

AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

March 8, 2021; 4:30 p.m.

Chairperson Melissa Bonorden called the regular meeting of the Austin Public Library Board to order at 4:30 p.m., on Monday, March 8, 2021, at the Austin Public Library. The meeting was conducted by videoconference via Zoom Meeting, as permitted by Minn. Stat. 13D.021 during the condition of a current health pandemic (COVID-19).

PRESENT: Melissa Bonorden, Jwokamer Debock, Sue Grove, Ted Hinchcliffe, Nitaya Jandragholica, Shannon Lysne, Alex Mayfield, Stephanie Postma

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Baldus (County Commissioner liaison), Joyce Poshusta (City Council liaison), Jeff Austin (City Council member), Julie Clinefelter, Sara Steinhoff

ABSENT: Jodi Krueger (with notice)

AGENDA: Ted Hinchcliffe moved to approve the agenda as presented; Nitaya Jandragholica seconded. Motion carried.

SELCO OVERVIEW:

Krista Ross, Executive Director of Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO), provided board members with an overview of how the regional library system works with individual member libraries (such as Austin) in the area, including coordinating core services, technology assistance and advocacy efforts. She further presented information on how board and community members can work for library advocacy on both the local and state level.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Sue Grove, seconded by Shannon Lysne, to approve the February 8, 2021, meeting minutes as presented. Carried.

EXPENSES AND FINANCE REPORTS:

A motion made by Ted Hinchcliffe was seconded by Shannon Lysne to approve the expenditures and accept the finance reports for February 2021. Motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

SELCO REPORT:

Julie Clinefelter reported the 2021 Library Legislative Day meetings with state legislators went well, and SELCO continues to work on advocacy materials by collecting library stories from patrons throughout the region for compilation to show the impact of libraries on people's lives. Sue Grove noted there will be a two-hour Advocacy Committee Training on March 15 for volunteers.

OPERATIONAL REPORT:

Julie Clinefelter provided a written operational report to the board and presented additional information regarding several of the topics covered.

The director noted Jess Lind, youth services librarian, has been notified of the library's approval for an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer to assist with the 2021 Summer Reading Program.

Julie provided the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan for board review and advised she will provide progress updates throughout the year.

Clinefelter reported on her progress on the application for a Library Construction Grant from Minnesota's Department of Education. She noted the City has budgeted \$250,000 in its Capital Improvement Plan for a library construction/remodel project in 2022, and the total project costs could be as much as \$650,000 to \$800,000. The Grant program provides a dollar-for-dollar match, so the library would need to provide at least \$75,000 to \$150,000 in funds to receive the necessary amount.

Julie advised the library has already received \$55,000 in private donations designated for the children's area portion of the project. The board discussed utilizing some of the library's money from the Walter Wienke fund to help finance the construction project, if needed.

Sue Grove moved to approve use of the \$55,000 received, as well as up to \$95,000 of the Walter Wienke fund, as needed for matching funds for the construction grant program. Nitaya Jandragholica seconded. Motion carried.

Director Clinefelter reported she had been approached by KAUS radio station to purchase a subscription for a weekly infomercial segment to promote library services and programs. After discussion of the library's current marketing efforts, and its advertising budget and expenses, the board requested Clinefelter obtain additional information from KAUS about the proposal. They also directed her to solicit patron feedback to help indicate where advertising dollars would be most effective. Board members also noted they would support a more robust virtual presence by the library via the website and social media, and encouraged library staff to renew exploration of various methods of outreach.

The final section of Clinefelter's report focused on the potential for expanding open hours. The board concluded the expansion of hours should be revisited at the May meeting when a higher number of the population has received vaccines and more information is available. Julie shared thoughts on her plans to maintain availability of curbside service after restrictions are lifted, as this is extremely popular with many patrons, and will likely be an ongoing need post-pandemic.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS: Ted Hinchcliffe noted the Hormel Institute is in the process of hiring an educational outreach coordinator.

ADJOURNMENT:

Alex Mayfield moved to adjourn at 5:50 p.m.; Shannon Lysne seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Steinhoff, Recording Secretary

NEXT BOARD MEETING – Monday, April 12, 2021, 4:30 p.m.