

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS**  
**OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS**  
**February 20, 2024 | 5:15 pm**  
**111 Library St NE | Board Room**

Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

**1. ROLL CALL**

Board Members Present: Rachel Anderson, Kelly Boston, Kathryn Dilley,  
Sheila García Mazari, Kristin Kopec,  
Kevin Peterson, Lauren Woolsey

Board Members Absent:

Administration Present: Robert Adcock, Lindsay Laplow, John McNaughton,  
Patrick Beatty

Staff Present: Megan Biggins, Erin Hart, Ann Neff-Rohs

Public Present: Steven Assarian, GREIU

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comment.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON JANUARY 20, 2024**

**MOTION: By Commissioner García Mazari, seconded by Woolsey, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of January 20, 2024.**

Poortenga has a correction on Agenda Item 6c: The Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation's board approved all Fiscal Year 2024 grant requests totalling over \$446,000.

**ACTION: AYES 7 – 0**

**Motion passed.**

**4. BOARD COMMENTS**

Boston comments that she was at the Main Library yesterday for storytime and got her taxes done. She commends Librarian Besty Zandstra for the excellent storytime. She includes that other patrons were very excited to attend more storytime programming. She says that she appreciates the tax service available at the library as well.

Anderson comments that she attended the lecture on Saturday on Afrofuturism. She says it was really nice and well attended. Biggins agrees and says that it was well attended throughout the whole program.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. Legislative**

Anderson comments that they will be meeting briefly after this meeting.

### **b. Policy**

No comments.

### **c. Board Retreat**

No comments.

## **6. STAFF & FOUNDATION REPORTS**

### **A. Library Director's Report**

McNaughton says that the STEAM Center update meeting is scheduled for this Thursday. Peterson, Woolsey, and Boston offer to attend the STEAM Center meeting. McNaughton says that he expects a conversation about the current state of the project. Fishbeck and the City will be present at the meeting.

McNaughton announces that we have hired a new Director of HR that will be starting March 4. We have also hired a new Facilities Manager that will be starting soon. McNaughton adds that he will bring both to a board meeting so they can introduce themselves.

Peterson comments that he is glad the HR position is being filled.

Anderson comments on the bed bug story within the report. She adds that GRPL has been very on-top of this issue for many years. McNaughton comments that starting pre-pandemic, we implemented book-cookers at every branch and we bring dogs in to detect bed bugs. He also explains what the book-cookers are. Biggins adds that we run every book that we receive back from patrons through the book-cookers. She says that it is a 2 hour process and holds 1-4 carts of books. The temperature needed to kill bed bugs is 140 degrees and it doesn't damage any library materials. Peterson asks if the book-cookers are commonly implemented in libraries across Michigan. McNaughton says that this is exclusive to GRPL and he does not know of any other library with this specific technology right now. McNaughton adds that the biggest investments in 2020 were book-cookers and pandemic resources. García Mazari says that she appreciates having this new technology as she knows from experience how much it helps with staff time.

García Mazari comments that she is impressed by the 42% read-rate on the e-newsletter.

Boston says she is glad we're providing a space for Bright Beginnings. She adds that it is incredibly important in our community.

McNaughton says that he sent an email to the board about the Director's Evaluation questions.

**B. Financial Report**

Adcock says that there is no monthly report due to the February board meeting being held early this month.

**C. Foundation Update**

No comments.

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Budget Information Review**

McNaughton explains that the reason for GRPL's budget presentation to the board 1 month early is so they can digest it and make appointments with him, Adcock, or any staff member to talk about it so everyone feels well informed.

McNaughton explains that the Google Workspace project has started with email conversion that happened over this past weekend. He says that this line item is included for FY25 for continued support.

McNaughton speaks on the Staffing Study. He explains that we will look at staffing and hours of operation at all of our locations.

Neff-Rohs speaks on the budgeted project for the Grand Rapids History Center (GRHC). She explains that archival collections are recorded in linear feet and we need to convert our measurements into cubic feet. Anderson asked if the contracted company will be doing a quality assessment. Neff-Rohs confirms that they will and explains that this will highlight what we need to digitize to preserve. Kopec asks if they will do any appraisals. Neff-Rohs answers that they will not.

Neff-Rohs speaks about adding a video game collection. She explains that this has been requested many times by patrons who are used to borrowing from Kent District Library (KDL)'s collection. Dilley asks if the games will all be in a digital format. Neff-Rohs clarifies that some are, and others are cartridges or CDs. Woolsey asks about the strategic plan for longevity of the video games. Neff-Rohs explains that there is a high demand when things are new and usage is what will drive the discontinuation of formats. Boston asks what happens if someone challenges a video game. Neff-Rohs explains that most video games are rated.

McNaughton speaks about the patron printing line item and explains that we need new machines for public-use due to high demand.

McNaughton speaks on the increase in parking fees. He explains that we are proposing to raise the parking rates to be more competitive with the rest of the City's parking lots. He says that Adcock is in contact with the City about the issues we are having with our parking and are hoping to come up with resolutions. Anderson asks if staff are having issues. McNaughton answers yes and says he will keep the board updated on the status of this situation. Woolsey suggests raising parking prices to market rate and widening the validation window. Kopec asks if the staffing

consultant could look at this as well. McNaughton says it is a possibility. Dilley asks if there can be designated spots for staff in parking lots. Adcock explains how the machines are programmed and says he is trying to figure out what is going to work for us to reserve staff spaces. Boston asks about street parking prices and if that will be factored in. McNaughton says we'll talk more in our Executive meetings. Anderson and Adcock confirm that pricing will be in whole dollar amounts because equipment doesn't take coins.

Anderson asks whether the property tax lines are real numbers or projected numbers. Adcock says the lines are projected numbers from the City due to the strong housing market.

Boston asks why the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation (GRPLF) granting process and GRPL budget process don't match up. Biggins explains that GRPLF has 3 granting cycles whereas the GRPL budget is only approved once a year.

Peterson comments that he's glad to see there is a surplus for 2025.

Anderson asks that the board members contact McNaughton or Adcock to set up a meeting or ask any questions and adds that they will be voting on the budget next month.

**B. Agenda Policy Adjustment**

Anderson explains that this removal is to streamline the meeting process. She adds that this will keep Agenda Item 12 at the end of the meeting.

**MOTION: By Commissioner Dilley, seconded by Woolsey, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the adjustment to the Agenda Policy.**

Woolsey comments that the public has not utilized both opportunities to make comments in most meetings.

Beatty asks why it was previously on the agenda. Anderson explains that Agenda Item 2 was changed from "Public Comments on Agenda Items" to "Public Comments" in order to allow the public to make comments at the beginning of the meeting. She adds that even with this change, the public rarely makes comments during a meeting.

**ACTION: AYES 7 – 0**

**Motion passed.**

**9. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. Media Index**

Boston says that she appreciates the breakdown within the media index for added context behind patron comments.

**B. Staffing Report**

No comments.

**C. Statistical Report for January 2024**

Kopec asks about the decrease in the number of unique borrowers. Anderson asks if this is due to children not coming in January as often as they do in July. Biggins confirms that Summer Reading programming goes through August each year. McNaughton says they'll keep an eye on it and will talk to the Library Analyst for more context behind this statistic.

**10. GRAND RAPIDS EMPLOYEES INDEPENDENT UNION**

Assarian says he is happy to see a line item for patron printing next fiscal year. He adds that he is looking forward to working with management on the staffing initiative.

**11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR BOARD MEETING: MARCH 26, 2024**

Anderson asks the board to let her or McNaughton know if they have anything they want to add.

Dilley comments that she is interested in going to ALA. Anderson says she possibly is interested too. McNaughton says to let Laplow know and she will take care of registration.

**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments.

**13. Adjournment**

**MOTION: By Commissioner Kopec, seconded by Peterson, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids adjourn the meeting.**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm.**