West Fargo Public Library Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 13, 2023
5:30 p.m.
City Hall Commission Chambers

Board Members Present: Liann Hanson, Alanna Rerick, Larry Schwartz, Tony Stukel
Absent: Commissioner Mandy George
Also Present: Adult & Patron Services Manager Kirsten Henagin, Communications Specialist Ellen Rossow

I. Call to Order

Hanson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Order of the Agenda

Rerick asked to add the Election of Officers to the New Business portion of the agenda. Schwartz moved to approve the agenda with the addition. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

III. Consent Agenda

Schwartz moved to approve the consent agenda. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

IV. Regular Agenda

Old Business

Rerick moved to clear items 1 through 5 from the table to allow the Board to vote on them. She intended to vote to decline all items, an action which, if taken by a majority of the Board, would remove the items from Old Business. This would give the incoming Director the option to reintroduce the items in the future, if necessary. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried. All items were removed from the table and roll call votes were held.

1. **Staff Request for 2023 Budget (Action)**
   A roll call vote was held for the approval of the Staff Request for the 2023 Budget. Rerick voted nay; Stukel, nay; Schwartz, nay; Hanson, nay. Commissioner George was not present. Motion denied.
2. **Library Marketing & Communications Specialist Job Description (Action)**
   A roll call vote was held for the approval of the Library Marketing & Communications Specialist Job Description. Rerick voted nay; Schwartz, nay; Stukel, nay; Hanson, nay. Commissioner George was not present. Motion denied.
3. **Building Fund Budget Line Item (Action)**
   A roll call vote was held for the addition of a Building Fund Budget Line Item. Rerick voted nay; Stukel, nay; Schwartz, nay; Hanson, nay. Commissioner George was not present. Motion denied.
4. **Media Relations Policy (Action)**
   A roll call vote was held for the approval of the updated Media Relations Policy. Rerick voted nay; Stukel, nay; Schwartz, nay; Hanson, nay. Commissioner George was not present. Motion denied.
5. **Public Postings & Displays Policy (Action)**
   A roll call vote was held for the approval of the updated Public Postings & Displays Policy. Rerick voted nay; Stukel, nay; Schwartz, nay; Hanson, nay. Commissioner George was not present. Motion denied.

New Business

1. **2024 Library Budget Draft Review (Action)**

Henagin discussed the Library Budget Draft for 2024 that was being prepared for submission to the City Commission in August. Henagin shared some general assumptions that the entire City was considering for the 2024 Budget cycle. These included a 5% increase in staffing cost due to Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA), an 11% increase in health insurance and benefits, and a 10% increase in WSI. Additionally, the value of a mill had increased by 10.32%.

The budget was drafted based on the same 8.4 mill allocation as in fiscal year 2023. It was estimated to have a small surplus, but Henagin explained that the Library could operate in a deficit if changes were made to staffing at the service desk, levy discounts increased, or if the Library received less State Aid than estimated.

Henagin also outlined some adjustments made to various lines in the budget, including the reallocation of $12,000 from Books to E-Resources, which would help to invest in OverDrive Advantage and make Libby a more robust tool for patrons. The Audio/Video and Technology lines would decrease to allow Furniture, Programming, and Shipping to increase. Additionally, a Library of Things line would be added to replace and replenish non-traditional circulating items such as memory care kits and hotspots.

The Staffing budget also increased as it included three additional full-time staff that were added in 2023, as well as two Teen Summer Interns for 2024, and a new full-time Outreach Services Coordinator for 2024. Henagin pointed out that any changes to the service desk were not included in the draft. Rerick asked for clarification to which Henagin explained that filling all Circulation positions with part-time staff would have the Library operate in a slight deficit, while changes to the Circulation team to include full-time staff as had been requested in past meetings would undoubtedly have the Library operating at a deficit. Schwartz motioned to approve the draft to be included in the City of West Fargo 2024 Budget. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

2. **Q1 & Q2 Programming & Reach Report**

Rossow presented a report on the programming, outreach, and promotional efforts for the first half of 2023. The Library's door count increased and more new cards were made in the first 6 months of 2023 than in the same timeframe of the last five years, surpassing even pre-pandemic numbers. Program attendance and participation also saw higher numbers in the first six months of 2023 than in the same timeframe in the last five years. Participation in youth activities made up over half of the in-library attendance, largely due to the popularity of storytimes. Attendance at general interest (family) events and adult events had also grown. Rossow shared staff plans for meeting increased demand in STEM programming at the Library, while also expressing that spatial limitations would continue to cap attendance at STEM programs given the size of the Library's meeting rooms. Adult programming attendance continued to grow in 2023 but was also stunted due to several programs being nixed because members of the Adult Services team stepped in to cover the service desk. Outreach participation numbers decreased from 2022 to 2023, but in-library event participation more than doubled.

Rossow provided a brief report on digital outreach efforts through social media, the Library's website, and email, all of which also saw steady year-over-year growth.

The West Fargo Library was featured in almost three times the local news articles

than in the first half of 2022. Hanson asked for clarification, to which Rossow explained this news coverage largely comes from information being pushed out to the news media by staff. Rossow shared a few other marketing tools in use including a new magazine-style newsletter implemented in early 2023, a free commercial for the Little Red Reading Bus thanks to Prairie Public, information in the West Fargo Focus magazine which is mailed monthly to all West Fargo addresses, and inclusion in West Fargo Public Schools publications which are sent to students and parents.

3. Director's Report

Henagin provided an Interim Director's Report which included positive feedback from patrons, specifically positive responses to the new puzzle exchange program.

Henagin also provided updates about a few issues. City-wide Wi-Fi infrastructure stress tests and assessments caused periodic outages at the Library in June and Henagin explained outages were likely to continue into the foreseeable future, however, IT was doing their best to notify everyone beforehand. Regarding the library building, West Fargo Public Schools contractors had begun painting the entryway of the Lodoen Center with no prior communication to anyone at the Library. This project took longer than anticipated and had the potential to impact patrons coming and going as the walls were wet and tools were left in the entry. When inquiring with the school district about the project, Henagin was informed that a flooring project would also be taking place in the same area. Henagin requested the Board approve the Library to be closed Saturday, July 29 to allow the contractors time to complete the flooring project without impacting patron access to the library. Hanson moved to approve the closure. Schwartz seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

Henagin shared that the library had spent 39% of the budget through June.

Regarding staffing, Chelsea Simdorn moved from Library Assistant to Technical Services Assistant. The Youth Services Program Assistant position was reposted after unsuccessful interviews.

Henagin gave a brief overview of recent and upcoming programming and outreach efforts including Summer Boost challenge completion being higher than the last three years, and a great turnout of nearly 350 people at the Summer Kick-off Party.

Lastly, Henagin shared that physical and digital circulation numbers were up again in June and continue to climb. Library card signups were down for June, but this can be attributed to the many people who signed up for their cards on the Little Red Reading Bus route in 2021 and 2022 who would now be active cardholders.

4. Election of Officers

After hearing her self-nomination, Hanson moved to elect Rerick Board Treasurer for the 2023 - 2024 year. Schwartz seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

After hearing his self-nomination, Hanson moved to elect Schwartz Board Vice President for the 2023 – 2024 year. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

After hearing her self-nomination, Schwartz moved to elect Hanson Board President for the 2023 – 2024 year. Stukel seconded. No opposition. Motion carried.

V. Adjourn

Schwartz moved to adjourn. Hanson seconded. No opposition. Motion carried at 6:36 p.m.