for Professional Education: Genealogical Principles, a seven-week online professional development course for Nancy Cowan. Nancy runs the library's very popular monthly genealogy group. #198, New York Library Association: Registration for nine staff to attend this year's all-virtual NYLA conference.
- All vouchers were approved.
- It was proposed to plan for two interim year-end voucher lists, as has been done since 2018. This allows for more accurate tracking of spending and simplifies the process of closing out the year. Motion to allow board treasurer Tyler Kwolek to provisionally approve and sign November and December 2020 interim vouchers on behalf of the board, to be voted on at the following regular meeting. Motion approved with one abstention.

#### Year-end spending plan, funding request process, CARES Act application

- The library has submitted records of COVID-related expenditures to the town in preparation for possible reimbursement under the CARES Act. \$25,000 has already gone out to the town of Penfield.
- We are on track to use all professional-development funds by year-end, with several significant expenditures in this month's vouchers.
- Tyler provided an overview of the process for funding requests outside of the regular library budget (e.g. those submitted to the Friends, Foundation, or an outside granting agency). The process is also outlined in a document Tyler will share with new trustees.
- Budget workshop is scheduled for Thursday 10/27 at 5:30 pm. This is the stage of the process at which all departments review their budgets with the town board. The public is welcome to attend, but does not participate. Traditionally all trustees would attend in person, but only Tyler, Collene, and Susan (along with Greg and Patrina) will be present this year due to social-distancing restrictions.
- Next stage in the process is the public hearing on 11/12, when the public will have the chance to comment on the preliminary town budget. Previous public hearings have seen a strong library presence, but anyone thinking of attending this year should be mindful of pandemic restrictions. Collene and/or Tyler will be present along with Greg.

#### **Organizational development committee report**

- Continuing to work on onboarding plan and mentoring partnerships for new trustees.
- Once again partnering with Causewave to put together the 2019 annual report, which will be in a one-page format and available to share online. Next year's annual report for 2020 will be longer and more in-depth. Consider appealing to the Foundation if Causewave's fee won't fit into this year's budget.

#### **Old business**

##### Jack Herrema—in memorial

- Mr. Herrema's memorial tree has already been planted, and the Foundation has commissioned a plaque. A ceremony is scheduled for Friday 10/23 at 12:00 and will feature five speakers, with the town providing a tent, podium, and microphone. Foundation board

members Mary Ellen Jones and Bud Birchard will present a facsimile of the proposed plaque to Judy Herrema.

- An item about the ceremony will appear afterward in the library newsletter, but otherwise publicity will be minimal due to limited capacity.

#### Student representative recruitment

- Brief overview of student representative role for the new trustees. This position was created two years ago with the goal of improving information flow between schools and the board.
- Bishop Kearney recently reached out to obtain library hotspots for quarantined students, and two more potential student rep candidates have come forward as a result.
- Community engagement committee typically handles interviews for new student reps, with the organizational development committee overseeing the onboarding process. Terri and Rosa will coordinate on interviewing interested candidates, whether in person or over Zoom.

#### **New business**

##### 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge

- Administered by United Way, with heavy involvement from Cicely. Participants receive a daily email with 10-15 minutes of content introducing definitions, topics, and new perspectives.
- The town of Irondequoit has signed up as an organization, with Jason Vinette as facilitator.
- Trustees discussed also signing up the library board as an organization to signal a public commitment to racial equity.

##### Plan to deliver on our promise in 2021

- Long-range plan tracking for 2020: Long-range plan is both a legal requirement and a guiding document. Each measure in the LRP is assigned to a board committee, as covered in the committee's charter. For next month's meeting, all committee chairs should have reviewed the measures they are responsible for and be able to speak to any areas where they feel more work is needed, as well as where things are in good shape. New trustees should also read through committee charters and communicate with Cicely and Collene about where they might be interested in serving.
- Board retreat date and format: Board retreat has been an annual event for the past three years. While technically public meetings, previous retreats have had no outside attendees. The next board retreat is slated for early 2021 and will likely take about four hours, although this may need to be broken into multiple sessions if on Zoom. The possibility of engaging an outside facilitator was also discussed. Cicely will set up a Doodle poll with possible dates and times.

##### 2020 and 2021 project focus list, prioritized assignments

- New library website: Funding for this project was removed from the 2021 budget, so we will need to look for alternative funding sources. Quotes have been obtained from multiple vendors and a document was put together outlining features the new website will need (e.g. better content updating capabilities, navigation, and an integrated chat function). Creating the website in-house is also a possibility but would come with its own set of challenges.
- Long-range plan: The current LRP ends next year, which means it will soon be time to track and report out results. It will also be important to capture 2020 data, as some actions in the

LRP are tied to specific years. Work for the first quarter of 2021 will focus on closing out the current LRP and identifying lessons learned for the next one. Further discussion to follow at the board retreat.

- Catalog diversification: Briefly, an effort to make the library collection more accurately reflective of Irondequoit as a whole. As discussed previously, there are few (if any) examples of similar projects on this scale, and we will need a partner to take the lead. Coordinating communication with the town will also be critical. Along with Amy Henderson and Irina Ovcharov, Greg recently attended the first in a series of eight weekly webinars on building diverse collections, which they are meeting afterward to discuss. Collene and Rosa offered to partner in this effort on behalf of the board. An existing library staff member will also come on board to replace Irina at the end of her internship.
- Monitoring COVID-related impacts: Expenses already submitted to town for upcoming reimbursement request. Library staff continue to adapt to the new normal by dealing with new costs, finding potential savings, and exploring alternative ways of providing programs.
- Youth fine and fee elimination: Pre-pandemic, 2020 was intended as the first year of a two-year pilot program. As discussed with the town supervisor and comptroller, it now makes more sense to shift the pilot program to 2021-2022, as the pandemic led to a systemwide suspension of all fines for several months. Apart from an unresolved discussion of outstanding fines, the logistics are largely in place. Collene to send out FAQs about the program to new trustees.
- Deferred maintenance fund: Money set aside for maintenance issues that will inevitably arise as the library building ages. This is a 2021 priority, and it was proposed to initiate periodic meetings with the town to identify areas of concern where funds may be needed. Further discussion and committee assignment to follow at the board retreat.
- Board retreat: Date(s) and venue discussed above; next steps will be to work through the agenda and identify participants (in addition to board members, these would include the library director, an outside facilitator, and any interested members of the public). Rachel will partner with Cicely to move this forward.
- New initiative reviews: What feedback has the community given on new services launched during the pandemic (Hoopla, wifi hotspots, curbside pickup), and what are the library's plans for these services going forward? How do we characterize success when traditional measurements such as foot traffic may not apply? Terri will serve as the library's board partner in this area.
- Community book discussion, continued: A second community book discussion program, similar to the one carried out in partnership with the Irondequoit school districts in August, is tentatively planned for February break. Organizers have yet to select a book, but will likely choose another young-adult title in a similar vein to *Stamped*. Next month, Greg will offer a presentation about the program to school library professionals, including two members of the state Board of Regents. Support from the library board will focus on facilitating communication and funding book purchases.
- Children's library doors: Time to wrap this project up. Terri will act as the library's board partner.
- Relationship with MCLS and other MCLS library boards: IPL board would benefit from deeper engagement with MCLS. As we move forward with the fine elimination pilot, it will be particularly important to ensure Irondequoit trustees have a seat at the table for critical conversations. Susan and Phil will take the lead on this.

### **Town board liaison report**

- Town will be observing Red Ribbon Week for youth substance abuse prevention beginning October 23. Drug-Free Irondequoit and both school districts are planning events, including a drug takeback on 10/24.
- The 2021 budget process is well underway and will continue through December. Public hearing scheduled for 11/12.
- Patrino has been involved in the 2020 Virtual Interrupt Racism Summit, a two-day event organized by the Urban League of Rochester.

**IPL Foundation report:** Recruiting for new member.

**IPL Friends report:** None. Friends did not meet.

### **Director's report highlights**

- Wifi hotspots: As of Monday 10/24, a total of 42 students enrolled in Irondequoit schools are relying on a library hotspot for home internet access. The Gates library is leasing ten hotspots from us, Chili has asked to extend their loan, and Mendon has requested two more.
- 1839 Maker's Lab: The maker space will reopen for use in November.
- Extended Saturday hours: Starting Saturday 10/24, the library will remain open until 2:00 pm.
- MCLS cost share: MCLS is reevaluating how it calculates member library cost shares in anticipation of implementing the changes during the 2022 budget year. The new calculation will result in some libraries paying less and others more, as higher-performing libraries would be rewarded for contributions to systemwide goals. The team of library directors who recently drafted revisions to the MCLS Document of Understanding will research and present alternative cost-share models.
- Internet use policy: In order to comply with the findings of a recently completed audit on MCLS use of federal E-Rate funds, member libraries will have to follow a different process for updating their internet use policies. Universal Service Administration Company, who conducted the audit, indicated that a public hearing or public meeting must be called, separately from the regular board meeting, to solicit public response before any library board may approve an updated internet use policy. Updates to the internet use policy should be completed by the end of 2020.
- 2021 MCLS E-Rate purchases: MCLS will be using federal E-Rate funds to help member libraries replace their wireless access points, with member libraries bearing only 15 percent of the cost. Greg has asked technology librarian Nancy Cowan to evaluate the health and anticipated lifespan of our current wireless access points in order to take advantage of these cost savings.
- 2020 election: The library is receiving an unusually high number of phone calls requesting information on early voting and election day. Several patrons have already attempted to turn in absentee ballots to library staff, who are all aware that they cannot accept them. Higher-than-normal foot traffic is anticipated in the downstairs meeting rooms, which will be closed off from the rest of the library. Greg will be present for the first day of early voting on Saturday 10/24.

- Alternative use of 2020 children's programming budget: Children's librarians Amy Holland and Matt Krueger have proposed using their leftover programming money to commission a mural from Shawn Dunwoody, who has already submitted a quote. His concept would involve generating input from community members about the library's importance to the community.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Stephanie Schubmehl  
For board secretary Terri Dalton