

AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

August 12, 2024; 4:30 p.m.

Vice Chair Kristi Beckman called the regular meeting of the Austin Public Library Board to order at 4:30 p.m., on Monday, August 12, 2024, at the Austin Public Library.

PRESENT: Kristi Beckman, Melissa Bonorden, Sue Grove, Nitaya Jandragholica, Valerie Sheedy

ALSO PRESENT: City Council Liaison Jeff Austin, Julie Clinefelter, Sara Steinhoff, Courtney Schmitt

ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Gema Alvarado-Guerrero, Jwokamer Debock, Ted Hinchcliffe, Stephanie Postma

AGENDA:

Sue Grove moved to approve the agenda; Melissa Bonorden seconded. Motion carried.

LIBRARY STAFF PRESENTATION:

Adult Services Librarian Courtney Schmitt reported to the board on her participation in the Minnesota Library Association's two-year leadership program (MILE), which included a retreat in May and an ongoing mentorship program. Courtney provided feedback on the content of the program and stated how it has enhanced her knowledge and leadership skills in her position at the library, and recommended that other library staff participate in the future, if possible.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Nitaya Jandragholica, seconded by Sue Grove, to approve the July 8, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Carried.

EXPENSES AND FINANCE REPORTS:

A motion was made by Nitaya Jandragholica to approve expenditures and accept the finance reports for July 2024. Valerie Sheedy seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous roll-call vote.

SELCO REPORT:

Valerie Sheedy, Mower County's representative to SELCO, reported a new president has been elected to the advisory board, which is in the process of conducting reviews of internal processes, organizational bylaws and other documents. She also noted SELCO's Executive Director is working to negotiate the contract with a new vendor for the region's interlibrary system software, now that a program has been selected.

CITY/COUNTY LIAISON REPORTS:

City Council Liaison Jeff Austin reported council has begun initial review of the proposed 2025 budget.

County Liaison was not present. Valerie Sheedy, who is employed with the county, called the board's attention to a current joint city-county endeavor to complete revisions on the 20-year comprehensive plan. She directed them to a website link for additional information and to complete a survey.

OPERATIONAL REPORT:

Julie Clinefelter provided a written report prior to the board meeting, and discussed the following items:

Library Staff:

Julie reported library staff members participated in the department's Sicora employee engagement workshop on August 6, and the surveys for her 360 evaluation for her have been distributed.

Library Programs:

Clinefelter noted the Summer Reading Program has concluded and Youth Services Librarian Salie Olson will present a summary at the September board meeting. She added that library program staff are working on planning for the remainder of 2024, and are working as a group to revise the internal program evaluation process and other "big-picture" goals and processes for 2025 programming, including identifying the impact of translating program information into other languages.

Julie shared findings from the Public Library Association's Tech Survey, including the following facts:

- approximately half of all US public libraries circulate wifi hotspots to their patrons, and
- 95% of US public libraries offer formal and/or informal digital literacy training to patrons.

She noted this was reflective of how Austin is very much in line with national trends on services and programs related to technology and digital literacy. Clinefelter stated the challenge is really to find the best way to help

people improve their own skills in regards to the learning process, which can be achieved through tech coaching that often involves the need for one-on-one help. She noted the library staff will continue to work on ways to foster a culture of learning and also increase staff skills regarding current and emerging tech.

Networking:

Julie reported Courtney Schmitt will assist with a presentation (led by Austin Aspires) to the Hormel Foundation on digital equity, and Julie recently met with the community's digital equity committee.

Administration:

Clinefelter advised the directors of Mower County's libraries (APL, Grand Meadow, Brownsdale and LeRoy) presented their 2025 budget requests to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration, and the final budget numbers are usually approved in early December.

Julie is currently preparing a future work session presentation for City Council on the topic "not your childhood library" to help council members better understand library day-to-day functions, including tech needs.

Julie also reported the library has obtained the phone accessories to enable use of the Language Line and is working on training staff and making signs to let the public know the service is available.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Julie reminded board members the regular meeting times for the board in October and November will both fall on holidays, so they are currently scheduled for the second Tuesday of those months, rather than the usual second Monday.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Board members commented on the library's position as an "incubator" for new programs and ideas in the community, such as the after-hours Mower County Health and Human Services department evening program that started at the library. Several members noted this fills an important need in Austin by helping connect people and organizations to put new ideas into motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

Sue Grove moved to adjourn at 5:35 p.m.; Valerie Sheedy seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Steinhoff, Secretary

NEXT BOARD MEETING – Monday, September 9, 2024, 4:30 p.m.