

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, July 28, 2020**

**Video Conference Call by GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT:** Michele Bria, Joan Prince, Chris Layden, Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Nik Kovac, Matt Kowalski, James Marten, Dir. Larry Miller, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Mark Sain, JoCasta Zamarripa, Paula Kiely

**EXCUSED:** Ald. Michael Murphy, Jennifer Smith

**STAFF:** Rachel Arndt, Kelly Bolter, Connor Bowman, Eileen Force Cahill, Kristina Gomez, Joan Johnson, Sarah Leszczynski, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Judy Pinger, Anne Rasmussen, Rebecca Schweisberger, Mary Sherwood, Kelly Wochinske, Dea Wright

**OTHERS**

**PRESENT:** MPL Foundation: Ryan Daniels, Sylvia Dawson, Pat Swanson

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President Michele Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:02 p.m. on July 28, 2020 with a quorum present. All Trustees participated by video conference. The agenda items were taken out of order; however, these minutes are presented in numerical sequence.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes June 23, 2020.**
2. **Administrative Reports.**
  - a. Financial Report
  - b. Library Director's Reports
  - c. Statistics

President Bria asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 4-15 of the agenda. Hearing no objection, the Consent Agenda was approved.

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**SPECIAL COMMUNICATION**

President Bria welcomed new Library Director Joan Johnson. Director Johnson was appointed by Mayor Tom Barrett and her appointment will go before the Common Council in September. Ms. Johnson has served as Deputy Library Director since 2009 and has been an integral part of library programs and operations. She is excited to work closely with the Board and provided a brief overview of upcoming initiatives and programs.

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MPL CONSENT AGENDA

1. Regular Board Meeting Minutes 07/28/2020

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3. **Introduction of New Board Member.** President Bria introduced Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa, who was appointed to the Board by Mayor Barrett. Ald. Zamarripa is a former State Representative and was elected to the Common Council in April 2020. She is honored to serve on the Board and looks forward to continued advocacy for MPL and the community. Informational item.
4. **Trustee Recognition.** President Bria presented a resolution honoring Alderman Michael Murphy, thanking him for his two years of service. Informational item.
5. **Retirement of Trustee Dr. Joan Prince.** President Bria presented a resolution honoring and thanking Dr. Joan Prince for 20 years of service. A new piece of artwork will be purchased and displayed at Good Hope Library to honor Dr. Prince's dedication to the library and community. Informational item.

#### **ELECTION**

6. **Election of Officers.** President Bria reviewed the slate of Officers for 2020-2022: Michele Bria for President, Chris Layden for Vice-President, Jennifer Smith for Financial Secretary, and Mark Sain as Past President. Trustee Nicholson moved to approve the slate and Trustee Marten seconded. Motion passed.

#### **REPORTS**

7. **Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting.** Chair Chris Layden reported on the July 28, 2020 meeting. The quarterly trust fund investment performance was reviewed and highlighted some areas of market recovery, particularly in technology sectors. MPL staff confirmed internal accounting processes were followed in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters of 2020. The Committee discussed the 2021 budget and possible scenarios that could result from decreased funding. Library Administration does not recommend cuts to the materials budget as MPL per capita spending is already quite low. The Budget Office is preparing a community survey to gather public input and priorities for the budget. Informational item.
8. **Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board.** Trustee Nik Kovac reported on the July 20, 2020 meeting. The MCFLS Board approved a RFP for their new marketing plan. Reciprocal borrowing levels have been affected by the pandemic and the Board will discuss distribution of grant money to system members. The annual financial audit for 2019 was presented and received. Informational item.
9. **Building & Development Committee Meeting.** Chair Mark Sain presented on the July 2, 2020 meeting; the meeting minutes were included as Attachment C of the agenda. Chair Sain reviewed the history and timeline of the Martin Luther King branch library redevelopment project. The Board-approved letter of intent and site control as well as exclusive negotiating rights for this project expired on June 30, 2020. Library Administration and the Committee have not received updates or responses to meeting requests from developer Lavelle Young, CEO of Young Development Group. General Capital Group has informed MPL of their intention to terminate their partnership with Young Development Group. The Committee moved to authorize MPL Administration to meet with General Capital Group to determine their interest in continuing the project in partnership with a new community developer. Chair Sain invited comment from Ald. Coggs, as the library is in her district. Ald. Coggs thanked Chair Sain, the Committee, and library staff for keeping her informed about the situation. The greatest priority is creating a quality library for the community and Ald. Coggs supports the Committee's recommendation. Trustee Prince seconded the motion. Motion passed. MPL was contacted by Kevin Newell, CEO of Royal

Capital Group, to gauge MPL's interest in relocating the library from the current site to a new mixed use building south of the library on Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. Mr. Newell has partnered with the Medical College of Wisconsin and Greater Milwaukee Foundation to renovate the former Gimbels and Schuster's Department Store, with a portion of the space dedicated to public use. Although it was an attractive proposition, after discussion with President Bria, Ald. Coggs, and Chair Sain it was determined the best option for MPL and the community is to redevelop on the current site. After discussion about the library location, Trustee Nicholson moved to continue developing the new Martin Luther King branch library at the current site on the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and Locust Street. Trustee Miller seconded. Motion passed.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

10. **COVID-19 Recovery Plan.** Incoming Library Director Joan Johnson reported on the Good Hope Library opening ceremony, which will be held on July 29, 2020. Tours of the new library will be available after the ceremony and throughout the remainder of the week. Curbside service begins at East Library next week and phased reopening will continue through the first week of September. MPL will continue to host Election Commission activities at several locations. MPL safety protocols have been updated to reduce the risk of transmission. Informational item.
  
11. **Retirement of Library Director Paula Kiely.** President Bria announced Director Paula Kiely is retiring from MPL after 25 years of service, 14 of which she served as Library Director. President Bria and the Trustees thanked Director Kiely for her thoughtful, innovative, and strategic leadership. Under her guidance, MPL has improved our communities and became a model for public libraries nationwide. Incoming Director Joan Johnson described retirement gifts from the Board which are in preparation, including a Wall of Library Directors and a pendant necklace made from the mosaic tile in the Central Library Grand Rotunda. Director Kiely expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Director and for support, advice, and guidance from the Board and MPL staff. She encouraged MPL staff remain committed to the library's mission to help people read, learn, and connect as well as providing relevant services for patrons of all ages. Trustee Prince moved for the Board to send Paula Kiely off with love, affection, hugs, hope that she enjoys the next phase of her life as she has enjoyed the previous phases, and that she remain a loyal library advocate for the rest of her days. Trustee Sain seconded. Motion unanimously passed.

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With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of July 28, 2020 was adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

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