

**WINNETKA-NORTHFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

March 18, 2019

I. Call to Order

The meeting was held at the Winnetka Library, 768 Oak Street Winnetka, Illinois. President Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

II. Roll Call

Present: President Brian Johnson, and Trustees Jean-Paul Ruiz-Funes, Suzie Shoup, Keta McCarthy, Lois Neustadt and Kathleen Reichert; and Library Director Rebecca Wolf.
Absent: Raheela Anwar

Present were library employees; Nicola White (Administrative Assistant), Sarah Quish (Head of Communications and Marketing) and Stephanie Girardi (Collection Services Acquisitions Associate). Present were Lakota Group members; Scott Freres and Kevin Clark. Present were Product Architecture + Design members; Tiffany Nash and Dan Pohrte. Present were Trustee candidates Brian Schmisek and Travis Gosselin. Present was Winnetka resident Jeffrey Liss.

III. Public Comments

No public comments.

IV. Vote to Approve Minutes of February 11, 2019 Regular Meeting*

A MOTION was made by Trustee Shoup to approve the February 11, 2019 Regular Board Meeting Minutes and seconded by Trustee Reichert.

The MOTION passed on a voice vote.

V. Financial Report

Director Wolf stated that the second disbursement is now coming in for revenues.

Director Wolf stated that capital outlay continues to run high due to final payments from the remodel last fiscal year.

Director Wolf stated that water and power are running slightly above the anticipated budget due to fluctuations in costs. The District will plan for this in the budget for next year.

Director Wolf stated that the personnel budget line continues to be underbudget because the District did not fill two significant positions. The librarian II positions began in February, and there is discussion about filling another librarian position.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked if the increase in healthcare is reflected in the budget. Director Wolf responded that only one staff member took advantage of the family healthcare plan; but even with that addition, the District will still be underbudget.

Director Wolf stated that IMRF is slightly overbudget in cash due to the rate change that went into effect. She expects numbers to fall in line with any overage being nominal.

President Johnson mentioned that donations are running low. Director Wolf responded that the District receives the donations from the Friends of the Library in May.

Director Wolf stated that interest revenue is coming in high and suggested that the Board consider this for next year's budget.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes mentioned that Adult Services is still running overbudget. Director Wolf responded that digital and databases are overbudget due to the timing of payments. She expects Adult Services will be on budget by the end of the fiscal year.

President Johnson asked why the Human Resources consultant budget is running low. Director Wolf responded that HR representative Kevin Breese has been working less hours at the District; he comes in twice a week. She also mentioned that Kevin will be working on a project to assist librarians with recrafting their job descriptions.

A MOTION was made by Trustee McCarthy to approve the February 2019 Financial Statements and seconded by Trustee Ruiz-Funes.

The MOTION passed on a voice vote.

VI. Library Report

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Johnson stated that he received a copy of the Source and was pleasantly surprised to see that his mother-in-law was featured on the cover.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Wolf stated that the 43rd Annual Winnetka-Northfield Chamber of Commerce Recognition Lunch will be held on April 10th, 2019 and the District has chosen to honor Mark Swenson, Head of Information Technology as the Librarian of the Year.

Director Wolf stated that District staff met to discuss the strategic plan and the upcoming survey.

Director Wolf announced that Sandy Penn has been promoted from Page to Circulation Associate.

Director Wolf announced that part-time cataloger Jessica Thomson will be leaving the library for a full-time cataloging position at the Wilmette Public Library.

Director Wolf announced that Amanda Garrity has stepped up as the Youth Interim Head while Head of Youth Services Sheila Cody is out on leave.

Director Wolf announced that Studio Associate Jimmy Gonzalez-Vicker has led a complete Studio training initiative. All staff have been retrained.

Director Wolf stated that staff are preparing for another fun season of summer reading.

Director Wolf stated that study room usage is continuing to increase.

Director Wolf stated that circulation is doing well, although the numbers are not comparable to this time last year because the Library was closed.

President Johnson mentioned that initial checkout data is more meaningful and suggested using Collection HQ to run that data. Director Wolf responded that she will find out what Collection HQ can do with initial data.

Trustee Neustadt asked if the ordering procedure will change given the new Librarian II positions. Director Wolf responded that the Collection Development Librarians are gathering data and learning from other libraries and will take over ordering in the next fiscal year.

Trustee Neustadt asked if the staff who are currently ordering will continue to order materials and Director Wolf stated that they will not. Staff will still manage collections by helping with maintaining, weeding and recommending titles. Collection Development Librarians Kate Grabon and Nick Mall will be doing all the ordering and presenting to staff quarterly regarding collections.

Trustee Neustadt asked if anyone who works at Northfield will be ordering for Northfield. Director Wolf stated that Kate is from the Northfield Branch and all librarians including Kate and Nick are scheduled to work shifts at the Northfield desk, and will also understand the branch's collection trends through data and experience.

Trustee McCarthy asked if Amanda Garrity is doing alright juggling the two positions. Director Wolf stated that they are very sensitive to it and are planning for a slower start to her programming responsibilities. She is doing very well.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes mentioned the increase in hot spot sessions and web sessions and asked if these are trends. Director Wolf responded that she believes the new catalogue and website design have made the user experience more friendly which could be influencing the upward trends.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked what the District can do with these numbers. Director Wolf responded that she believes the numbers demonstrate that more patrons will be using library services from outside of the library. She is excited to dig into the data from the survey results.

VII. Liaisons to Other Organizations-Reports

- *RAILS* - Director Wolf stated that there is nothing new to report on RAILS.
- *Winnetka Village*- Trustee Anwar is absent.
- *Northfield Village*- Trustee Neustadt stated that Northfield Village has started using Smart911. Trustee Neustadt stated that car burglaries are up, and the Village approved a

new sound ordinance. She also stated that a new report was published regarding the Village budget. Trustee Neustadt stated that the construction of the new bank on Willow Road has slowed down due to environmental issues, and that the Best Hardware is for sale.

VIII. Unfinished Business

- *Presentation by Lakota Group of the Patio Materials*

Director Wolf stated that tonight the Board will be reviewing the revised patio project plans and will then vote to proceed to Village commissions.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked to be reminded of the budget and Director Wolf responded that it is about \$250,000. Scott Freres from Lakota Group stated that \$250,000 factors in contingencies, and they expect to spend around \$210,000.

Kevin Clark from Lakota Group presented the updated plans for the patio project. He noted that one of the biggest changes was providing a visual barrier between the patio and the street. He also noted the addition of a midcentury inspired sign that states the name and address of the Winnetka Library.

Clark stated that after they go to the Design Review Board and are approved to move forward, they plan to begin construction after the Fourth of July activities. He stated that it should be a three-month process, so the Library will be enjoying the patio by October.

Trustee Reichert asked if there is any part of the plan that the Village has not fundamentally agreed with. Clark stated that there is still some discussion to get approval, but Village planners are generally on board.

Clark stated that the bus shelter is still in discussion. They have spoken with the Village and reached out to Pace to replace it. However, if it is replaced then the District must sign a contract to maintain it.

President Johnson mentioned that the front entrance will not be the ADA entrance; however, the South entrance will be fully ADA compliant. He asked Lakota Group if they are required to post signage at the front entrance mentioning the ADA accessible entrance in back, and if so, are they able to do it in a tasteful and informative way? Clark responded that it would be easy to do.

Trustee McCarthy asked which plantings would be removed and which would be new. Clark stated that most of the plantings are new, but anything they can reuse they will. They will also be keeping the forested grove on the West side.

Trustee Reichert asked if there is currently a sprinkler irrigation system covering the area. Director Wolf responded that there is not, but they can consider the sprinkler option after reviewing the cost.

Trustee McCarthy asked if patrons can sit on the walls near the sidewalk. Lakota Group responded that they can, and they expect people will because of how well-used the walls are in other areas, such as the park in Hubbard Woods.

- *Discussion and Vote to Proceed with the Patio Project to the Village Commissions*
A MOTION was made by Trustee Reichert to proceed with the Patio Project to the Village Commissions and seconded by Trustee Shoup.

The MOTION passed on a voice vote.

- *Presentation by Product Architecture and Design of the Proposed Northfield Branch Remodel*

Director Wolf stated that Product Architecture + Design will be reviewing the first draft of the Northfield renovation plans with the Board. She hopes that the Board will vote to move forward with the budget and the fundamental ideas of the plan that they will show the community.

Tiffany Nash and Dan Pohrte from Product Architecture + Design presented the draft for the Northfield plans, highlighting the remodeled circulation desk, removal of the Glass Room, and the addition of study rooms. They hope to make the desk easier for staff to maneuver through and to add a self-check portal. They also highlighted the new shelving that is more accessible for all patrons.

Trustee Neustadt suggested slowing the process down and collecting usage data and input from the Northfield community before proceeding with the design phase.

Director Wolf stated that ideally, she would like to begin the remodel in August due to the downtrend that occurs in that month. They have done the decibel study and looked at usage and have always had it on the agenda to remodel Northfield after the Winnetka remodel. She also stated that about 15-18 District staff members met on March 6th to review the plans with Product Architecture + Design and give input.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked for a reminder of the strategic plan for the Northfield Branch. Director Wolf responded that overall for the District they discussed updating lighting, buildings, carpet, and making sure they are treating both libraries the same regarding updates.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes mentioned that the original budget was not to exceed \$200,000 and asked how it got to be over \$400,000. Director Wolf responded that she needs a Construction Manager and that was not included in the original budget. The actual design comes in around \$212,000, and there are options to remove items from the wish list to prioritize what is needed.

Trustee Reichert asked how the payments will fall in terms of fiscal years and Director Wolf responded that payments will be made in the next fiscal year (2019/2020).

Trustee Neustadt mentioned the Youth Project that was recently completed at Northfield. Director Wolf stated that they will be using that same shelving and just reorganizing the section. She also stated that there was some new lighting added to Northfield that will stay the same.

Director Wolf stated that new lighting will be added in the staff area and desk area, and they plan to retrofit the fixtures in the main room. She stated that the carpet is six years old and is due for replacement.

Trustee McCarthy asked why they are considering flipping the preschool area and the junior high area. Director Wolf responded that they may keep it as is, but the benefit to flipping it would be to make a pathway to the Community Room where the District plans to start holding storytimes and more programs. When she watches patrons go into the current storytime area, they maneuver past shelving into a little corner which is tricky for strollers and caregivers.

The Board expressed concern for young children being distracted by the activity at the desk or running out of the main doors if the preschool area is moved to the front of the library. Director Wolf stated that the District can ask for community input, but she felt it was a good way to highlight picture books and open the space. Demographically she believes Northfield tends to have more junior high aged patrons than preschool patrons.

President Johnson mentioned that a few of the components of the plan involve maintenance that would have to be done anyway, such as replacing the 6-year-old carpet and 20-year-old shelves.

Director Wolf stated that with the new shelving there will be a slight cut to nonfiction. She stated that there should be some weeding to make the collections that circulate pop.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes agreed that Northfield is up for a remodel but stated that they must understand usage and circulation first. He asked for crossover data for Northfield and Winnetka patrons, and asked if there were facts to support the need for study rooms at Northfield.

Trustee Neustadt mentioned that the Glass Room always has people sitting in it and two small study rooms is not enough quiet space. Product Architecture + Design mentioned that besides the fireplace there are no other places with tables to sit at apart from the Glass Room. They would like to add more seating for everyone and include study rooms only for very quiet independent work.

Director Wolf stated that the door to the Glass Room is not ADA compliant, so even if the Board chose to keep it, it would still have to be redone.

Director Wolf stated that the District did a decibel study and found that the only time the Northfield Branch Library was at a high volume was during storytime, which will hopefully begin to take place in the Community Room. She stated that furniture also helps to absorb sound and the shelves in the adult area will help to close off the space.

Trustee Shoup suggested that the District ask the Northfield community for input regarding the study rooms, and if patrons do not want them it would be a very easy thing to remove from the plans.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked if the District should create a commonality with the designs at Winnetka and Northfield. Nash stated that there are a few common elements that will carry over, but the Northfield Branch is a different color pallet and a different style of building.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked what the District would be able to achieve with the original \$200,000 budget. Nash stated that they could remodel the desk, add new carpet, and tear down the Glass Room. However, they would not be able to remove the overhead ceiling from the desk or add any new lighting.

Trustee Reichert asked if there is flexibility in the budget for next fiscal year to spend more on the renovation. President Johnson responded that the District did underspend this fiscal year, so there would be some extra money there.

Trustee Reichert suggested they ask for community input before voting on an exact budget.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes stated that the Board should review the reserves both currently and projected with and without the remodel before making any big financial decisions, because year after year we are depleting the reserves. Director Wolf responded that we have a capital projection for projects and that the projects just so happen to be running into each other. After this, there will not be any major projects for a while.

President Johnson stated that the Board should consider the relative tax contribution from Northfield patrons.

The Board agreed that it is very important to receive input from the Northfield community before moving forward, and to give them multiple plan options.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes suggested writing the guiding principles for the Northfield Branch remodel clearly and concisely.

- *Discussion and Vote to Proceed with Public Comment and Budget for the Design for the Northfield Branch Remodel*

The Board decided to receive input from the Northfield community in the next thirty days before voting on a budget. There will be a public comment open house at the Northfield Branch Library on April 10th and April 13th.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked for comparative numbers for Northfield and Winnetka and any crossover information the District has.

Trustee Reichert asked for a list demonstrating what a \$50,000 or \$100,000 deduction would look like in terms of design.

Trustee Ruiz-Funes asked Product Architecture + Design what the District would be able to add to the design if they increased the budget to \$600,000. Nash and Pohrte stated that they could receive more continuity with the Winnetka design by adding all new shelving,

new desks in the staff area, and potentially remove the entire ceiling above the desk to reveal the wood ceilings throughout the entire building.

Director Wolf stated that spending that amount of money on the ceiling is not necessary right now. She stated that it is worth asking the Northfield community, but she does not believe they will be spending more than the anticipated budget.

Director Wolf stated that if they were to spend more, she would like to enclose the pathway from the main library to the Community Room.

President Johnson suggested that the interior of the Branch could be stage one of the remodel and stage two could be exterior; which would include the pathway to the Community Room.

The Board discussed the possibility of moving the Branch if a location became available and asked if they would still do the remodel if they knew a space would be available in a few years. Director Wolf stated that she would.

Trustee Reichert stated that the Board cannot know what will happen in five years, but right now they should remodel Northfield, so it is a more welcoming space for patrons for at least the next five years.

Trustee Neustadt suggested having Kristin Carlson, Manager of the Northfield Branch Library attend the April board meeting.

The Board is not approving a budget for the Northfield Branch remodel but are going forward with gathering community input. They are committed to doing a nice renovation and will review the budget after better understanding the financial implications and usage factors of the remodel.

- *Update on the Strategic Planning Process*
Director Wolf stated that she sent a draft of the upcoming community survey to staff and the Board and has been reviewing the feedback. They will be revising the survey and sending it back out for another round of feedback.

President Johnson suggested adding an “other” option to the survey question that asks for the participant’s gender and the Board agreed, stating that the District is an inclusive space.

IX. New Business

- *There was no new business to bring before the Board.*

X. Communications

- *Board members should be receiving their Statements of Economic Interest soon.*
- *There will be new Board Officers in May; Director Wolf will be sending out an email to gather information on who would like to be or remain an officer.*

XI. Public Comments

Winnetka Resident Jeffrey Liss had several suggestions including that it would be nice to tie the two libraries together by having similar designs and suggested bringing the round light fixtures to the Northfield Branch for continuity, being transparent with patrons about the percentage of hard materials that they are expecting to cut during the Northfield Branch remodel, to use square tables instead of round and to look at putting the preschool children in the middle of the Northfield Branch Library, so that they are past the doors and staff area, but not all the way in the back.

Mr. Liss asked if the proposed Northfield study rooms will be reserved like Winnetka, or if they will just be small quiet rooms for multiple people to share.

Jeffrey Liss asked if the new Winnetka Public Library sign that is in the patio project plans will be too far from the street.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, a MOTION to adjourn was made by Trustee Reichert and seconded by Trustee Neustadt. The MOTION passed on a voice vote and President Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicola White
Recording Secretary

_____ Brian Johnson, President

_____ Suzanne Shoup, Secretary