

CITY OF GLENDALE LIBRARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

May 26, 2021

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by the Chair, Katie Wood.

Roll Call: Present: Amanda Seligman, Helaine Glass, Lin McCracken, Catherine Hansen, Ben Koziol, Lyndsay Smanz, Katie Wood, Mary Lynn Cinealis. Absent: None.

Other Officials Present: Rachel Safstrom, City Administrator, Sarah Armstrong, Consultant, and Kaela Sullivan, Administrative Secretary.

Approval of the May 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. Hansen, seconded by Ms. McCracken, to approve the May 19, 2021 minutes. The motion carried with one abstention by Ms. Seligman.

Discussion on Community Survey.

Ms. Wood explained that the Common Council would like numerous recommendations based on the survey observations. Administrator Safstrom stated it may take multiple meetings to form the appropriate recommendation.

The committee members shared their comments regarding the survey results. Ms. Seligman shared her appreciation for the thoroughness of the open-ended questions and added that there was considerable community support for a new library and a tax increase.

Most of the committee shared concerns regarding the lack of community education among a large portion of the Glendale population of why Glendale is leaving the North Shore Library. Ms. Smanz recognized that residents stated they would continue to use the North Shore Library on the assumption that the North Shore Library would remain the same as it is currently, yet Glendale would solely support the new library.

Ms. Smanz, Ms. Glass, and Ms. Hansen shared disappointment that access to computers and technology were low on the priority list. Ms. Glass wondered if this may be due to individuals being home during COVID-19, requiring more technology at home. Ms. Seligman believed there would be a baseline of a dozen computers at the library. Ms. Armstrong added that the weighted score for access to technology is beneficial information.

Mr. Koziol requested clarification on the current joint funding with the North Shore Library and suggested showing residents the numerical cost benefit as an explanation. Ms. McCracken added the importance of sharing the benefits of having a separate library.

Ms. Glass agreed with the residents' responses that the potential library should be easily assessable. Ms. Glass also explained why she believes a children's library service is important, and the different roles of a public library versus a school library to avoid duplication. Ms. Wood questioned who oversees the summer programming for school libraries. Ms. Glass stated that

school libraries are closed in the summer, but the school libraries used to work with the North Shore Library for their summer programming.

Ms. Hansen recognized that residents desire cozy spaces, programs, etc., and believes these aspects are important for a library. Ms. Hansen also stated that there should be appropriate pay levels and staffing for behind-the-scenes work.

Ms. Cinealis was encouraged by the responses and is hopeful for a good chance to move forward.

Ms. Wood commented on potential tax funding and questioned additional capital expenditure. Administrator Safstrom stated that with initial capital expenditures, she is unsure if the committee will be able to borrow within general borrowing parameters. There may not have to be an additional tax levy increase. Administrator Safstrom questioned any opportunities or building locations for the library, as this will determine the initial capital expense plus the dollar amount for renovations and stocking the facility.

Ms. Armstrong added that Glendale residents should be aware that Glendale pays a library fee to the state of Wisconsin whether there is a standalone library or not. Administrator Safstrom stated the question is whether three years is enough time to get a referendum approved, find a location, renovate, and open a library. If that is not enough time, is there an ideal timeline? Administrator Safstrom questioned whether Glendale should ask another community to allow Glendale to join them for a year while working through the process, which would eliminate the state fee.

Ms. Hansen questioned whether a resident would be charged every visit to a library. Administrator Safstrom stated that Whitefish Bay currently receives the reciprocal borrowing money, which is paid quarterly. Ms. Hansen added that it eventually evens out between the net borrower and net lender.

Ms. Seligman and Ms. Armstrong discussed budget information regarding income and state funding, provided on the spreadsheet distributed by Administrator Safstrom.

Ms. Wood reiterated that educating the Glendale community on what is happening with the North Shore Library is a top priority. Ms. Seligman felt urgency for public relations efforts, including Glendale summer events for a public relations campaign. Ms. Seligman also stated that the Common Council should allocate time and funding for summer events. A staffed table with literature and informed individuals may build an informative community. Administrator Safstrom fears a lack of table attendance at public events. Ms. Armstrong suggested having an announcement at the end of different public events. The committee members discussed possible city events, parades, vendor spaces, and block parties to attend.

Ms. Wood stated her concern that there may not be clarity or support in forming a library. Ms. Seligman stated the alderpersons voted to leave the North Shore Library. Ms. Glass questioned whether a citywide mailing would be possible and other committee members suggested additional local mailings. Ms. Seligman suggested the committee hire a public relations

specialist. Ms. Armstrong suggested 'Every Library'. Administrator Safstrom stated this may be an opportunity to work with Welcome to Glendale.

Ms. Seligman suggested having two campaigns: one immediate and an ongoing campaign through any possible referendums. Administrator Safstrom recommended to focus on the first part of the campaign, identifying it at the June 14, 2021 Common Council meeting.

Mr. Koziol questioned the conditions of the current joint governance with North Shore Library. Administrator Safstrom thoroughly explained this.

Possible Recommendation to the Common Council.

Katie stated the committee will present to the Common Council that while creating a formal recommendation, the committee would like to see an immediate campaign formulated.

Motion by Ms. Wood, seconded by Ms. Hansen, to develop a statement to send to the Common Council for review for public education. The motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Safstrom stated it would be appropriate to send the statement to Administrator Safstrom for distribution to the committee. Ms. Seligman offered her assistance in writing the statement.

Ms. Wood questioned whether the committee members would be willing to discuss information at local events. Committee members agreed. Ms. Wood questioned whether Glendale has a strong relationship with Bayshore to share information at Bayshore events. Administrator Safstrom stated this is a possibility.

Ms. Wood questioned whether the committee should decide at the next meeting what the recommendation would be if Glendale would pursue a joint library verses a standalone library. Ms. Seligman stated the survey given did not ask about an ultimate joint library. Ms. Armstrong stated that a joint library was not mentioned in the survey because these options were not yet available, but several comments were made for alternative funding sources to forming relationships with other communities, so this may be considered when providing a recommendation.

Ms. Glass stated joining another community would not be convenient. Ms. McCracken agreed, adding that reaching out to another community may not be best for Glendale residents.

Mr. Koziol stated it may be difficult to ask another community to become joint if they are already fully funded and questioned if Glendale would be willing to stay with the North Shore Library if there was validation for more allocation for funding. Administrator Safstrom stated the Common Council is open to working with other communities, just not under the current agreement.

Ms. Glass and Mr. Koziol discussed accessing current library resources on a newer project.

Ms. Wood suggested to focus on the possibilities of a standalone library at the next meeting. Ms. Hansen asked for clarification, as the committee would like to begin crafting a recommendation for the Common Council. Ms. Wood stated that the committee needs to manage the tax increase tolerance disconnect for potential funding.

Set Next Meeting Date and Location

Ms. Wood stated the June 22, 2021 Library Review Committee meeting will be hosted in the Glendale Common Council Chambers and via Zoom at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Koziol, to adjourn the Library Review Committee meeting of May 26, 2021 at 5:09 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.