

MINUTES
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

September 24, 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 (arrived at 5:18 pm), Kathryn Dilley, Sheila García Mazari, Kevin Peterson, Lauren Woolsey
Board Members Absent:	
Administration Present:	Robert Adcock, Megan Biggins, John Bosma, Natalie Drew, Lindsay Laplow, John McNaughton, Ann Neff-Rohs, Jen Vander Heide, Patrick Beatty
Staff Present:	Erin Hart
Public Present:	Steven Assarian, GREIU; Jax Johnson; Dan Poortenga, GRPLF; Brandee Ritsema, Rapidian/Documenters

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON JULY 30, 2024

MOTION: By Commissioner Woolsey, supported by Commissioner García Mazari, that the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of July 30, 2024.

No comments.

ACTION: AYES 6 – 0

Motion passed.

3. BOARD COMMENTS

Anderson asks about library cards with patron photos. She explains that Michigan voting law recently changed and local government photo IDs can serve as IDs to vote. Anderson adds that this is a recent development and is now updated to any civil personal ID such as school and library cards. The board agrees that this could be looked into before the next big election. Woolsey suggests that we can offer these to patrons if they request. Peterson adds that there are some local funds for photo IDs that may be interested in supporting this. McNaughton says it is very interesting news and that he will look into it.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Legislative

No comments.

b. Policy

No comments.

c. Board Retreat

No comments.

5. STAFF & FOUNDATION REPORTS

A. Library Director's Report

McNaughton starts by welcoming GRPL's new Deputy Director Jen Vander Heide. Vander Heide comments that it's a pleasure to be back at GRPL. She explains that she started working at GRPL in 2014 as a Library Assistant II in the Adult Reference Department, in 2016-2020 she oversaw Customer Service for all 8 locations, and in 2020-2024 she was the Librarian IV who oversaw Collection Service and Customer Service where she worked on large scale projects, budget management, and patron-facing coordination with technological systems. Her wife was awarded a prestigious position in Germany, which gave Vander Heide the opportunity to see what is happening internationally in libraries. She concludes that she is delighted to be back at GRPL leading operations and moving the organization forward in an impactful way. The board welcomes Vander Heide.

McNaughton says the open board position seat was posted yesterday.

i. GRCM Collaboration

McNaughton and Vander Heide have been meeting with Grand Rapids Children's Museum's (GRCM) CEO Maggie Lancaster. GRCM hired a new Fundraising Consultant, Kristin Gootjes, to do a feasibility study. Recently, they met with some donors and are now waiting for an updated timeline. McNaughton adds that we will send a draft of a job description of a Project Manager to GRCM so they can get it posted. McNaughton concludes that we are putting together a renovation committee consisting of GRPL board members and staff to examine what we'd like in this building and for the new building, as we want to hear all voices.

Boston asks about the previous renovation plans that were made. McNaughton says some people weren't happy with it so we're going to look at crafting new plans. Woolsey asks if staff have already given feedback on what they'd like. McNaughton answers yes. Boston asks if Vander Heide is going to be involved. McNaughton answers yes.

Anderson commends the Ottawa Hills Branch staff for vocalizing their work within the report. She asks if staff would like to come to a board meeting to talk about their branch. McNaughton offers to have them come in at the start of the new year. Boston asks if we could give each branch a month to report out so they know when they are expected to be present. McNaughton answers yes.

Boston comments on the interstitial ads and asks if we have done these before. McNaughton says Director of Marketing & Communications Katie Zychowski has planned and executed this, and it is very new. Boston comments that she's happy to see new advertising since only 17% of City residents used their library cards last fiscal year.

Woolsey commends the Collection Services Department for breaking their record 2 months into the year.

B. Financial Report

Adcock comments that the funds have hit as of September.

Boston comments that digital content use during FY24 is almost 50/50 with print and asked if the budget line is for both digital and print. McNaughton answers yes. Boston asks what the breakdown is. McNaughton said he will send this to the whole board.

Anderson comments that she would like to also hear about the increases in prices to digital items. McNaughton says this has been a challenge and he will create a mini-report for the board. Anderson adds that the whole board would like to hear about the lending model and how it works. Neff-Rohs says we were a little higher in digital than physical materials due to demand being higher. Woolsey comments that she appreciated the report Neff-Rohs sent.

C. Foundation Update

Poortenga comments that the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation (GRPLF) board met in August and approved all submitted grant requests, totalling over \$69,000 to support Black History month, One Book One City for Kids, Dyer Ives, and History Center projects. He adds that GRPLF is appreciative to library staff for the effort they put forward in the grant requests submitted.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Board Replacement of Resigning Member

Anderson comments that we are sadly down a member. She notes that we are accepting applications for a large window of time, until November 1. McNaughton adds that we are hoping to attract someone with community knowledge.

Peterson speaks about a skills matrix for board members to identify the skills that are currently represented within the board to show where we could add areas of experience that we can recruit. Anderson asks if Peterson can put something together and send it over to the board within the next week or two so they can talk about it at the October regular board meeting.

Anderson says the goal is to narrow down the candidate pool at the November regular board meeting, and conduct interviews at the December regular meeting. Woolsey asks if we're meeting before the December regular meeting. McNaughton says the December agenda is usually light, so we may not need to. Anderson adds that the regular meeting is scheduled for December 17.

García Mazari asks if she should also do the skills analysis. Peterson answers yes.

Anderson asks the board if the proposed timeline works. The board answers yes.

Dilley asks if the skills matrix will come with the next board packet. Peterson answers that it will be sent as a google doc or spreadsheet, and the board members can see live updates. He adds that he is happy to plug things in for other board members too.

Woolsey asks if we can add the timeline dates to the website after the October regular board meeting so applicants know what to expect. McNaughton says yes.

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Year End Reports

McNaughton comments that if anyone has questions, they are welcome to ask. Anderson explains what reports are included.

Woolsey asks whether the new Patron Responsibilities Policy is working well in regard to the Safety Report. Bosma says yes, it has been helpful and he is looking forward to the revision process through the next year as we reassess and get more feedback from staff.

Peterson asks whether the incident spike between 1:00 - 5:00 pm correlated with an increase in visitors or whether it is out of proportion for how many visitors are in the building at one time in regard to the Safety Report. Bosma answers that the incident spike was between 4:00 - 5:00 pm last year, this year is a bit more broad. He adds that an increase in anxiety with some challenging behaviors has been noticed in the evening when patrons are making plans for the rest of the day. He concludes that the total number of guests are spiking as well as the incidents.

Anderson asks if the monitoring logs are for adult and youth patrons in regard to the Safety Report. Bosma answers yes. Anderson asks about the ratio of bans between youth and adult patrons. Bosma answers that they are mostly adults. He adds that if we need to ban youth, durations are significantly shorter.

McNaughton thanks the team for such wonderful reports and adds that he is very proud of the work they have done.

García Mazari asks if we can separate out the breakdown within the HR report for administrative staff. McNaughton answers yes.

B. Media Index

No comments.

C. Staffing Report

No comments.

D. Statistical Report for July & August 2024

No comments.

9. GRAND RAPIDS EMPLOYEES INDEPENDENT UNION

No comments.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR BOARD MEETING: OCTOBER 29, 2024

- Summer Reading Challenge has been permanently moved to October.
- Continuation of the new board member discussion.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Johnson comments that they love the Dungeons and Dragons for Teens program.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:48 pm.