

Kalamazoo Public Library
OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC MEETING
Date: January 22, 2024
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: Van Deusen Room, Central Library

CALL TO ORDER:

President Roth called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers.

Recommendation: Denise Miller, President
Christy Roth, Vice President
Lisa Godfrey, Treasurer
Jannie Williams, Secretary

Hearing no further suggestions, President Roth closed the nominations.

MOTION: K. JOCK MOVED AND J. WILLIAMS SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE SLATE OF OFFICERS RECOMMENDED BY THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE FOR 2024-2025.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright –yes; D. Miller – yes

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

AGENDA APPROVAL:

The agenda was approved.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Jannie Williams, Lisa Godfrey, Christy Roth, Kori Jock, Emily Greenman Wright, Linda Mah, Denise Miller

Absent: None

II. RECOGNITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

III. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Jada Warren, a youth community member, comments on the impact that Deza's corner has had not only on her family but others in the community. Jada asked that Deza's corner be taken into consideration of the Alma Powell branch temporary closure. She stated that she hopes there will be a new Deza's corner at the new branch.

Tami Rey, a Northside resident, stated that she was unsure about the facts of the Alma Powell branch moving or closing and she only read one article online. Tami stated whatever the case she encourages the board to find a new branch location on the Northside, because a library branch is very important to Northside residents.

Krystin Penny, a community member, commented that she would like to speak on behalf of the Alma Powell branch. She stated that there should be a deep consideration of temporarily closing the Alma Powell branch. Krystin stated that families that utilize the library don't have access to transportation which makes it difficult for them to reach the downtown library location or any other location. She continued to state the activities and resources she uses at the Alma Powell branch, such as First Saturdays and utilizing the library for her work life. She stated First Saturdays are important to build up children, empowering reading, and encouraging reading. Krystin also stated that her child's daycare center walks to the Alma Powell branch and visits often. She thinks the temporary closure will cause devastation to the children in the Northside community if they don't have access to a library.

Chika Hampton, a Northside resident, commented that she was present when the Douglass Community Association (DCA) first opened. She stated that it's devastating that the Alma Powell branch will no longer be in the DCA. She continued by stating that it's important to reestablish a library branch near its former location. Chika stated she read articles that said there will be a new Alma Powell branch, and she wanted to know what the timeline for this new library branch is. She also stated that it would be frustrating more than anything if it's several years down the line, and the services that were available at the Alma Powell branch were important to the patrons. She further commented that the services are not only important for the students, but also for the adults who need the services and assistance.

T. Johnson, a community member, stated that she understands this is not a hundred percent the library's choice to temporarily close the Alma Powell branch. She stated that she hopes there will be a lot of library resources made available to the community. She continued by stating that the Alma Powell branch provided services to the most underserved community members, that youth used the library after school to do homework, and parents to find resources, and that the library provided a safe space for kids to come and find peace. The kids had computer access, which no other space provides as openly as the library does. T. Johnson stated that she is concerned about the number of resources that the library provides not being made available to the youth that organizations like her organization services. She stated that even though there are other organizations in the DCA building that provide services, they are not the same as the library. She continued by stating the community would love a timeline so that the community can know how to support kids with transportation for the kids from school to the library. She stated one of her major concerns is that the library needs to be clearer on the plans moving forward.

Mara Minott, a community member, stated that she utilized the Kalamazoo Public Library while she was in high school as an at-risk youth. She stated she had nowhere to go after

school and would walk to the Oshtemo Branch where she was treated very kindly and received amazing service. Mara stated the library gave her computer access and access to education and knowledge that she did not have before. Also, her first job was at the Kalamazoo Public Library. She continued by stating that it's very disappointing to see resources being diminished in the community, and that all kids and individuals should have access to their community library. Also, that the library is instrumental and important to persons of color and in allowing black people to be able to have a space where they are heard, along with having programs that meet their needs.

Gwendolyn Hooker, a Northside resident, stated she did not have a lot of information regarding the Alma Powell branch temporary closure and that she got her information from a news article which seemed very abrupt in explaining the situation. She stated she has affinity to the Alma Powell branch for many reasons. Gwendolyn continued by stating that the Library probably already knows that taking resources from a marginalized community of black and brown children is detrimental in numerous ways. She also stated that the Alma Powell branch is 25 to 50 yards from one of the most low-income neighborhoods in Kalamazoo County, and to move it any further from where it is would be a detriment.

IV. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. *Minutes of the Meeting of December 4, 2023*
- B. *Minutes of the Meeting of December 11, 2023*
- C. *Personnel Items:* Trustee Roth acknowledged employee new hires, employee separations, and employee anniversaries within the organization.

MOTION: K. JOCK MOVED AND E. GREENMAN WRIGHT SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT CALENDARS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

V. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

- A. *Financial Reports for the Month Ending November 30, 2023*

Recommendation: Interim Director Terry New recommended the Board accept the Financial Reports for the month ending November 30, 2023.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND K. JOCK SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2023.

Discussion: Nnamdi Dike, Department Head of Budget and Finance, gave a summary highlighting the November Financial Reports.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

B. Financial Reports for the Month Ending December 31, 2023

Recommendation: Interim Director New recommended the Board accept the Financial Reports for the month ending December 31, 2023.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND K. JOCK SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023.

Discussion: Nnamdi Dike, Department Head of Budget and Finance, gave a summary highlighting the December Financial Reports.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

VI. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

A. Revision to the Purchasing Policy

Recommendation: Interim Director New recommended the Board accept the revised Purchasing Policy.

MOTION: L. MAH MOVED AND C. ROTH SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE REVISED PURCHASING POLICY

Discussion: Nnamdi Dike, Department Head of Budget and Finance, explained the revisions of the Purchasing Policy.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

B. Revision to Meeting Room Policy

Recommendation: Interim Director New recommended the Board accept the revised Meeting Room Policy, which will be renamed Community Room Policy.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND K. JOCK SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE REVISED MEETING ROOM POLICY, WHICH WILL BE RENAMED COMMUNITY ROOM POLICY.

Discussion: Bionca Stewart, Executive Assistant, explained the revisions to the Meeting Room Policy. Trustee Godfrey stated there should be language included in the policy that informs patrons they will not have access to events or meetings that are not designated for the public. Interim Director New stated this language will be included in the policy revision.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

C. MERS Transfer

Recommendation: Interim Director New recommended the Board approve the Employer Resolution Establishing Uniform Transfer Provision to the Supervisory-Technical and Administration MERS Defined Benefit Agreement.

MOTION: C. ROTH MOVED AND E. GREENMAN WRIGHT SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE EMPLOYER RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING UNIFORM TRANSFER PROVISION TO THE SUPERVISORY-TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATION MERS DEFINED BENEFIT AGREEMENT.

Discussion: Interim Director New explained that the transfer would require that current KPL employees transferring into the Supervisory-Technical/Administration group from other Defined Benefit eligible groups such as KPLA and KPLSP be enrolled in the open Defined Contribution Plan. Approving this resolution would allow current KPL Defined Benefit participants within these groups to maintain these benefits when transferring into the Supervisory-Technical/Administration group.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Reports

A. *Reading Together Preview*

Karen Trout, Librarian Lead, discussed the selection process of how the book *Yellowface* was chosen for the Reading Together program. Librarian Lead Trout informed the board that 400 copies were purchased, and 200 copies will be for giveaways at different events the library will be hosting.

B. *ONEplace co-leadership update*

Ragan Savara, ONEplace Operations Manager, gave a presentation on ONEplace services and resources it provides to the community. ONEplace Operations Manager Savara explained how she co-leads with ONEplace Programming Manager Stacy Jackson. She also gave information on the grants ONEplace has received, along with updates on the Emerging Leadership Academy.

C. Law Library update

Librarian Lead Jade Epps and Patron Services Department Head Michael Cockrell gave an update on the Law Library's new location, and an explanation as to why the Law Library had to relocate. Librarian Lead Epps stated the new location of the Law Library is comfortable and safe.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Finance and Budget Committee* – Trustee Godfrey stated the committee reviewed the Purchasing Policy, and approval for opening a discussion with Lee Schultz of Miller Johnson for legal counsel for upcoming union negotiations.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND E. GREENMAN WRIGHT SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO APPROVE OPENING A DISCUSSION WITH LEE SCHULTZ OF MILLER JOHNSON FOR LEGAL COUNSEL.

Roll Call Vote: J. Williams – yes; L. Godfrey – yes; L. Mah – yes; K. Jock – yes; C. Roth – yes; E. Greenman Wright – yes; D. Miller – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

- B. Personnel Committee* – Trustee Williams stated the committee discussed board development and continuing the current contract with Onyx Consulting. An email of the proposed contract with Onyx Consulting was sent to board members for review. The committee continued to discuss the 360 evaluation and have started looking at vendors for doing the evaluation.
- C. Fund Development Committee* – No meeting.
- D. Director's Building Advisory Committee* – No meeting.
- E. Ad hoc Bylaw Review Committee* – No meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Director's Report

Interim Director New reported on the following topics:

- Interim Director New thanked those of the public who gave public comments. Interim Director New stated members of administration are listening and recognize how significant the temporary suspension of services at Alma Powell branch is and the Library is working hard to minimize any disruption of service. She continued by stating the Library is looking for a temporary branch location, looking at extending our programs, and working with community partners, and more Mobile Library stops so collections can be accessible.
- Interim Director New stated there will be two public forums on Tuesday, January 30th to provide information on the services that will be provided to the Northside, and also collecting feedback and ideas for the future of the Alma Powell branch. The first session will be in the Van Deusen from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and the second session will be at Lincoln School Auditorium from 6 to 8 p.m.
- Interim Director New continued by stating The Professional Development Committee is working on the coordination of the return of KPL Academy. KPL Academy is an internal professional series for all staff which has provided an opportunity to learn and connect with other staff on a regular basis. Staff were also able to practice presentation and instruction skills. Staff attended in-person training on a variety of topics including KPL's own policies or procedures, information specific to the Kalamazoo community, or general training areas in libraries, productivity, technology, etc. KPL Academy was suspended during COVID but returns this month with MeL Resource Training led by Laura Warren-Gross. This training will be held three times in January and early February.
- The New Internal Communications guidelines have been completed and will be presented to all staff this month. Guidelines detail methods and appropriate uses of internal email communications systems as identified by the Internal Communication Audit.
- Interim Director New gave an update on the Coffee & Connections program growing each month. Over 30 patrons attended the December 18th program in the Van Deusen Room. Many of the participants attend monthly. The Community Engagement, Security, and Social Services Teams have been doing an amazing job providing outside resources from organizations like the Family Health Center and Kalamazoo Literacy. This outreach is making a difference by connecting patrons with not only important resources, but a friendly KPL face. The next Coffee & Connections is on January 29th from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the Van Deusen Room.

IX. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

T. Johnson, a community member, stated that she is relieved to hear that there will be community sessions. She stated she would like to know if there would be a questions and answers session, where community members could directly ask questions. She continued to state that when the Alma Powell temporary closure was announced there should have been more said about what the Library intended to do and how it intended to do it.

Mara Minott, a community member, inquired if artwork could be commissioned that would honor her Aunt Peggy and her contributions to the Oshtemo branch.

X. COMMENTS BY TRUSTEES

- L. Godfrey thanked the public who came forward to speak on behalf of the Alma Powell branch. She stated it is her intention to assure that there is a library branch that exists in the Northside community, and the board will do whatever it is in their power to make services continue.
- K. Jock echoed thanks to the community members who shared their passion for literacy and for their support of the Alma Powell branch. She also gave thanks to Kalamazoo Public Library (KPL) staff for their quick work to address the situation and plan of the forums.
- E. Greenman Wright gave no comment.
- J. Williams echoed thanks to the patrons for expressing their concerns. She continued by stating she was excited by how many people attended tonight's meeting. She also stated that she thinks this opportunity will bring the community together and make a new library branch a top priority. She stated she thinks about Michigan's literacy rate in the nation, stating it is ranked 45th across the 50 states. And the board will do whatever we can to offer services and resources.
- L. Mah echoed thanks to the community members who spoke about the Alma Powell branch. She stated the board is committed to serving the Northside community and to developing services to help transition through this period. She asked for the community's patience and encouraged the community to come out and learn about the process and about the opportunities to comment at the public forums.
- C. Roth echoed thanks to the community members who spoke about the Alma Powell branch. She stated that the board is listening to the community, and that KPL staff are working to come up with ways to make sure that there is minimal interruption to services. She informed the public that the public forum session will be happening on January 30th in the Van Deusen from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Lincoln School.
- D. Miller thanked the nominating committee and the trustees for entrusting her in leadership. She thanked the former officers for their work this year, and welcomed new officers. She echoed thanks to the public for their comments regarding the Alma Powell branch.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, President Roth adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

X

Jannie Williams
Secretary