



MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call.

Director Auston called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Trustee Di Lorenzo called the roll.

PRESENT: Trustees Cox, Di Lorenzo, Fishman, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer, Director Auston

ABSENT: Trustees Fishman and O'Keefe

VISITORS: Georgia Gebhardt – League of Women Voters

STAFF: Alex Barzallo, Marti Bellefontaine, Cathleen Blair, Sandra Discepolo, Ethan Herdrich, Christine Hightower, Andrea Vaughn Johnson, Marcos Levy

Recognizing the absences of President Fishman and Vice President O'Keefe, both a President Pro tem and a Secretary Pro tem need to be appointed for this meeting. Secretary Di Lorenzo volunteered to serve as President Pro tem, and Trustee Sennett volunteered to serve as Secretary Pro tem in her place. Trustee Nealon moved approval of the appointment of Trustee Di Lorenzo as President Pro tem, and Trustee Sennett as Secretary Pro tem for this meeting. Trustee Sommer seconded.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Fishman, O'Keefe

MOTION CARRIED.

II. Review draft of January 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Cox moved approval of the January 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as presented. Trustee Sommer seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Fishman, O'Keefe

MOTION CARRIED.

III. Public Comment. None.

IV. Presentations. None.

V. Treasurer's Report.

A. Financial Reports for January 2025. Trustee Sommer reported:

- On the income statements, miscellaneous income line 47000 in the amount of \$3,190.76 includes bag receipts, Maker Space receipts, Friends of Library income, and book recycling.

- Items classified as Gift/Donations, which is line 48000 on the income statements and totaled \$1680 this month, include general donations, memorial donations, and Friends donations.
- Line 50200 is titled Continuations, which are print serial (non-periodical) subscriptions for reference/research resources typically managed by Adult Services and include monthly or annual subscriptions from vendors like Thomson Reuters, The Globe Pequot Publishing Group, or Baker and Taylor Books.
- With the new cleaning company (if the contract is approved later on the agenda), included in line 76350 – Building Maintenance Contracts, we will continue to stay within budget as the contract is slightly less than the current vendor.
- As mentioned in the last paragraph in the notes to the financial statement, the library is operating at a total net loss of \$620,000 and the General Fund has a loss as of the end of January of \$444,000. Shortly property tax revenue will be received and this number will significantly decrease.
- Replacement taxes are running a little below budget but this is more than made up from the investment income.
- There was only one Special Reserve Fund distribution to Computer View, Inc. for \$31,545, which accounts for the last distribution for the new computer project.
- As mentioned last month, in the Equity section, the Current Fund Balance represented the net income for all classes from the year ending June 30, 2024. This was rolled into the Beginning Fund Balances as an adjustment since our last meeting.

B. Bills and Salaries Check Detail for January 2025. Trustee Sennett moved approval of the January 2025 Bills and Salaries Check Detail, as presented. Trustee Cox seconded the motion.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Fishman, O’Keefe

MOTION CARRIED.

VI. Action Items.

A. Request for Proposals: Audit Services Recommendation. Trustees discussed the process and outcomes. Trustee Sommer moved approval of the proposal for audit services from Selden Fox for three fiscal years ending June 30, 2025, 2026, and 2027 for a contract total of \$36,000, as presented. Trustee Sennett seconded.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Fishman, O’Keefe

MOTION CARRIED.

- B. Request for Proposals: Cleaning Services Recommendation. Trustees discussed the process and outcomes. Trustee Cox moved approval of the proposal for cleaning services from Multisystem Management Company for monthly cleaning services for one year, for a contract total of \$65,160, as presented. Trustee Nealon seconded.

Aye- Cox, Di Lorenzo, Nealon, Sennett, Sommer

Nay- None

Absent or not voting – Fishman, O’Keefe

MOTION CARRIED.

VII. Director’s Report. Director Auston noted the following from his report:

- The library saw 21,701 visitors in January, averaging over 700 users each day.
- January was a slightly busier month for Circulation with our monthly physical circulation stats again reaching 55,000+.
- The library welcomed 172 new patrons in January. We processed 58 new D39 student library cards.
- In July 2024, our librarians were tasked with evaluating our largest collections and aiming to reduce the collection by 20% by removing our least used items. We substantially accomplished this strategic goal for the year within its first 6 months by reducing the collection size by 15% and simultaneously updated and enhanced the presentation and display of the collections. While we were not able to proceed with the larger goal of renovating spaces and reorganizing collections for flow quite like our architect had envisioned, we continue to target our goal to consolidate all of the lower level non-fiction collections along the south half of the building, and aim to empty the 900s room to facilitate updating and improving that space, including flooring updates and asbestos abatement in the near future.
- January 2025 saw a new all-time high record of checkouts through OverDrive / Libby app at Wilmette Library with 20,703 total checkouts. Of the 10,981 eBook checkouts, District 39 Schools checked out 2,394 of them. This is a notable uptick in D39 usage, which typically averages 1,500 eBook checkouts. The increase may be related to the work Youth Services has been doing to promote the library’s OverDrive partnership with D39 via SORA, and Circulation’s partnership with D39 to help families register students for library cards when enrolling for school.
- Many of our youth-focused resources including Encyclopedia Britannica, Facts on File, Pebble Go, CultureGrams, and World Book saw massive spikes in usage. The increase came after Youth Services hosted meetings for District 39 teachers and promoted the K-8 databases and the digital card numbers they can use to demo them for their classes.
- In January, Digital & Maker Services Manager Lauren Kelly worked on database renewals, including getting New York Times Online All Access, which includes The Athletic, Wirecutter, Games, and more.
- In Adult Services, in conjunction with Wilmette Reads, pop-up displays were embedded in new locations to invite opportunities for spontaneous engagement throughout the building. Librarian Rachel Rothe curated several mini-spotlights to feature at eye-level on top of the lower fiction shelves, and Assistant Manager Rachel Garcia launched a branded Staff Picks table display on the lower level, with the added enhancement of personalized endorsements tucked into the titles.

- Business Librarian John Amundsen was named Chair of the RUSA Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS) Business Reference in Public Libraries Committee. The committee studies and fosters the role of business reference in public libraries, addresses issues facing business reference, and liaises with relevant Public Library Association groups.
- Youth Services School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland collaborated with D39 teacher Brenda Hsu and New Trier teacher Sara Chao on our annual Lunar New Year celebration on Saturday, January 25. Highcrest Middle School students shared the story of the Chinese zodiac. New Trier students shared a piano and violin duet, Lunar New Year traditions and greetings, a calligraphy demonstration, a song, and more! Afterwards, children created their own snake puppets. More than 130 people attended this highly anticipated event.
- After hearing about the accessibility resources available to them at Wilmette Library (from teachers who attended the District 39 staff meeting in December), Wilmette Junior High's Learning Behavior Specialists arranged a field trip to the library with their 7th and 8th grade students and staff. Community Engagement Librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako, assisted by School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland, led these visits, which included two tours (including Circulation, shelving and the highly popular AMH, the Junior High room) and a variety of activities in the Teen Room. Teachers shared this feedback afterwards: "We all had a great time. Thank you so much for planning and leading an awesome trip. We appreciate the resources that you shared!"
- Wilmette School District 39 3rd & 4th Grade Staff Meetings: The Youth Services department continued their collaboration with District 39, led by Tony DeMonte, Assistant Superintendent for Technology and Safety, to host teacher staff meetings at the library, accompanied by library information sessions. The 3rd and 4th grade teacher meeting was held on January 22, with more than 50 teachers. Youth Services Manager Andrea Vaughn Johnson, School Engagement Librarian Eti Berland, Community Engagement Librarian Sarah Jo Zaharako, and Youth Services Librarian Jennifer Lee shared engaging, information-rich presentations about the resources available to teachers, their students, and families, based on survey feedback they received from teachers. They shared curated collections of the district's monthly Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging themes, as well as books connected to upcoming learning units. The library will continue to offer staff meetings this spring for the remaining elementary school teachers.
- In January the Studio team had 613 reference interactions in the space. This month marked the first birthday of the Studio. We celebrated with a themed display which included a paper craft 3D cupcake and party hat, stickers, and more. In its first year, the Studio recorded 5971 patron interactions. The space has been a source of joy, exploration, and discovery for our patrons, whose creations have continually wowed staff. We're excited to see what year two brings!
- At the January all staff meeting, Communications & Events manager Sarah Beth Brown formally introduced the Branding and Communications Manual to library staff. This tool, which has been in use in the C&E department for some time, will now be able to help all staff produce high-quality, consistent written communications for library patrons. This tool provides guidance on our house style and an overview of how the library uses language in speaking to patrons. We are glad to have this up and running and will be able to continue to expand our communications output with even more staff contribution.

- In late January, we published our 2024 annual report, a statistical overview of the previous year (appended to this report). Though we have been doing annual reports for ten years, they have been very narrative without a level of comparison to previous years. This year, we endeavored to separate our narrative from our statistical story. We sent out a Year in Review in December, highlighting fun programs, big accomplishments, and revealing our top circulating books of the year. This was sent as an email blast to our entire mailing list. We completed the story of our year with a formal Annual Report in January, which had financial information, a thank you to our community partners, and a statistical comparison to the previous year. The information was presented attractively, primarily using infographics, and available both in print in the library and via pdf on our website. We think that this was an effective, efficient way to tell the library's story, and we look forward to continuing to perfect this storytelling pairing in future years.
- Over the course of the past two months, the library has implemented its first major computing systems replacement project in over 8 years. The patron PCs and catalogs were all replaced with the new systems in mid-December. Staff computers were installed in late January, complete with a new profile management system that makes our systems faster and more responsive. The results have been remarkable. Concurrent with the deployment of the new hardware, staff began training on a set of staff-led video and in-person courses in support of our new Microsoft 365 cloud-based office productivity software. Developed by DMS staff and deployed through our Talent training platform, staff completed the training series last week. We're excited to see staff begin to apply and take advantage of the benefits of our new resources this winter.
- New employees in January: Circulation Assistant Janet Creevy-Avery and Digital Services Assistant Molly French
- Nearly 30 staff participated in the Village of Wilmette CPR/AED certification program in January. We'll be offering another round of this training later this year.
- Staff Development Day is April 4, 2025 and Wilmette Library will be closed.
- February 20, 2025 is Clean Out Your Bookcase Day, and we encourage folks to consider donating book to the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library. The Friends bookstore supports the summer and winter clubs, Wilmette Reads, and The Shakespeare Project of Chicago.
- The Shakespeare Project of Chicago will perform The Winter's Tale on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 2pm.
- Sunday, February 23, 2025, from 2-4pm, the Wilmette Human Relations Commission is hosting a panel discussion entitled Civil Rights: Progress and the Path Forward.

VIII. Committees – Report on Meetings.

- A. ILA/RAILS Update. Trustee Sennett shared the news that she has been appointed to the RAILS Board of Directors, filling a 5-month vacancy for public library trustee seat. She intends to run for a full 3-year term in June. There was no ILA update.
- B. Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee Report. Trustee Sennett and President Fishman attended the January 22 Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee meeting which was the culmination of the committee's mental health awareness campaign. Presentations were made regarding sustainability updates and decennial reports were shared.

IX. Information Items.

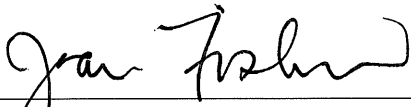
A. Communication. Comments from the suggestion boxes were distributed at the meeting.

B. Policy Committee Meeting. No update.

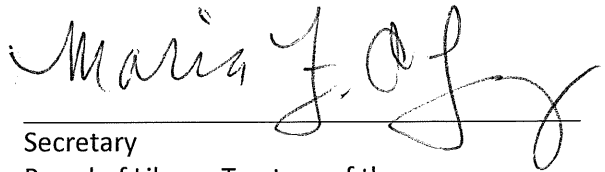
X. New Business. None.

XI. Adjournment. Trustee Sommer moved to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. The meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.



President
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL



Secretary
Board of Library Trustees of the
Wilmette Public Library, Cook County, IL