



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call.

President Fishman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Trustee Di Lorenzo called the roll.

PRESENT: Trustees Cox, Di Lorenzo, Fishman, Nealon, O'Keefe, Sennett, Director Auston

ABSENT: Trustee Sommer

VISITORS: Liz Seager – League of Women Voters; 20+ members of the community

STAFF: Marti Bellefontaine, Cathleen Blair, Michael Boone, Al Frumkin, Ethan Herdrich, Andrea V. Johnson, Marcos Levy

II. Review draft of March 19, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Nealon moved approval of the March 19, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as presented. Trustee Cox seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Fishman

Nay- None

Absent or not voting - O'Keefe, Sommer

MOTION CARRIED.

III. Public Comment. 10 visitors signed-in to speak during public comment:

Iliana Mora – longtime resident thanked WPL for the Between the Lines programming on April 19. Mora noted that having said programming allows the LGBTQI community to be welcomed in a public space and feel supported. For the LGBTQI community, and youth in particular, to have inclusivity and a place to have conversations about pronouns in an open discussion and in public allows them a sense of security.

Amanda Nugent – Wilmette resident and mom acknowledged the conversation around pronouns is new and challenging. A library book started the conversation in their own home around gender identity and sexual orientation. Books teaching families about unknown and challenging subjects are needed.

Laura Herrick – Wilmette resident thanked WPL for the Between the Lines program. Herrick noted talking about pronouns early on is important because gender is recognized early on. Also noted was in the 2022 largest study of transgender people, 80% of those who participated in the study were bullied and 47% considered moving because of the way they were treated. Having words matters.

Lorenza Amigo – DEI elect for McKenzie PTA. Amigo was inspired when she learned of the library's Let's Learn Together program which inspires life-long curiosity, exploration, and discovery, and is in tune to the needs of the community as expressed in their DEI

commitment. The fight for dignity, justice, and equality is a matter of basic human rights.

Cindy Fey – shared a passage from *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder about supporting/defending institutions by acting on their behalf.

Mike Moskowitz – thanked WPL for the Between the Lines program and shared data that 81% of LGTBQ persons have thought about suicide, 42% have attempted, and 56% have engaged in self-harm, and the difference between life and death is shown to be a single, caring adult. Programs like Between the Lines show LGTBQI folks that they are not alone, making this a worthwhile program.

Cristina Gill – expressed their child’s LGTBQI experience growing up in Wilmette was positive and noted the necessity of youth learning to respectfully engage with the LGTBQI community.

Byrd Rhyme-Fisher – thanked the board for LGBTQ resources as an educator, a Wilmette resident, and as a parent.

Leslie Weyrich – thanked the board for their support.

Lisa Oldson – thanked the library for its programming, noted the community’s support and how important it is to “do no harm”, and how important it is to stand up for social justice.

IV. Presentations. None.

V. Treasurer’s Report.

A. Financial Reports for March 2024. Trustee O’Keefe reported:

- During March WPL received \$1,990,432 in Property Taxes, \$9,160 in Replacement Taxes, and \$24,917 in General Fund interest.
- Point of interest: In March 2024, the library received \$24,917 in General Fund interest (almost double in comparison to \$12,527 in March 2023) and \$15,264 in Special Reserve Fund Interest (comparable to \$15,540 in March 2023).
- Two special reserve fund CDs matured in mid-March 2024 and have been reinvested accordingly.
- Three checks in the Check Detail were questioned: 1) A Special Reserve Fund check for \$1,408.48 to Engberg Anderson for the final payment of the BAS consulting; 2) \$4,471.74 to JAMF Software LLC for interface products which manage Apple products and computers; and 3) \$1,950 to Team One Repair, Inc. for processing materials for library hold items.

B. Bills and Salaries Check Detail for March 2024. Trustee O’Keefe moved approval of the March 2024 Bills and Salaries Check Detail, as presented. Trustee Di Lorenzo seconded the motion.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, O’Keefe, Sennett, Fishman

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Sommer

MOTION CARRIED.

VI. Discussion Items. None.

VII. Action Items.

A. Policy Committee Recommendation: Review and approval of updates to the following policies:

- Board Bylaws
- Appendix 0: Rules of Procedure for Public Meetings and Hearings
- Policy 1: Policy Development
- Appendix 1: Guidelines for Library Policies
- Policy 6: Library Facilities
- Policy 9: Human Resources

Trustee Sennett moved approval of the proposed updates to library policies, including the Board Bylaws, Appendix 0, Policy 1, Appendix 1, Policy 6, and Policy 9, as presented. Trustee Cox seconded. There was no discussion.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Fishman

Nay- None

Absent or not voting - Sommer

MOTION CARRIED.

VIII. Director's Report. Director Auston noted the following from his report:

- The Finance Committee is currently scheduled to meet twice this spring to review the FY24-25 budget, which is typically subsequently approved at the June regular meeting. The first committee meeting will be in Friday, May 3 at 10:00am (focusing on the general operating budget), with the second meeting Wednesday, May 29 at 10:00am (focusing on a closed session for the review of the Personnel budget, which comprises nearly 70% of the operating budget).
- We're preparing for public and staff engagement meetings around our Space Needs Assessment (aka the Strategic Facility Plan). The core team (including multiple managers, with trustees Fishman and O'Keefe) met with architect Joe Huberty and his partner Shaun Kelly earlier this month to officially kick-off our space planning project. We will conduct the official staff kickoff at Staff Development Day on Friday, April 19.
- Auston noted additional media supplements to his report this month, including local news reports about Women's History Month activities including the March 13 Women in the Workplace event at the library and hosted by the League of Women Voters of Wilmette (who are celebrating their 100-year anniversary), this panel discussion featured Wilmette residents with diverse career backgrounds; and the March 14 women in local government panel discussion, which included representatives from every unit of local government in our community (the library was represented by vice president O'Keefe). The library was also featured in an article about events around the community related to the April 8 solar eclipse, though it failed to report the remarkable detail that the library distributed over 1,000 eclipse glasses, including distribution over 100 pair on the day of the event.
- The library was also mentioned in an article from CBS news detailing recent House Bill 4567, proposed earlier this year. The bill amends the Criminal Code of 2012 to include protections for library employees across the state from harassment, threats, and disorderly conduct and gives law enforcement agencies and State Attorneys tools to charge a threat against a library or a public library employee, as it already does for school and elected officials. The bill was specifically written to address a rise of hostility toward library employees around the state and country, including a series of extremely disruptive bomb threat incidents last summer and fall.

On behalf of the library, Director Auston signed a witness slip for the judicial committee's review of this proposed update to the criminal code earlier this month. Back in January, when he became aware of the bill, he reached out to local house representatives Gabel and Gong-Gershowitz to encourage them to co-sign the bill, stating that "the definitions provided by this bill lend legitimacy to the library profession and the important role that libraries serve in our fragile democracy." Their chiefs of staff responded to Auston in February, acknowledging receipt of his request, but to-date neither have taken any measurable actions to further respond or demonstrate support of the bill.

- At the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library April 10 board meeting, the Friends board reviewed and approved the library's funding request of \$32,000 for FY24-25. The Friends renewed their commitment to fund library programming, including Wilmette Reads, the Adult/Teen Summer Reading Club incentives, Youth Summer and Winter Reading Club Book Giveaways, the Books for Babies program, and the return of the Shakespeare Project of Chicago (one of our more popular programs of the past 20 years, which has been on pause since the start of the pandemic). We're grateful for the continued support and advocacy provide by our dedicated volunteer corps and Friends board members.
- Physical circulation was strong in March, making it the library's 3rd highest performing month of the fiscal year, and digital circulation continues with its exponential growth trend (just 3% off its record high in January).
- Door counts are remarkable and increasing overall, as we serve on average 700 users each day - rebounding strongly from our pandemic years, though still off the mark from our 2019 traffic.
- Over 1400 people flocked to the library on Saturday, March 9 for Maker Fest, with over 700 attending just for the event. It was resounding success and the result of much planning and coordination with staff across all departments and over a dozen partners.
- The library welcomed 159 new patrons in March.

IX. Committees – Report on Meetings.

- A. ILA/RAILS Update. Trustee Nealon noted the Intergovernmental Committee will reconvene in the fall.
- B. Director Auston noted ILA's Reaching Forward conference for library paraprofessional staff will be attended by several staff members. Two staff members attended PLA's biennial conference in Columbus, OH, April 3-5.

X. Information Items.

- A. Communication. Comments from the suggestion boxes were distributed at the meeting.
- B. The library will be closed on Friday, April 19, 2024 for Staff Development.
- C. Finance Committee will meet May 3, 10:00am and May 29, 10:00am in the Small Meeting Room.

XI. New Business. None.

XII. Adjournment. Trustee Fishman moved to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. The meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.

President
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL

Secretary
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL

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