

CITY OF GLENDALE LIBRARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

June 22, 2021

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the Chair, Katie Wood.

Roll Call: Present: Amanda Seligman, Lin McCracken, Lyndsay Smanz, Katie Wood, Mary Lynn Cinealis, Ben Koziol. Absent: Helaine Glass, Catherine Hansen.

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

Approval of the May 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. McCracken, seconded by Ms. Cinealis, to approve the May 26, 2021 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion on Milwaukee County Federated Library System (Steve Heser, System Director)

Steve Heser introduced himself and gave a brief overview of reciprocal borrowing within the library system.

Ms. Wood questioned why the data provided shows net positives trending downward.

Mr. Heser stated that circulation for libraries is decreasing, as well as library expectations.

Ms. Seligman questioned if reciprocal borrowing is solely within Milwaukee County municipalities. Mr. Heser confirmed this. Ms. Seligman also asked if the City of Milwaukee would be considered a zero on the chart. Mr. Heser stated yes. Ms. Seligman asked for clarification on the North Shore Library. Mr. Heser explained the factors of being a net borrower and lender and stated that North Shore is a large net borrower, but not currently a net lender.

Ms. Wood questioned if net lenders have a common programming theme. Mr. Heser stated large net lenders normally provide more staff and larger collections, which attract more people, but it is mostly based on patron behavior.

Ms. Seligman questioned the extent to which library directors are strategic regarding borrowing and lending. Mr. Heser stated that it depends on the investments in a library's collection and programs. Ms. Seligman then asked if this depends on where the directors invest, such as capital improvements and collection enhancements. Mr. Heser stated this varies library to library.

Discussion and determination of parameters for a marketing firm.

Ms. Wood stated she attended the Common Council Meeting and learned that the Library Review Committee can move outside the parameters of RFP. The committee needs to create a list of steps for the Common Council to pursue.

Administrator Safstrom is hopeful that basic parameters are created as consultants are contacted. Thus far, there is one consultant available for the community events this summer. Administrator

Safstrom stated she hopes to present a quote for hiring a consultant to the Common Council at Monday's meeting.

The committee discussed what is needed in a consultant. Ms. Wood believes a printed mailing should be dispersed to residents, as well as a webpage. Ms. Seligman asked the extent to which the Common Council is willing to speak publicly about the library. Administrator Safstrom stated the Common Council and mayor are willing to be part of the educational process and would like to make a joint effort with a consultant. Ms. Seligman asked if a second consultant will be hired in the future for additional needs. Administrator Safstrom explained the committee will know more as time moves forward.

Ms. McCracken asked how the committee can counter the negative messages surrounding leaving the North Shore Library. Administrator Safstrom explained that the committee will need to educate the public on why Glendale is leaving the North Shore Library. Ms. Wood stated it is important to ensure the community understands there was a long negotiation process prior to withdrawing from the North Shore Library.

Review and Discussion on Possible Recommendation to the Common Council.

Ms. Wood stated that there are several potential recommendations to present to the Common Council. If Glendale builds a standalone library, it may not be completed in two years; therefore, Ms. Wood asked what the fee would be if Glendale joined another library until completion. Mr. Hesel will contact DPI for additional information. A temporary situation would require an agreement between the library system and Glendale for how to best serve Glendale's residents, which could be expensive. Mr. Hesel stated West Milwaukee pays \$100,000 a year because they do not have a library building to loan materials to residents and Milwaukee County resorts to MCFLS.

Ms. Wood asked if taxes would rise regardless of whether a new library was built. Administrator Safstrom stated that Common Council would have to decide based on a referendum. There is a possibility of using the Milwaukee County Federated Library System or joining another library.

Ms. Wood stated if a referendum passes, she is unsure if a building would be completed and prepared in two years. Administrator Safstrom stated she will discuss this with the Common Council. Ms. Seligman asked how realistic it would be to open a new library in two years if a referendum passes. Ms. Armstrong stated it depends what option the committee pursues: building a brand-new building or renovating an existing space.

Ms. Wood stated the recommendation to the Common Council may have to follow a flow chart. Administrator Safstrom stated there are many scenarios, which make it challenging. The education piece is important, and it is important to receive verbal feedback from residents at community events. Administrator Safstrom asked if the committee has requests for the Common Council to focus on. Ms. Smanz and Ms. Wood agreed that the survey results showed residents want a library. Ms. Smanz stated if a referendum is not approved, a secondary recommendation should be formed.

Ms. Smanz asked how the committee would inform residents of a referendum since the committee is unable to make purchases prior to a referendum. Administrator Safstrom stated that the municipality does not need a referendum to build; it needs a referendum to increase the tax levy. Therefore, there is funding in the debt service for building and it is a decision of the Common Council to use this money.

Ms. Wood asked if there is data on start-up costs for creating a library collection. Mr. Hesel stated he will collect data from recent renovated locations.

Ms. Seligman asked how detailed the recommendation needs to be for the Common Council. Ms. Wood stated she was unsure, but the initial collection costs are going to be high and would be funded through a referendum. Administrator Safstrom asked what is needed for a library to open. Mr. Hesel stated there are requirements for directors and potentially collection requirements based on the size of the community. Administrator Safstrom asked if it would be possible to build on the initial collection. Mr. Hesel stated there are statutory standards, but there are also state guidelines to consider, so he will ask the League of Municipalities for more information.

Ms. Wood stated that based on the survey, the committee should recommend a standalone library. Administrator Safstrom agreed. Ms. Armstrong explained there should be a dedicated space for children, computer access, space for adults to attend programs, etc.

Ms. Wood asked Ms. Armstrong if she advises hosting focus groups if a referendum passes. Ms. Armstrong stated additional feedback is always helpful.

If a referendum does not pass, the committee will discuss the information that Mr. Hesel presents at the next meeting. Mr. Hesel stated he will send out library data within a week. Administrator Safstrom stated she will try to draft more information from the Common Council and consultant for the next meeting. Ms. Wood stated she will begin formulating a recommendation for the Common Council and send drafts to the committee by July 7, 2021.

Set Next Meeting Date and Location.

Ms. Wood stated the July 13, 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 Ms. Smanz, to adjourn the Library Review Committee meeting of June 22, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.