

FRANKFORT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
FRANKFORT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
October 26, 2023  
7:00 PM

I. Call to Order

President Look called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Trustee Knutson called the roll call.

Present: Trustee Look, Trustee Karabis, Trustee Knutson, Trustee Schneider, Trustee Veach, & Trustee Wagner

Absent: Trustee Drisko

Also Present: Director Kowalcze, Assistant Director Rice, Business Manager Wargowsky

Citizens Advisory Committee: Tracy Bohl, Lauren McDonald, Julie Terlep

IV. Introduction of Visitors

Jeffrey Slovak, Friends Liaison

V. Public Comment—Agenda Items Only

None.

VI. Approval of Minutes from the September 28, 2023 Regular Meeting and Truth in Taxation Meeting

***Motion made by Trustee Veach to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting and Truth in Taxation Hearing held September 28, 2023. Seconded by Trustee Karabis. All trustees voted "Aye." Motion carried.***

VII. Treasurer's Report

Trustee Schneider read the treasurer's report for September 2023.

A. Review of Bills for September 2023

***Motion made by Trustee Schneider to approve the bills for September 2023 as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wagner. Roll call vote.***

Drisko                      —

Knutson                    AYE

Karabis	AYE
Veach	AYE
Wagner	AYE
Schneider	AYE
Look	AYE

***Motion carried.***

- B. Maintenance Expense V. Budget—standard expenses, noted fans were replaced/installed in back staff work area
- C. Capital Funds Project Status— \$210k
- D. Profit & Loss V. Last Year—income: taken in close to 95% of budget; Interest income of \$10,000 last month. 10% less spending compared to last year. Typically receive spring and fall taxes by September, so this is a high cash balance month.
- E. Balance Sheet as of September 29, 2023—about \$3.2M in total cash

VIII. Fiscal Year 22–23 Audit

- A. Presentation of the FY 2022-2023 Financial Audit—Illinois NFP Audit & Tax, LLP—Alfredo Rodriguez presented the annual Audit Report; none of the fund balances had a deficit at the end of the year. Liabilities are up due to retirement fund losses by IMRF. The Auditors did not have any recommendations. All financials are well-documented and there are no recommended procedure changes.

***Motion made by Trustee Wagner to accept the FY 22–23 Financial Audit. Seconded by Trustee Knutson. Roll call vote.***

Drisko	—
Knutson	AYE
Karabis	AYE
Veach	AYE
Wagner	AYE
Schneider	AYE

Look                      AYE

***Motion carried.***

IX. Committee Reports

- A. Finance Committee—did not meet
- B. Policy & Personnel Committee—Met Wednesday, Oct 25. Working on Personnel Handbook to reorganize and make it easier to read. Estimated to be a six month project.
- C. Building & Grounds Committee—Met on October 24. Full review during the Building Design Project action item.
- D. Strategic Plan Committee—Did not meet. Will next have a quarterly meeting in January.

X. Correspondence

None.

XI. Old Business

A. Building Design Project—

1. The Board reviewed copies of the draft minutes from B&G Committee meeting on 10.24.23 for tonight’s meeting. As requested, Director Kowalcze provided additional compiled information regarding previous building projects including the 1977 building, 1998 Addition, 2015 Addition, 2020 Circulation remodel, and current loan repayment.
2. As a reminder of background context: this project started with Strategic Planning, and feedback in the community surveys. Then we completed the Facility Assessment to look at Building Needs. Jamie Rachlin from Meristem Advisors was then asked to complete a financial review. Now the Board is reviewing how to fund necessary building repair and replacement needs. Trustee Veach stated that she believed it was important for the Board to know why the library has millions of dollars in deferred maintenance before it could discuss funding options, and she asked the Library Director for an explanation. A discussion ensued during which it was explained that the deferred maintenance was supposed to have been taken care of in the past. In addition, when the library took out the \$2.5 million dollar loan for the new meeting rooms, staff was told that deferred maintenance would also be taken care of, but it was not done. Trustee Veach thought it was important for the board to look at all possible funding alternatives to a tax increase through the referendum process because

she believes building maintenance is a fundamental responsibility of the board, and before the board goes out to the voters and asks for a tax increase to pay for deferred maintenance, the board should explore these other options. In particular, the board should explore these options before the board votes on pursuing a referendum for tax increases for deferred maintenance by voting on which architectural firms to bring in for a discussion of their fees and processes for building designs and referendum support.

3. The Board determined a priority for a developing maintenance calendar, which Director Kowalcze should bring to the January Board Meeting. Trustee Wagner would also like to start a quarterly maintenance assessment report once this calendar is completed.

4. The Board reviewed the Budget Required for List of Required and Recommended Work as prepared by Dan Eallonardo with data pulled from the StudioGC Facility Assessment. Repair and replacement projects for the next 5 years total \$3.5M. Director Kowalcze was asked to put together hypothetical budget cuts to fund these projects over the next 5 years. Hypothetical \$200k budget cuts for 5 years were requested. Hypothetical \$700k budget cuts for 5 years were requested. Trustee Look responded to this review that services that patrons are used to having would be affected. These hypothetical cuts would result in significant cuts to the materials budget and a loss of services to the community, as well as a potential cut in operating hours. Trustee Look discussed looking for potential grant funding that can be applied for. Trustee Veach stated during the discussion of possible alternatives to a referendum that the two budget cut scenarios presented by the Library Director were just a starting point and that many other alternatives could be looked at within the budget. She also mentioned that the board could consider looking at a combination of the options as an alternative to asking for the tax increase.

5. B&G Committee discussed other funding options including private donors or creating a foundation. Trustee Veach feels that pursuing private donors should be a priority, but stated that we currently do not have someone spearheading the creation of a Foundation. There was discussion of looking into known philanthropic members of the community making sure they are aware of the Library's need.

6. There was a discussion of refinancing the current loan back up to \$2.5M. Director Kowalcze pointed out that this loan needs to be paid off in full by 2035. There was a discussion of using the \$210k from the capital projects fund to pay for maintenance projects instead of using cash on hand as we earn interest on our accounts vs the capital projects fund which does not earn interest.

7. When the Library Director stated her concerns that the added time for the board members to discuss funding alternatives to a referendum could delay

the process for getting the referendum on the ballot, Trustee Veach stated that the board had not reached any decision on pursuing a referendum and needed time to read, examine, and discuss the materials, much of which had only been received by them immediately before the meeting, including the draft library budget reductions requested by Trustee Veach. The Trustees agreed that there was a lot of information to review, much of which they only received that night. Trustee Wagner suggested having a special meeting with all trustees in order to evaluate and review all information. Trustee Schneider suggested having a timeline of when a discussion and decision needs to be made. The decision was made to hold a Special Board Meeting prior to the November Board Meeting for the express purpose of discussing how to fund the Library's needed repair and replacement projects. Director Kowalczek will get this scheduled right away.

8. It was decided to table the discussion about the architect proposals until after the discussion about funding at the Special Board Meeting was completed.

## XII. New Business

### A. Personnel Policy: General Paid Leave

***Motion made by Trustee Veach to approve the new General Paid Leave section of the Employee Handbook, to comply with the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Seconded by Trustee Wagner. All trustees voted "Aye." Motion carried.***

### B. Personnel Policy: Time off Requests

***Motion made by Trustee Knutson to amend the Employee Handbook to add new time off request procedures to comply with the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Seconded by Trustee Schneider. All trustees voted "Aye." Motion carried.***

### C. Personnel Policy: General Paid Leave

***Motion made by Trustee Wagner to amend the Sick Leave section of the Employee Handbook, to comply with the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Seconded by Trustee Veach. All trustees voted "Aye." Motion carried.***

### A. Standards for IL Public Libraries Review: Ch. 12 & 13

1. To apply for annual grant, library and board must review core standards and identify areas for improvement.

a) *Ch. 12—Technology—Staff noted room for improvement for website and is currently working with a company to update it.*

b) *Ch. 13—Marketing, Promotion, & Collaboration—Staff identified the need for a formal marketing plan and for staff, administration, and Board members to visit other libraries.*

XIII. Librarian’s Report

The Board members received the September 2023 monthly librarian’s report in writing from Director Kowalcze for review by the trustees, including information on the following:

- A. The Annual Harassment Prevention Training must be completed by all staff and Board Members by 12.31.23.
- B. The Friends of the Library Fall Art Market is on Saturday, November 11
- C. Monthly Statistics are up, with a 30% rise in circulation over the last year, and a 67% increase in program attendance. These numbers are also higher than 2019 statistics.

XIV. Public Comment

None.

XV. Trustee Comment

Trustee Wagner thanked the Buildings and Grounds Committee for all of the work and time put into research and discussion. Trustee Look thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

XVI. Executive Session

None required.

XVII. Adjournment

***Motion made by Trustee Wagner and seconded by Trustee Schneider to adjourn the meeting. All trustees voted “Aye.” Motion carried.***

***President Look adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted:

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Jennifer Knutson  
*Secretary*

Recorded By:

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Denise Wargowsky  
*Business Manager*