



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of  
The Board of Trustees  
Webster Groves Public Library  
September 15, 2021

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Webster Groves Public Library was held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, September 15. President Bethany Curtis presided and Library Director Tom Cooper kept the minutes. Also present: Trustees Peter Ruger, Janey Worthington, Leanne Waugh, Jenine Harris, Tess Thompson, Sherry Taylor, Anita Radcliffe, and Ed Scholl. Absent: City Council Liaison Karen Alexander.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Public Agenda

There was no public agenda.

Minutes of the August 18, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Cooper said that he had amended the minutes at Mr. Scholl's request. Where he had noted that he and Mr. Scholl had held discussions with people from the Old Webster Business District and agreed about who would be our appointed representative on the TIF commission, it was actually only Mr. Cooper who talked to them, and Mr. Scholl concurred with the decision.

Ms. Taylor moved to approve the minutes as amended, Dr. Thompson seconded and the minutes were approved.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

President's Report

Ms. Curtis told the new trustees that we like to have short biographies of trustees, to acquaint one another about their backgrounds. Mr. Ruger and Ms. Radcliffe are invited to submit theirs to Mr. Cooper.

Librarian's Report

Mr. Cooper mentioned that he would be on vacation the next two weeks.

Advanced Planning

Dr. Harris offered this report on a recent meeting of the Advanced Planning Committee:

We agreed that survey data on usage does not seem like the best use of library resources given what we know about library use from our last survey, recent

informal survey, and library usage data that is already sitting in the library computers.

We discussed options that might help us to better develop a strategic plan that would do two things: (1) increase membership and use of the library in groups that are not currently members/users, and (2) increase depth of engagement with the library by current members/users.

Our idea is to conduct a 2-stage strategic planning process that incorporates existing data (if available) from the library system with a series of focus groups. The work would be centered around the following theme:

What would bring you to the library?

The two groups of interest:

- People/groups who do not use the library at all
- People/groups who engage with the library in a minimal or transactional way (e.g., only pick up books ordered online)

Stage 1:

- Use existing library data (if possible) to map baseline library usage by neighborhood (i.e., neighborhoods with the fewest/most library cards, late fees, amount of active use)

Stage 2:

- Hire an evaluation group to:
  - Work with us to create a set of focus group questions about membership and usage of the library
  - Conduct and report on 6 total focus groups, 3 of library non-members or non-users who live neighborhoods with the least usage/membership and 3 of residents who are library members and live in neighborhoods with moderate to high library membership/use

Combine the mapping of library membership and usage with the focus group data/findings to (1) set strategic goals about the geographic distribution of membership and usage, and (2) identify material and environmental characteristics of the library that might increase use and engagement.

Other ideas:

Maybe the Friends would be able to provide focus group participants with gift card incentives for their time?

### Building and Grounds

Ms. Waugh noted that the new doors for the Meeting Room had been installed, and discussion of payment for them is coming up in New Business.

### Finance

Mr. Scholl reported that our new tax rates were being set by the City at an overall rate of .53 per 100 dollars of assessed valuation. This compares to last year's overall rate of around .54, so not much change. As of August, we are running about \$8,000 under budget.

Ms. Worthington moved to approve the finance report, Ms. Taylor seconded, and the report was approved.

### Human Resources

Dr. Thompson presented and signed Mr. Cooper's goals for fiscal year 2021-2022, which had been slightly changed from the draft presented at last month's meeting. They are on file in his employee file.

### Policy

There was no report from this committee.

### Friends Report

Ms. Worthington reported that the Friends met last week and are planning their book fair, which will take place Friday and Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

### City Hall

There was no City Hall report.

### Old Business

This was taken care of in Human Resources Committee report.

### New Business

Ms. Waugh moved to take \$5,750 from reserves to pay for the new Meeting Room doors. Dr. Thompson seconded, and the motion was approved.

Mr. Ruger asked for a moment to introduce himself.

### Adjournment

Dr. Thompson moved to adjourn, Ms. Worthington seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Library's Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, October 20 at 7 p.m.