

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS  
June 20, 2023 – 5:15 pm  
111 Library St NE – Board Room**

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

**1. ROLL CALL**

Board Members Present: Rachel Anderson, Kelly Boston, Kathryn Dilley, Kristin Kopec, Lauren Woolsey

Board Members Absent: Sheila García Mazari (with notice)

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

Staff Present: Ann Neff-Rohs, Robby Peters, Julie Tabberer, Bridget Ward

Public Present: Dan Poortenga, GRPLF; Steven Assarian, GREIU; Jarran Fountain, Lions & Rabbits; Ken Miguel-Cipriano, WMCAT

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION: By Commissioner Kopec, supported by Commissioner Woolsey, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of April 25, 2023.**

**ACTION: AYES 5 – 0**

**Motion passes.**

**4. BOARD COMMENTS**

Boston received a comment from a community member that they were grateful for forward-facing displays being added to the lower shelves of the children's area.

Kopec mentions that the staff turnover rate has been better than previous years. McNaughton says staffing is almost at capacity.

Anderson says the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) seems to be going well and has heard how excited adults are to be included. Woolsey adds that she's glad it's available and marketed to adults as well as children.

Woolsey says she's disappointed not to have been able to work with Commissioner Bose.

Dilley makes notes of improvements to the Grand Rapids History Center and asks about staffing. McNaughton answers that no new positions have been added, but the department is now fully staffed. The change in hours for the History Center have been tabled.

Dilley mentions Illinois recently passed a law prohibiting the banning of books. She hopes Michigan will do the same. Anderson appreciates Dilley sharing this with the board.

**5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Anderson says there is no update with Fishbeck due to various delays. There will be a proposal ready at the end of the summer and there will likely be another presentation for the board possibly in August.

## 6. STAFF & FOUNDATION REPORTS

### a. Library Director's Report

McNaughton says Fishbeck is currently working very closely with staff and are completing their final analysis. They will be working on a proposal for the rest of the branches. Staff are excited to participate and McNaughton is pleased to see the ideas that have come forward. The STEAM Center will have a listening session with the public in the GRPL auditorium. He emphasized that none of these changes are going to happen over night and will take quite some time.

A new trustee manual from the State of Michigan is available and can be sent to the board members electronically or printed. The manual is on their website as well. Woolsey and Boston request to have it emailed.

Boston asks if the STEAM Center listening event will be promoted on Facebook. They discuss whether it is a private event. Bratt says she will get with the Communications Department on that. Boston will share with people if able.

McNaughton adds that during his review, it was mentioned how ambitious his goals are, so he is working on drafting a letter to the board that has main focuses and a roadmap, and says to look for that shortly.

Woolsey was glad to see how many people could participate in the Mental Health First Aid training at Staff Day. Kopec adds that she is impressed by everyone's baking skills at Staff Day.

Boston talks about the youth-led Book Club. She adds that she likes the addition of accessible tools for children.

### b. Financial Report

Adcock says we have 2 weeks left of the fiscal year. We won't have final numbers until possibly September. He will bring projections to next month's board meeting.

### c. Foundation Update

Poortenga says that the GRPLF is in between granting meetings. They are working on the Friends of the Library bookkeeping and will assist them to make sure they know their responsibilities. An MOU between the GRPLF and the Friends is being worked on. Anderson thanks Poortenga for his work on this.

## 7. OLD BUSINESS

### a. Continued Conversation about Future Library Statements Policy

Anderson asks what the Library wants and how the board can help. McNaughton explains how this conversation started and where it is now. He wants a policy to protect and empower staff in conversations with patrons around fraught subjects. There is a larger issue about organizational values. Dilley talks about values being subjective and the need to determine if this is policy and procedure. McNaughton discusses whether this should be more of a human rights policy.

Anderson asks what the Library's values are and Bratt answers. Anderson suggests taking values from our strategic plan and using them as a basis to create policy. This will be added to the agenda for the Committee of Whole.

Woolsey says rather than reinvent anything, the ALA Bill of Rights could be used. Boston agrees. McNaughton agrees and says that the Library does currently offer that and also encourages anyone with questions or issues to talk to the director. He talks about wanting to leave the Library

in a better place than where it began.

Anderson says a value statement explicitly stating the right for collection development may be needed.

The board and Beatty discuss the law around book bans and its effects.

Anderson suggests looking to KDL for policies as well.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### a. Lions & Rabbits Presentation

Ward talks about a proposal to put a mural on the side of the Van Belkum Branch. She explains that she has been working with Lions & Rabbits to create a proposal.

Fountain from Lions & Rabbits presents.

The board asks questions regarding lifespan, pricing, and repair of the mural, as well as about the approval process and zoning issues. Fountain answers.

Boston clarifies that this is just an informational item. She says this is very exciting and thinks this mural will fit in the neighborhood well.

### b. Library Facilities Management Compensation Change

**MOTION: By Commissioner Dilley, supported by Commissioner Boston, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the change in compensation for the Library Facilities Manager for FY24 or until a new Facilities Manager is hired.**

McNaughton explains that the current Facilities Manager is retiring but is willing to stay on for an additional year with additional responsibilities. Kopec asks for clarification on the added responsibilities and McNaughton explains that they are intended to create a clear roadmap for the next person who comes in as his replacement. Anderson clarifies that we are still actively looking for a replacement Facilities Manager. Laplow agrees.

**ACTION: AYES 5 – 0**

McNaughton mentions a revision to the proposal stating the effective date will be from July 1, 2023 through July 1, 2024. The Board revotes.

**ACTION: AYES 5 – 0**

Motion passes.

### c. Approval of Michigan Arts & Culture Council Grant Application

**MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner Kopec, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the GRPLF to submit the MCACA grant application for FY24.**

Woolsey asks how many years the Library has applied for this grant. McNaughton says it's been every year since he's been here.

**ACTION: AYES 5 – 0**

McNaughton mentions that the name of the grant has changed from Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) to Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC). The Board revotes with the revised name.

**ACTION: AYES 5 – 0**

**Motion passes.**

**d. Board Member Replacement Discussion**

Anderson says we need to let García Mazari know if we want to use the application that was in the May board packet. She suggests a timeline of a month of online applications. All board members will read applications and will select a group to conduct interviews then vote on the new member. The new member will fill Bose’s term and will need to run again in the next election.

Woolsey asks if the interviews need to be an open meeting. McNaughton confirms. The board discusses the proposed timeline.

Anderson asks if the board would like to change anything or add questions to the application. The board discusses and decides to add: “How would your advocacy of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access support the existing work of GRPL?”

The board addresses the rules for serving on the board. Beatty answers that he isn’t sure of an age restriction.

The board discusses the importance of candidates knowing what the role is. Anderson says the application will be a link on our website which also includes a link to the Board Policy. Dilley says there should also be physical copies in each branch.

The board will finalize the application by the end of this week; it will be posted at the beginning of next week, with a closing date of July 18. The board will discuss applicants at the July regular meeting and will interview candidates on August 15 to choose a new member. The new member will be sworn in by the August regular board meeting.

**e. Policy Meeting of the Whole Discussion**

Anderson discusses having a set policy meeting on a monthly basis for the foreseeable future and suggests keeping meetings to an hour in length. Dilley asks if the regular time frame or if earlier in the day works better. The board agrees that earlier in the day does not work.

Woolsey would like to wait until the new board member is chosen and there are action items. McNaughton suggests making a quarterly meeting for the 3-person policy group to come in early before a board meeting to meet.

Anderson offers to step off the policy committee so Woolsey can step onto it. The policy committee now consists of Dilley, Woolsey, and García Mazari.

**9. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. Media Index**

No comments.

**b. Staffing Report**

No comments.

**c. Statistical Report for May 2023**

No comments.

**10. GRAND RAPIDS EMPLOYEES INDEPENDENT UNION**

Assarian says that there are currently 4 open grievances and a FOIA request, which he believes is

expected to be received by the end of this month. He asks the board a question regarding the board's policy about FOIA requests and Anderson reminds him that his time is to make statements. Assarian suggests answering his question at the next regular board meeting.

**11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR BOARD MEETING: July 25, 2023**

Official discussion of candidates.

Boston asks for an update on IT Dewpoint. McNaughton explains what stage the process is in. Dewpoint is working directly with the Library's IT department. Bratt includes that they are currently assessing the scope of work.

**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Miguel-Ciprano says that they are a Creston resident and comments on the Lions & Rabbits proposed mural at the Van Belkum Branch. They suggest that the board considers using vinyl wrapping for a long-term piece of art and claims that it is a better investment than a painted mural.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids adjourn this meeting.**

No comments.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.**