

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING****September 15, 2020**

The regular monthly meeting of the Spokane Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 via Zoom meetings.

Present were:

**MEMBERS**

Ms. Mary Starkey, Chair of the Board  
Ms. Lara Hemingway, Vice Chair of the Board  
Mr. Nathan Smith  
Mr. Casey Linane-Booey IV  
Mr. Jim Kershner

**COUNCIL LIASION**

Ms. Kate Burke

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Mr. Andrew Chanse

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm by Ms. Starkey.

**VISITORS**

Skyler Noble  
Penny Brown  
Nicole Edwards  
Amanda Donovan  
Matt Walker  
Jason Johnson  
Caris O'Malley  
Ellen Peters  
Paul Chapin  
Natalie Hilderbrand

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

None

**APPROVAL OF August 18, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Hemingway moved to approve. Mr. Kershner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF August 2020 BILLS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Mr. Kershner moved to approve the bills and contributions. Ms. Hemingway seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Ms. Edwards stated there were 107 days of operating costs in cash and investments net of encumbrances. In the General Fund allocation, there will be 27 payments this year versus the normal 26 payments in a typical year. The expenditure trend outlines we spent \$680,707 in August. Our spending is trending downward compared to the prior year: spending around \$160,000 in capital books and materials from the Bond and about \$180,000 less on equipment, building maintenance and improvements, and travel. In August, the City implemented a new strategy to prepare for a potential revenue shortfall where departments were asked to reduce their 2020 expenditure budgets. We reserved \$400,000 as potential savings from books and materials, salaries and wages from vacant positions, and IT minor equipment purchases. Ms. Hemingway asked what the reserve is earmarked for. Ms. Edwards stated it would be used to cover a reduction in General Fund allocation. Mr. Chanse says we have been proactive about the potential impact on our organization in order to minimize the potential impact on staff and services.

### **BOND CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE**

Ms. Brown started with noting that \$1.6 million was spent in August for bond projects. This included a progress payment to MK Solutions for automated material handling and other tech-related needs. Also, \$1.1 million was paid to the contractor L&K for The Hive and Liberty Park construction project. The Walker invoice is not represented in the \$1.6 million amount due to the complexity and volume of the invoice. Ms. Brown had her first site visits last Thursday at The Hive and Liberty Park. There is a finalized agreement with Spokane Arts Commission. The MOU is 10 percent of public art budget which is \$38,000 for Phase 1 projects. No contracts were executed under the special authority granted by the board. Approval of bills will climb because all Phase 1 bond projects are moving along.

Mr. Walker reported Liberty Park is a few weeks behind The Hive and they are working on the foundation wall. Shadle work is continuing but had a delay due to smoke. Downtown is starting to create large cuts in the third floor. At Hillyard, they are focused on electrical work. Mr. Kershner asks if bad air is slowing construction this week. Mr. Walker answers Downtown is available to work since they are indoors at this stage.

**PERFORMANCE REPORT**

None

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

None

**COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

None

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Chanse wanted to update on our latest hurdle to provide service of unhealthy and hazardous air quality. When the air is at unhealthy or worse, the library is discontinuing curbside service to minimize risk to staff. If it gets to very unhealthy, there is the possibility of closing the branch and sending staff home to keep them safe. We are paying staff out of emergency leave when they are sent home. Ms. Starkey affirms the administration's navigation through the air quality issues. Highlights from the submitted executive report: we hosted the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion kickoff meeting with over 20 staff. We sent out a leadership charter and are drafting short- and long-term goals. Also, we resumed partnership meetings with SPS and City of Spokane since self-isolation began. Operations of joint facilities will continue to be refined as we get closer to opening day of the facilities. Applications are being submitted for new 24/7 library kiosks. As we've seen in previous months since our buildings closed, we are not idle. Staff are delivering solutions. Highlights: Read and Walk at Comstock Park from Kathryn Illback. Riva Dean created YouTube videos on how to do historical research which received more than 2,000 views, making her the STAR of month for August. IT is piloting a project with Crosswalk and installed computers at their facility for public use. We also added print jobs to curbside service. We will kick off Hispanic Heritage Month today. In preparation of Phase 3, facilities team are doing dry runs of making safe places for staff and public (i.e. disinfecting surfaces). Ms. Barden turned in her resignation to work with Volunteers of America. 10 positions within the organization are currently unfilled, which are equivalent to 7 FTEs. In addition, 15 staff are currently furloughed. We aren't refilling positions at this time. Mr. Kershner asked how many kiosks we are looking into. Mr. Chanse answered 3. One for each council district. These are the areas being informally discussed: Shiloh Hills (north of Francis avenue), the area off 195 near Eagle Ridge and Grandview/Thorpe, and the Northwest neighborhood.

O'Malley stated plywood and other materials. Mr. Kershner moves to approve, Mr. Linane-Booey seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **14b. 2021 Budget Adoption**

Ms. Edwards began her report on the Library Operations 2021 budget by noting that there were no staffing changes for 2021. The City may make minimal adjustments before the budget is finalized. Ms. Edwards will notify the trustees if anything major changes. Overall the budget to be adopted has a net income of \$24,357. For tax-related revenue we are estimating a 3% increase is assessed property values. Seventy percent of total expenditures are staffing costs and seventy one percent of the expenditures makeup the Public Services and Support Services departments. The staffing budget decreased slightly because of some retirements in 2020, those positions revert to an entry-level pay rate. Benefits increased by \$44,000. Retirement contributions increased to 10 percent. We are able to recognize some savings by not having utility costs or security costs for branches closed during construction netted against leasing temporary branch locations. We increased the budget for the Folio contract and set aside funds for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant. We also budget for the purchase of video lab equipment for Downtown Video Lab once it is reopened post-construction. Also, there is a decrease in repairs and maintenance supplies for branches due to construction. Mr. Kershner asked what the office of performance management increase was. Ms. Edwards outlined that it is a new City project manager that was approved by Council and it is our share of that position. Ms. Hemingway asked if expected decreases from City are outlined in budget. Ms. Edwards answered no.

Ms. Brown reported on the 2021 Bond budget. The general process is to budget remaining available proceeds for following year. The two additional gray lines on the financial page have been added to recognize our intention to spend \$3 million in interest earnings and funds from a transfer from the City of Spokane for landscaping replacement resulting from the downtown CSO project. Ms. Brown closed by requesting the board adopt the 2021 Bond budget in the amount of \$25,174,506.

Mr. Kershner asked if the Finance Committee had gone through this. Ms. Starkey stated the committee went through both budgets thoroughly with Ms. Brown and Ms. Edwards. The recommendation was to approve the 2021 operations budget and capital bond projects. Ms. Starkey called for a motion to approve the 2021 budget for library operations and capital bond projects. Mr. Linane-Booey moved to approve, Ms. Hemingway seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Highlights include the Read and Walk at Comstock, Corbin, and Chief Garry Parks. CARES Act funding was used to fund the Read and Walk. It was featured in three media stories. Our Facebook posts about the Read and Walk reached nearly 10K people and shared 30 times. There was an uptick in returns after the Spokesman a ran story seeking to get materials back since self-isolation/COVID. Twenty-nine bins were full at Northtown following the article. We are running a Back to School mini campaign to look at ways to support the back to school journey. We are working with library clerks at school locations and PeachJar for parents in addition to making demo videos on YouTube to create a greater awareness of our resources. Social media highlights include an increase in followers on all platforms which is consistent with people being online, but we are observing a decrease in engagement and reach for an unknown reason. The two top posts on Facebook and Twitter were about the Read and Walk. The top YouTube views are Riva's house history videos. Her next video is about how to preserve family papers and photographs. PatronPoint continues to be useful as we are continuing to send monthly newsletters and Summer Reading newsletters. We are launching a Fall Reading program per a request from Spokane Public Schools to augment online reading curriculum. We've been able to use PatronPoint when cancelling and rescheduling curbside pickup appointments due to hazardous air quality. App downloads are steady. Mr. Kershner asked about quarantining materials and if there is any new research. Mr. Chanse mentioned the REALM study reflecting trace amounts of the virus on stacked materials after 6 days, but what is important to consider is that it is trace amounts. From a practical perspective, an environmental consultant working with other libraries on their procedures for returned materials reported his view that "headlines are being overblown and negligible amounts of the virus are on materials after two days." We reached out to the Spokane Regional Health District, and they affirmed our procedures, noting the best protection is good hygiene. No further questions.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **14a. Children's Area Design Services**

Mr. O'Malley reviewed the 50% design concepts for the children's areas at our library locations. The board approved budget is \$1 million. That will be about \$75 per square foot but the spaces would be simple in design and would not reflect what the public was presented during the bond campaign. We are recommending the board approve increasing the not to exceed amount of \$1 million to \$1.8 million to include design fabrication and installation all of which will be funded through interest earnings. Mr. Kershner asked about the materials used for the spaces. Mr.

#### **14c. Library Location Naming**

Ms. Donovan presented a case to be deliberate and thoughtful about naming at a time when the libraries are changing and reopening. To honor the park settings of two of our locations, Liberty and Shadle should incorporate “Park” in the name - Liberty Park and Shadle Park Libraries. For Downtown, Ms. Donovan proposed we call the Downtown Library the Central Library to draw visitors around the city and to distinguish from smaller neighborhood libraries. The Hive is a name that was coined organically and immediately resonated. It was proposed that the new library locations are Liberty Park Library and The Hive and the existing locations be called the Central Library and Shadle Park Library. The other locations would remain the same. Ms. Starkey asks whether the Downtown Library should be called “Main” since it is on Main St. Ms. Donovan answered that we don’t want to confuse the public, but it was taken into consideration before the recommendation to call it Central Library was made. Mr. Linane-Booey expressed support for the Downtown Library name. Mr. Kershner asked about the possibility of Hillyard being changed to Shaw Library. Ms. Donovan explained we want to minimize confusion between the school and library and there is a strong affiliation with Hillyard Library being the name according to previous research. Ms. Starkey asks why “Shadle” did not include “Park” in the first place. No one knows why. More conversation on the Downtown Library ensued, including discussion of research on the naming conventions used by other library systems, which predominately use “Central” or “Main” for their flagship library branch. Mr. Chanse outlined this is an opportunity to rebrand and to possibly change current, potentially negative, public perception about the Downtown Library. Mr. Kershner argued that this is not just a library for Downtown, it is a library for the entire city. Mr. Linane-Booey stated he is “on board.” Ms. Hemingway moved to approve the proposed library location naming post-construction. Mr. Kershner and Mr. Linane-Booey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public had the option to email [trustee@spokanelibrary.org](mailto:trustee@spokanelibrary.org) with any comments and none were received.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

#### **NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, October 20, 2020. Location will likely be online.



**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 pm.

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman, Board of Trustees \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_