

Irondequoit Public Library Board of Trustees
Monthly meeting (via teleconference)
Minutes of Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Call meeting to order: 6:16 pm

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

Guests: Greg Benoit, library director; Stephanie Schubmehl, library bookkeeper; Nick Mott, student representative; Dave Seeley, town supervisor

Approval of agenda: Approved.

Public hearing on internet access policy: Notice of the hearing appeared in the Irondequoit Post on 1/7/21 and was also posted on the library website, along with the text of the revised policy. Copies of the revised policy were also made available in the library building. Neither Terri nor the library staff received any public feedback, and no members of the public requested to speak at the hearing. Hearing closed at 6:19 pm.

Approval of minutes for regular December board meeting: Approved. Minutes from the board retreat on 1/9/21 will be submitted for approval at the February meeting.

Attendance: Next meeting Wednesday 2/17/21 at 6:30 pm. The board will continue meeting over Zoom.

Public forum (comments submitted via email): Received several thank-yous from library staff for holiday gift cards.

Board president's remarks

Board retreat summary: Thanks to all who attended this year's board retreat for a successful and productive meeting. Based on the day's discussions, Cicely and Rachel have put together documents outlining the initiatives the board agreed to prioritize in 2021, which Tyler will send out by email and post to the January meeting folder on Google Drive. Also posted will be a list tracking action items and responsible parties for each meeting.

Officer election summary: New officers were elected at the board retreat. Tyler is now board president, with Cicely as vice president, Collene as treasurer, and Terri continuing as secretary.

Community engagement committee

Student representative reports

- Nick: West Irondequoit observed National Day of Racial Healing on January 19. Coming up in February, some students will be participating in a Black History Month graphic design challenge through Amnesty International. Seniors can now register for the 2021 Virtual HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Festival.
- Rosa will connect with Anna and Chloe about attending next month's meeting.

Collection diversification

- A white paper outlining the project is included with this month's packet. The project was also discussed extensively at last Sunday's community engagement committee meeting.
- In the white paper, "marginalized communities" are defined as follows, using a definition from the National Institutes of Health which Susan uncovered in her research: "Marginalized communities are those excluded from mainstream social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life. Examples of marginalized populations include, but are not limited to, groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status. Marginalization occurs due to unequal power relationships between social groups (Sevelius et al., 2020)."
- Greg has met with Patrina Freeman and agrees with the idea of bringing ICARE, ERASE, or another appropriate community partner on board once we have something ready to share with an outside entity. School librarians in East and West Irondequoit also have a similar effort underway with their own collections, and a collaboration with them is in the works. The library will continue to work closely with the town on implementation and messaging.
- Funding was also discussed, with Collene emphasizing the importance of following the established process for larger requests. Designating a percentage of the existing materials budget for this initiative is a possibility, but additional funding would be preferable.

Finance committee, vouchers, financial report

Financial report

- Revenue: This month's revenue includes \$33,300 in CARES Act reimbursement for COVID expenditures, significantly reducing (though not eliminating) our shortfall. At year end, we have collected 97.7 percent of our budgeted total.
- Expenses: Some year-end expenditures have yet to be posted, but as of the latest financial reports from the comptroller's office we are at 91.4 percent of our overall budget (92.8 percent for salaries, 89.8 percent for materials, 85.4 percent for services and supplies). Personnel expenditures were up this month due to December having three paydays. Even so, we are ending the year significantly under budget for salaries, as expected. The employee benefits line now reflects this year's major annual retirement expenditure. Still to come are the final quarterly expenditures on the maintenance chargeback line, as well as the expenditures covered in the final 2020 voucher list.

Vouchers

- For this month's meeting, there are separate voucher lists for expenditures from the 2020 and 2021 budgets.
- Vouchers of note: #260, OverDrive (2020 list)—large year-end ebook purchase; #7, Center Point Large Print--annual renewal of our standing order for large print materials; #12, Library Journal--registration for Amy Henderson to attend Public Programming in the

Pandemic (online professional development course); #17, Cory Woodard—online storytime and travelogue presentations as part of IPL’s inclusion partnership with Rochester Accessible Adventures and Irondequoit Rec, discussed in Amy Holland’s presentation at the November board meeting.

- Both the 2020 and 2021 voucher lists were approved with no objections or abstentions.

CARES Act reimbursement

- The library has been documenting COVID-related purchases since the beginning of the pandemic, including PPE, cleaning supplies, signage, virtual programming, and mobile hotspot expenses. With the exception of digital materials purchases, all expenditures submitted were reimbursed at 70 percent.

Old business

Children’s room doors

- In the process of reviewing prior work on this initiative, Terri consulted with John Perticone from the town board and determined that Rochester Colonial had never given a formal quote for the project. New quotes will be needed.
- Supervisor Seeley noted that under town procurement policy, which the library follows, bidding will be necessary for an expenditure of \$30,000 or more.
- In keeping with her new role as treasurer, Collene will take over for Terri as “board champion” for the children’s library doors project. Further discussion of the process for obtaining quotes and coordinating with Bob Kiley to follow at the next finance committee meeting.

New business

Vote: Internet access policy

- Motion by Tyler Kwolek, seconded by Collene Burns, to approve Irondequoit Public Library’s revised internet access policy as written and published. Discussion: No feedback received from the public. Motion carried with no objections or abstentions.

MCLS Advocacy Day

- Terri, with input from Adam Traub, has put together an overview of Advocacy Day for new trustees. In a more typical year, MCLS would facilitate in-person meetings with legislators for library directors, trustees, and supporters both locally and in Albany. All meetings this year will take place over Zoom.
- Areas of concern for this year will be restoration of state aid for library operation and construction. MCLS and NYLA are working on coordinating talking points. Adam Traub is also encouraging local libraries to share personal stories, and Nick has agreed to talk about IPL’s hotspot lending program in a meeting with state assemblywoman Sarah Clark. Dates and times are still being finalized.

Committees discussion

- This is an opportunity to update and correct the list of committees and members. Allocation of initiatives to each committee was discussed at the board retreat and will be revisited throughout the year.
- Executive committee: Membership is predetermined.
- Policy committee: Absorbed into executive committee.
- Organizational development committee: Co-chaired by Cicely and Rachel, with Susan as a member and involvement from Greg.
- Community engagement committee: Co-chaired by Terri and Rosa.
- Finance committee: Chaired by Collene, with Betty and Tyler as members and involvement from Greg and library bookkeeper. Collene proposed bringing another library staff member on board, as this would be a valuable opportunity for anyone interested in seeing how a public library is run.
- Technology committee: Previously disbanded. With multiple technology-related initiatives coming up in 2021, this may be worth revisiting, even if it is not formally reinstated as a committee. Phil, Rosa, and Tyler will be involved, with John Scalzo as the staff point of contact for the new library website and Nancy Cowan as the contact for upcoming hardware upgrades.

Initiatives on the docket

- A catchall category for minor updates on ongoing initiatives.
- Library website: Currently reviewing offerings from multiple vendors and fine-tuning statement of work in collaboration with relevant library staff.
- Board collaboration: Meeting documents are now available on Google Drive to facilitate collaboration. Phil is also looking into other platforms.
- EFFCYA (Elimination of Fines and Fees for Children and Young Adults): Greg is working with staff to ensure we have all the relevant information and nail down a timeline. More to follow at next meeting.
- Staff representative: It was proposed that future meetings include a representative from the library staff who would update the board on their work at the library. Ideally, this responsibility would rotate so that staff in all areas of the library are represented.

Town board liaison report

- This month's report was delivered by Supervisor Seeley, as Patrina Freeman has a Wednesday-evening conflict that may prevent her from acting as town board liaison going forward.
- Nate Stone will be leaving for a new position next month. Plans for his successor are already in place and the transition should be a seamless one.
- Work on the community center is progressing well, and Maria Vecchio can arrange a site visit for any interested board members and library staff. Planning is also underway on improvements to the town hall campus, including a proposed dog park.
- The town is currently publicizing a community solar initiative, which would allow participants to collectively finance construction of solar farms and benefit from the cost savings of solar panels without having to install them on their own homes.

- The town and library budgets are ending the year in good shape, and it is a point of pride that we made it through the COVID shutdown with no layoffs or furloughs.

Foundation report: A potential donor has approached Greg with a very generous offer to help finance Amazon-style pickup lockers for library materials, a donation which would be channeled through the Foundation if it comes to fruition. More information at next meeting. Collene and Cicely will continue as Foundation liaisons.

Friends report: Did not meet, but have been in touch with Rosa by email. Phil volunteered to join Rosa as co-liaison to the Friends.

Director's report highlights

- Greg is working with Nick on talking points for the virtual legislative visit with Sarah Clark. The collection diversification project will also be discussed at this meeting.
- The library is working with Patrina Freeman and ICARE on plans for a virtual presentation by an expert on the history of redlining in Monroe County. We would like to make this interactive by teaching participants how to find and remove racist “racial covenant” language from their own property deeds—possibly in partnership with a speaker from Brighton’s Meadowbrook Neighborhood Association, which has recent experience with this process.
- Patrina has also connected adult services librarian Amy Henderson with resources on Asa Dunbar, an early Black settler on the land that would one day become Irondequoit. Amy is gathering more information on Dunbar for a series of social media posts to go up during Black History Month.
- The carved animal benches from the children’s library courtyard have been picked up by their original artist for refurbishment. One of the benches will need to be repurposed, but all the carvings can be preserved. The other will be relocated to the inside of the children’s library. Judge Genier is financing all work on the benches.
- Staff performance appraisals are complete.

Personnel updates

- The library has provisionally hired Lee Sigelow as a part-time library assistant. Lee is a retired newscast director for 13 WHAM and also works part-time as a real estate agent. He is already adapting well to his new position.
- Shelley Wade has been provisionally promoted to part-time Librarian I. In addition to assisting patrons at the reference desk, as she has been doing since joining the library staff in 2019, Shelley will be taking over responsibility for ordering adult nonfiction, freeing up Amy Henderson to spend more time on programming. As far as longtime staff are aware, Shelley is the first person of color to work as a librarian at Irondequoit.
- Motion to appoint Lee Sigelow as part-time library assistant, effective 1/7/2021. Motion approved.
- Motion to promote Shelley Wade to part-time Librarian I, effective 1/11/2021. Motion approved.
- Terri will send congratulatory notes for both new positions on behalf of the board.

Correspondence

- A letter from the Greece library board was included with this month's materials. Greece is proposing changes to the MCLS cost share calculation that would result in savings for Irondequoit and other larger suburban libraries. This may be discussed further at the annual MCLS directors retreat.

Review of meeting action items

1. Retreat summary and committee overview: Tyler to have ready for next meeting.
2. Collection diversification project: Input on white paper due by 1/27/21.
3. Children's room doors: Greg and Collene to initiate process of obtaining new estimates.
4. Youth fine and fee elimination: Greg to finalize timeline for next meeting.
5. Staff liaison: Greg to have role description ready for next meeting.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Stephanie Schubmehl
For board secretary Terri Dalton