

**MINUTES OF
HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
April 20, 2016**

The Hennepin County Library Board met Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at Ridgedale Library.

Present: Adja Ann, Katherine Blauvelt, Caitlin Cahill, Chris Damsgard, Jonathan Gaw, Sandy Johnson, Jill Joseph, Kathleen Lamb, Samuel Neisen and Jane Shanard.
Hennepin County Staff: Ben Brown, Bernie Farrell, Johannah Genett, Lois Lenroot-Ernt, Janet Mills, Shira Naharit, Thomas Rupp, Lois Langer Thompson, Ali Turner and Marilyn Zastrow.
Public: Sue Mackert and Gary Thaden

CALL TO ORDER

Library Board Vice President Chris Damsgard called the Hennepin County Library Board meeting of April 20, 2016 to order at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance including new Library Board member Samuel Niesen.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jill Joseph made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Caitlin Cahill. Motion passed.

CONSENT ITEMS

Jill Joseph made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 30, 2016 and accept donations; seconded by Jane Shanard. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT None.

***ELECTION OF OFFICERS: JILL JOSEPH**

Jill Joseph submitted the following nominations on behalf of the Nominating Committee: president, Chris Damsgard; vice president, Caitlin Cahill; secretary, Sandy Johnson. She called for nominations from the floor. No nominations were made. With one candidate nominated for each office, she declared accordingly that the nominees were elected. Motion passed.

PROGRAM REPORT

• Former Library Board member commendation: Gary Thaden

Library Board President Chris Damsgard made a motion to approve the following resolution honoring Library Board member Gary Thaden, seconded by Sandy Johnson. Motion passed.

WHEREAS, Gary Thaden served with distinction as a Library Board member for Hennepin County Library from March 2010 until March 2016; and

WHEREAS, through his term as a Library Board member he endorsed the Hennepin County Library Strategic Plan 2011-2025 and 2014-2018 Capital budget requests; and

WHEREAS, he continued his library education by attending Minnesota Library Association Annual Conference in 2012 and American Library Association Annual Conferences in 2013, 2014 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thaden served as secretary in 2011, vice president in 2012-2013, and president in 2014-2015 of the Library Board; spoke on behalf of the Library Board to the County Board; and participated in the Executive, Nominating, Legacy, Walker Library Art Selection and Walker Library Community Advisory Committees; and

WHEREAS, he participated in numerous local and community library events by attending volunteer recognition events, capital project community advisory meetings, staff years of service events, art dedications, tours and exhibits, Friends of HCL meetings, County Board budget presentations and briefings, anniversary events, Brooklyn Park Library Open House, Excelsior Library Ground-breaking, Walker Library Closing and Open House Events, re-opening event at Roosevelt Library, the Nokomis, Northeast, and Walker libraries grand opening events; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thaden has been a faithful and steadfast colleague who contributed significantly to the goals and objectives of the Hennepin County Library system, treated patrons and colleagues with respect and sustained his strong commitment to the role of the public library in building strong communities; and

WHEREAS, through his term of dedicated service and hard work, Mr. Thaden has been a strong advocate for collections, library buildings and space, technology, communication, and staff; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Hennepin County Library Board by this resolution extends its gratitude to Gary Thaden and acknowledges with great respect his generosity, time of service, and commitment on behalf of the residents of Hennepin County, Minnesota and wishes him all the best in his future endeavors.

Gary Thaden expressed that it was an honor to serve on the Library Board and support the staff and director of HCL. Library Board members expressed their gratitude for his commitment to libraries and patrons.

• **Acknowledge Athenæum: Kathleen Lamb**

- Kathleen Lamb thanked Sue Mackert for her steadfast stewardship of the Athenæum which is an important part of HCL. First Minneapolis Public Library and now HCL houses the collection. The Athenæum collection has made a significant difference in what HCL can offer our patrons.
- Sue Mackert thanked the Library Board. She is proud of the partnership and collaboration and looks forward to a great year for both entities. Due to the leadership of the Library Board, board member Kathleen Lamb, staff member Johannah Genett and the county attorney we now have a long term lease. Special Collections is open today showing the Audubon's Birds of America. There are also joint programs planned. Ms. Mackert invited the Library Board to visit the Athenæum, hold a meeting in the space and tour the vault.
- The Board supported the idea of having a tour of the Athenæum as part of a future meeting.

LIBRARY HIGHLIGHT

• **Summer Learning/Reading: Bernie Farrell**

- For summer 2016, Hennepin County Library will again partner with MELSA libraries in offering “*BookaWocky – Your Summer Library Experience*.”
- There are over 2,500 individual events this summer including storytimes, book clubs for kids and teens, STEM programs, art programs, and technology workshops that support kids and teens in reading and learning all summer long. The summer reading programs *Read.Write.Draw* and *Best Book Ever* provide opportunities for kids and teens to reflect on and share what they have read. Young patrons and their parents report that these activities support and inspire them as learners and readers.
- Some of HCL’s locations will be experimenting with program design changes to assist in meeting community needs. The changes are aimed at reducing barriers for program participation and represent intentional efforts to reach patrons who may be most in need of learning support during the summer months. These include book clubs that don’t require pre-reading and include paired reading or read-aloud portions as well as learning activities, “*My First Book Club*” for children entering Kindergarten through grade two that includes read-aloud and reading practice and a second summer of the popular *Lunch and Book* program.
- In 2013 and 2014, evaluations of STEM and art programs, book clubs and summer reading programs highlighted the value to HCL’s patrons of these services. In 2016, the focus for evaluation is on programs featuring live performers. We will ask patrons if this is their first visit to the library and if they used other library services either before or after the program. As a focus on continuous improvement, the summer learning team is developing a self-reflection tool that can be used by staff individually and to encourage information sharing and reflection among team members.
- HCL is looking forward to an exciting and eventful summer and we count on the Library Board to help tell the story of our success and to find ways to invite new patrons in to the library.
- Library Board discussion and feedback
 - Continue teen programs to keep them reading over the summer.
 - Teens love graphic novels! Encourage and promote more opportunities for teens to access graphic novels.
 - Offer more teen volunteer opportunities in the libraries.
 - Look into the summer reading programs offered at parks and other locations. Offer library cards.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

• **Public Library Association Conference: Chris Damsgard and Sandy Johnson**

- Chris shared that the session he liked best was, “*How a library is branded*.” Howard County Library system has aligned themselves with education. They call their librarians instructors and educators; their director CEO and their programs and services classes and courses. The benefit has been increased support and usage. Benefits for HCL include supporting those who are lifelong learners and the love of education and reading for enjoyment as the best ways to learn. Chris visited the exhibits including a preview and discussion with our new vendor BiblioCommons.
- Sandy’s highlights included Anderson Cooper’s presentation on his new book about his relationship with his mother, Gloria Vanderbilt; a program on the value of prioritizing sleep by Arianna Huffington; Bernard Marcus’ presentation on how we can be more vocal about diversity and other controversial issues as it pertains to the workplace and a session regarding medical cannabis and the impact of legalization in Colorado.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

• Library and Community Updates

- Library Board appointments are highlighted on the front page of HCL's website.
- Diversity, Inclusion and Racial Equity work:
 - We are continuing to learn and challenge ourselves to learn and talk more about these critical issues in order to create a more diverse and inclusive work place.
 - We are using our mission to lead us – nourish minds, transform lives and build community together – at work.
 - We will be posting a Diversity & Inclusion manager position in the next few weeks.
 - We are in the process of reviewing Request for Proposals from several consultants to help us develop a shared understanding and work plan. Sandy Johnson requested the consultant meet with the Library Board.
 - We are offering two learning opportunities for staff in May and June. An introductory session "*Race: Power of an Illusion*" and an advanced session "*Color of Fear: Advanced and Courageous Conversations about Race.*" Caitlin Cahill asked if the Library Board could have an overview or the full workshop.
- We have seven openings for our new Patron Experience Supervisor position. The position is currently open and will close April 29. We are hoping this will bring in a more diverse set of applicants and we are advertising in multiple ways and reaching out to our communities. The Library Board requested the link for the posting to assist with promotion of the positions.
- National Library Week – April 10-16, 2016
 - Theme from the American Library Association is "Libraries Transform."
 - Library Director Thompson read patrons transformational library experiences that were shared on social media and in the buildings.
- National Volunteer Week (April 10-16, 2016)
 - All adult volunteers received a postcard and posters were displayed in every library to recognize our volunteers. Local events will be held in the fall.
- Attended "Cradle to K" cabinet meeting. Minneapolis Mayor Hodges convened the meeting that also included Kara Dukakis, director of Too Small to Fail, a joint initiative of the Clinton Foundation and The Opportunity Institute. The meeting highlighted the *Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing* campaign. HCL staff is fully engaged in this initiative.
- Webber Park Library groundbreaking was April 12. Library Board members Adja Ann, Chris Damsgard, Barb Fenton, Jill Joseph, and Jane Shanard attended. There was a large and enthusiastic crowd for the event.
- New Brooklyn Park Library grand opening events are Thursday, June 23 late afternoon and Saturday, June 25. Lauren Kewley is coordinating the events and we will be highlighting the STEM and geography themes that were a key part of the community planning. Chris Damsgard asked us to reach out to the STEM Community group. Library Director Thompson said we are also reaching out to the Brooklyn Park Task Force.
- Maureen Hartman represented HCL at the MELSA Advisory Board meeting. One recommendation is to extend Bibliotheca (formerly 3M) to include audio books.

• Strategic Plan reframe update

- Strategic plan reframe will be reviewed at Library summit scheduled for May 12, 7 p.m. at Ridgedale Library. Current and former Library Board members, Library Board applicants and other key stakeholders will be invited. The summit will include discussions on collections, spaces and places and patron experience. Invitations will go out this week.

• County Updates

- Operating budget instructions have been received and budgets are to come in at 102 percent of current property tax requirement. The Library Executive Team will meet to start budget preparation. Kathleen Lamb requested that this year the Library Board look at the entire budget and not just the changes from the previous year's budget.
- Attended 2016 State of the County Address presented by Chair Jan Callison. Jane Shanard also attended. Libraries were highlighted including the ConnectEd challenge. Jane Shanard asked how HCL is moving forward to look at another school district. Library Director Thompson said that we are looking at criteria to select the next schools, implementing best practices and growing the program at a rate that we can sustain.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

• MELSA Trustees and Advisory Board Report by Jill Joseph

Jill Joseph serves on the MELSA Board of Trustees for Hennepin County. MELSA is comprised of the eight library systems in the seven county metro area. Funding is directed to MELSA through the state and then to member libraries through joint programs and direct support for system initiatives. HCL benefits from the MELSA funding for services including the 3M Cloud Library. At the March meeting there was an update on the new [smARTpass](#) program which is in the pilot stage and enables patrons to access online free tickets to cultural events. Currently there a limited number of passes available, but MELSA is recruiting more organizations. The new MELSA Executive Director Ken Behringer will be presenting to the Library Board in May. Upcoming MELSA meetings: May 2, Finance Committee will review audit report and May 19, Joint Trustees/Advisory Board meeting.

• Library Board Policy Task Force Report by Caitlin Cahill

Caitlin Cahill, Chris Damsgard and Kathleen Lamb met with staff for the first meeting of the task force. Three goals were identified: 1) Comparison to similar libraries including best practices and how HCL can be a leader. 2) Identification of gaps and what may be on the horizon. 3) Making policies more accessible to patrons and staff. The Policy Committee had been put on hold, but there are three policies up for review this year. If you would like to serve on this committee for a couple months to review these policies, let Chris know.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None.

NEW BUSINESS

• Friends of HCL Board Report by Jane Shanard

Jane Shanard is the ex-officio Library Board member for the Friends of HCL Board. She confirmed that Library Board members received an invitation to the Friends of HCL fundraising event on May 19 for a *Culinary and Cookbook Celebration* with Chef Alex Roberts. She has asked that the Library Board receive invitations for all Friends of HCL events to facilitate collaboration.

The Governance Committee is taking a look at the board as a whole. They are conducting interviews to see if the board is the right size and has the right mix of people, identify barriers for recruitment of members and to understand the level of board engagement. The Strategic Plan Committee will be interviewing several Library Board members and other key stakeholders to discuss best practices and how the Friends of HCL can best serve the community. Library Director Thompson added that the Friends of HCL have hit their stride with leadership and board members. They have a clear mission and vision.

• Library Board President Chris Damsgard

At the next meeting, Chris will appoint committee members to the Policy Committee. Future opportunities include the Nominating Committee in the spring and art committees for new libraries. If you are interested in serving on the Policy Committee or Webber Park art committee, please let Chris know.

Chris asked the board to send him ideas about the board. He would like to strengthen board relationships, take a fresh look at onboarding new members and consider how the board can best communicate and connect with the County Board. He would also like to consider working sessions for the Library Board to discuss ideas and themes in depth. Send your ideas to Chris or bring them to the Executive Committee meeting on May 9.

The next full board meeting is at Golden Valley Library which was recently renovated. Library Director Thompson added that staff will be available to give tours at 4:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Kathleen Lamb made a motion to adjourn the Library Board meeting at 6:15 p.m.; seconded by Jill Joseph. Motion passed. The next Library Board meeting is Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 5 p.m. at Golden Valley Library, Golden Valley Meeting Room, 830 Winnetka Ave. N., Golden Valley.

Sandy Johnson, Secretary