

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING**

January 27, 2022

Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen

**Tuesday, November 23, 2021  
Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT**

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Michele Bria, Chris Layden, Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Nik Kovac, Matthew Kowalski, Michael Morgan, Jennifer Smith, Ald. JoCasta Zamarripa, Joan Johnson

**EXCUSED**

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Teresa Mercado, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Mark Sain, Erika Siemsen

**STAFF**

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Maria Burke, Eileen Force Cahill, Tammy Mays, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Amelia Osterud, Karli Pederson, Anne Rasmussen, Marian Royal, Rebecca Schweisberger, Kelly Wochinske, Dana Zurek

**OTHERS PRESENT**

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Budget and Policy Division: Mason Lavey

MPL Friends Board: Jamshed Patel

Office of Equity and Inclusion: Nikki Purvis

P3 Development Group: Dominique Samari, Jessie Tobin

President Michele Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:06 p.m. on November 23, 2021 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.

**SPECIAL COMMUNICATION**

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The Trustees participated in the annual holiday donation.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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1. Regular Board Meeting Minutes October 26, 2021.
2. Committee Reports
  - a. Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2021
  - b. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2021
3. Administrative Reports
  - a. Financial Report
  - b. Library Director's Reports
  - c. Statistics

**NEW BUSINESS**

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4. 2022 Milwaukee Public Library Proposed Service Hours. The Board reviewed the proposed library hours of operation for 2022, listed as attachment B of the agenda. Library Director Joan Johnson shared there was a slight reduction in hours as a result of a 3% decrease to the operating budget. Under the new

schedule, service hours will be uniform across all branches with branches open 48 hours per week and Central Library open 52 hours per week. Sunday hours will be reinstated at Central Library for the first time since the pandemic began. Trustee Morgan moved to approve the hours; Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.

5. Contract Award – Library Books and Media Materials. Director Johnson introduced Karli Pederson, Library Services Manager – Acquisitions & Serials, who presented a recommendation to award the library materials contract to Baker & Taylor. Ms. Pederson reviewed the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for this contract. If approved, Baker & Taylor will be the primary vendor for library materials for the next 3 years. The contract allows MPL to seek other vendors if necessary resources are not available through Baker & Taylor. MPL will have the option to renew the contract twice, for 2 years each time. Trustee Kowalski moved to approve the recommendation to award the library books and media materials contract to Baker & Taylor. Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.

## REPORTS

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6. Services & Programs Committee Meeting. President Bria reported on the action items from the November 3, 2021 meeting.

- The Committee moved to grant approval for Library Director Joan Johnson to move forward with the 2022 MPL Foundation request of \$1.84M. Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.

7. Building & Development Committee Meeting. Vice-Chair Nik Kovac reported on the action items from the November 4, 2021 meeting.

- The Committee moved to approve a revised MCFLS lease agreement for space within Central Library. Per the revised agreement, MCFLS will lease the space at a cost of \$95,387 per year beginning January 1, 2022 through November 2023. Trustee Layden seconded. Motion passed.
- The Committee moved to approve authorization Deputy Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns to begin negotiations with Milwaukee Health Department and Milwaukee Fire Department for the lease of the former Mill Road branch. Trustee Morgan seconded. Motion passed.

## OLD BUSINESS

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8. Racial Equity & Inclusion (REI) Action Plan Status Update. Library Director Johnson introduced Dominique Samari, of P3 Group. MPL issued a RFP to select a consultant to assist in development of the library's REI action plan. The contract was awarded to P3, a boutique professional service firm that designs strategic solutions for clients seeking to drive equitable and inclusive change. Ms. Samari introduced the project team, summarized the project goals, and presented the findings from MPL staff and Board surveys and focus groups. Survey findings will be presented to all MPL staff and developing a diverse REI action planning team. The next phase, beginning in January 2022, will focus on action planning using a results-based accountability approach. The final action plan will include the overarching REI strategy, initial implementation steps, performance measures, desired outcomes, and strategic partner recommendations. A copy of the presentation is attached at the end of these minutes.

9. 2022 Budget – Final Update. Library Director Johnson shared a summary of the final 2022 budget. The library budget will be \$26.5M, which represents 3.6% of the City's total budget. MPL received American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding for COVID-related expenses and toward new construction project costs for the Martin Luther King branch redevelopment. Director Johnson thanked all Trustees, especially those on the Common Council, for their support of MPL's budget request. MPL will continue to work closely with the MPL Foundation on value-added components for capital projects. As the Express Library at Silver Spring (MPLX) has been retired, community support will continue through partnership between MPL and the Housing Authority. President Bria also thanked the Council members for their support during the budget process.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of November 23, 2021 was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

# MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## REGULAR MEETING

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January 27, 2022

Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen

### Monday, December 13, 2021

### Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting

#### PRESENT

Chris Layden, Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Nik Kovac, Michael Morgan, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Jennifer Smith, Ald. JoCasta Zamarripa, Joan Johnson

#### EXCUSED

Michele Bria, Matthew Kowalski, Teresa Mercado, Mark Sain, Erika Siemsen

#### STAFF

Victoria Robertson, Chris Schabel, Rebecca Schweisberger

#### OTHERS PRESENT

City Attorney's Office: James Carroll, Robin Pederson

Alicia Groeschel, Appellant

Trustee Mark Sain called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 11:59 a.m. on December 13, 2021 with a quorum present. All Trustees participated by video conference.

#### REPORT

1. Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting. Committee Chair Jennifer Smith reported on the December 13, 2021 meeting. The Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law document regarding the disciplinary hearing of Alicia Groeschel on December 13, 2021 was approved by the Committee. The Order of the document states that good cause existed for Ms. Groeschel's 30-day suspension from employment. Trustee Zamarripa moved and Trustee Morgan seconded a motion to adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law. Motion passed.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of December 13, 2021 was adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

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January 27, 2022

*Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen*

**Monday, December 13, 2021  
Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT**

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Jennifer Smith, Ald. Milele Coggs, Teresa Mercado, Michael Morgan, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Mark Sain, Joan Johnson

**OTHERS PRESENT**

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MPL: Victoria Robertson, Chris Schabel, Rebecca Schweisberger

City Attorney's Office: James Carroll, Robin Pederson

Alicia Groeschel, Appellant

Chair Smith called the meeting of the Board of Trustees Finance & Personnel Committee to order at 10:01 a.m. on Monday, December 13, 2021. All Trustees and presenters participated by video conference.

1. Employee Suspension Appeal. The 30-day suspension appeal hearing of Alicia Groeschel before the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees Finance and Personnel Committee was called to order on Monday December 13, 2021 at 10:01 a.m. with a statutory quorum present. Chair Jennifer Smith moved the Committee move into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(b) "considering dismissal, demotion, licensing or discipline of any public employee or person licensed by a board or commission or the investigation of charges against such person" to discuss hearing proceedings. Trustee Sain seconded the motion to move into closed session. Roll was called and passed unanimously. Appellant Alicia Groeschel remained during closed session. The Committee reconvened in open session at 11:45 a.m. for adjournment. The Committee recommended upholding the 30-day suspension. The recommendation will be forwarded to the full Board for approval.

The meeting of the Library Board's Finance & Personnel Committee was adjourned at 11:56 a.m. on Monday, December 13, 2021.

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
INNOVATION & STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

January 27, 2022

*Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen*

**Tuesday, January 4, 2022  
Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT**

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Matt Kowalski, Ald. Nik Kovac, Erika Siemsen, Ald. JoCasta Zamarripa, Joan Johnson

**EXCUSED**

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Teresa Mercado

**OTHERS**

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MPL: Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Anne Rasmussen, Marian Royal, Rebecca Schweisberger

MPL Foundation: Pat Swanson

Committee Chair Matt Kowalski called the MPL Board of Trustees Innovation and Strategy Committee meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. on January 4, 2022 with a quorum present. All Trustees and presenters participated by video conference.

1. Committee Meeting Minutes Review. The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the October 13 2021 meeting, listed as Attachment A of the agenda. Trustee Kovac moved to approve; Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.

2. Race, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan Update. Library Director Joan Johnson presented an update on MPL's action plan. MPL and P3 Group have completed phases 1 and 2, which focused on planning and data gathering. At the November Board meeting, Dominique Samari of P3 Group presented findings from the Board and staff surveys. The findings were also shared in detail with MPL staff in December. Phase 3 begins this month and will focus on adaptive leadership and action planning. An action planning team has been created, made up of a diverse group of employees from many areas of MPL. The team will hold three strategy sessions between January and March. Adaptive leadership training for staff will be held in the first quarter. A draft action plan and evaluation tools will be presented to the Committee or full Board for review. Implementation will begin in April with assessments scheduled for later this year. Informational item.

3. Broadband Access. Director Johnson is part of the Wisconsin Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Group, administered by the Wisconsin Broadband Office of the Public Service Commission. Through this group, Director Johnson was invited to join a newly-formed group facilitated by United Way Techquity. This group focuses on new opportunities for broadband access in Milwaukee. It has been challenging for urban areas to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for broadband and this group is investigating alternative funding sources, including federal funding, grant, and private fundraising. The group is also working to create maps that demonstrate a greater need for broadband access in Milwaukee than currently shown on Federal Communications Commission (FCC) maps. MPL submitted three proposals to the Emergency Connectivity Fund; two proposals were deemed ineligible for funding and the third is in process and expected to be approved. Trustee Zamarripa offered to follow up with Governor Evers' office to advocate use of ARPA funds for broadband expansion. Informational item.

4. 2022 Priorities and Goals. Director Johnson shared an overview of MPL's 2022 goals. The top priorities are:

- Implementation of the new Race, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan

- Martin Luther King branch redevelopment – groundbreaking is expected to begin in spring with completion projected for fall 2023
- LibraryNOW expansion project – grant and private funding has been secured for 20 new AmeriCorps staff who will serve at libraries, schools, and youth-serving agencies. The team will work year-round teaching 21st century literacy skills and serving as near-peers for students to support social-emotional development.
- Teen ConnectED learning expansion – the program will be expanded into the 3 maker spaces at branch libraries.
- Continued pursuit of broadband and high-speed internet access city wide
- Partnering with MPL Foundation to launch a capital campaign to raise funds for branch redevelopment and other capital projects
- Ensure all ARPA and grant funds are expended as intended and demonstrate financial accountability
- Reinstate hours and services that were suspended or limited during the pandemic Informational item.

5. Next Meeting. Updates about broadband access will be presented at the April 5, 2022 meeting. MPL staff will also provide updates about the Race, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan and King branch redevelopment. Informational item.

The meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board's Innovation & Strategy Committee was adjourned at 9:34 a.m. on January 4, 2022.

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

January 27, 2022

*Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen*

**Thursday, January 6, 2022  
Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT**

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Ald. Nik Kovac, Matt Kowalski, Chris Layden, Michael Morgan, Mark Sain, Joan Johnson

**OTHERS PRESENT**

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MPL: Heather Berg, Eileen Force Cahill, Ryan Hayes, Sam McGovern-Rowen, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Anne Rasmussen, Rebecca Schweisberger

Chair Mark Sain called the MPL Board of Trustees Building and Development Committee meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. on January 6, 2022 with a quorum present. The agenda items were taken out of order; however, these minutes are presented in numerical sequence. All Trustees and presenters participated by video conference.

1. Approval of the Minutes. Vice-Chair Kovac entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the November 4, 2021 meeting, listed as Attachment A of the agenda. Trustee Layden moved approval and Trustee Kowalski seconded. Motion passed.

2. Project Inventory and Status Report. The Committee reviewed the current project list. Library Facilities Manager Ryan Hayes noted the completed projects and will keep the Committee apprised of new projects. Informational item.

3. Center Street Branch. On December 10, 2021 a school bus collided with Center Street branch. Library Facilities Manager Ryan Hayes shared photos and commended Facilities and public service staff for responding quickly to address the situation and damage. There was significant damage to one wall, including a portion of exterior brickwork. Internally, drywall and heating mechanicals were affected. At Mr. Hayes' direction, the brick and exterior materials were removed and a water-tight barrier was installed. A secure interior barrier was created to seal off the area while it is under repair. Supply chain delays have postponed new window installation; however, all repair work is expected to be done by late February or early March. Dr. Tammy Mays, Public Service Area Manager (Branches), shared details about public service staff's quick and proficient response when faced with the emergency situation. Director Johnson offered thanks to the Facilities and public service staff for their amazing response and minimal disruption of service. MPL staff is investigating options for traffic barriers at this and other MPL locations. Informational item.

4. Mitchell Street Alley Project. Library Director Joan Johnson shared information about the history and current proposal for repurposing the alley space next to Mitchell Street branch for use as outdoor programming space. In 2017, MPL partnered with the MPL Foundation (MPLF) to raise funds for green infrastructure on the Mitchell Street redevelopment, including use of the alley space next to the building. Over the history of the Mitchell Street project, Library Construction Project Manager Sam McGovern-Rowen and MPL Administration have discussed green infrastructure with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Mitchell Street Business Improvement District (BID). Although funding was not available earlier, proposals and conceptual designs were created and kept on file for possible resubmission.

Recently, Maria Burke, Branch Manager at Mitchell Street, learned of the MMSD Gray-to-Green Parking Lot Project taking place along the historic Mitchell Street corridor. As part of the project, MMSD issued a community survey to gauge preference of a location for investment. The alley next to Mitchell Street branch was selected as the most preferred location. MMSD has \$7,000 to expend on the project, which could be used as seed money to purchase street furniture specified in the original conceptual designs. MPL will pursue capital project funding through MPLF to cover the remaining project costs. When

MPL and MMSD have created a joint plan of action, MMSD will contact Ald. Perez to request his support to proceed with assistance from the DPW. A finalized plan is expected by mid-January and the Committee will receive ongoing progress reports. Director Johnson will share the conceptual designs at the next Committee meeting. Informational item.

5. Martin Luther King Branch Redevelopment. Sam McGovern-Rowen, Library Construction Project Manager, provided an update on the project. MPL, its architect Moody Nolan, and the developer's team meet regularly to discuss design, engineering, and construction matters. The team is developing an interesting, eye-catching entrance, which will be a signature part of the project. The development agreement is in negotiation and the final document will be shared with the Committee.

MPL staff is identifying ways to gather input from the community. A new display has been installed at the King branch to collect patron comments and a survey has been added to the MPL website. Additional surveys will be placed in various community gathering places.

MPL is working with the Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) to make this a green and sustainable project, including electric energy and solar arrays. MPL has applied for supplemental funding from the state to cover additional green features. Jeremy McKenzie is the new City Attorney for MPL, taking over from Mary Schanning. Informational item.

The meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board's Building & Development Committee was adjourned at 8:42 a.m. on January 6, 2022.

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

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January 27, 2022

*Submitted by Director Erika Siemsen*

**Wednesday, January 12, 2022  
Video Conference Call via GoToMeeting**

**PRESENT**

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Ald. Milele Coggs, Teresa Mercado, Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Joan Johnson

**EXCUSED**

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Jennifer Smith, Mark Sain

**OTHERS PRESENT**

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MPL: Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Sarah Leszczynski, Rebecca Schweisberger

Budget and Policy Division: Mason Lavey

Vice-Chair Coggs called the meeting of the Board of Trustees Finance & Personnel Committee to order at 8:10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 12, 2022. All Trustees and presenters participated by video or audio conference.

1. Committee Meeting Minutes Review. The Committee reviewed the minutes from the October 26, 2021 and December 13, 2021 meetings. Trustee Nicholson moved to approve the minutes and Trustee Mercado seconded. Motion passed.

2. 2022 Meeting Schedule Revision. Library Director Joan Johnson explained the current meeting schedule is too early in the month to allow processing and reporting of financial transactions, including the quarterly internal controls memo. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to change the meeting dates to the fourth Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. Informational item.

3. Review of Appeal Process. Director Johnson thanked the Committee for their flexibility and availability to meet and hear an employee appeal in December. Library staff researched prior appeals to gather information about the process and prepare for the hearing. Based on information from the research and the recent appeal, a new checklist has been created to ensure a uniform process for any future employee appeals. Informational item.

4. Next Meeting. The internal controls reports for Quarter 4 (2021) and Quarter 1 (2022) will be presented.

The meeting of the Library Board's Finance & Personnel Committee was adjourned at 8:24 a.m. on Wednesday, January 12, 2022.