

RIVER FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: April 15, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Call to Order: At 6:00 pm, President Ruggeri called the Regular Meeting of the River Forest Public Library Board of Trustees to order. The roll was taken:

- Trustees Present: Cathy Ruggeri, Scott Delano, Elan Long, Jim Hopkinson, Ann Berens, Simon Saddleton. Kosha Baxi Carstens was absent.
- Also Present: Emily Compton (RFPL Director) and Shannon Duffy (RFPL Operations Manager).

Visitors and Guests: Shaun Kelly, Engberg Anderson Architects; Lynn Libera, River Forest Park District Commissioner

Visitor Comments: Mr. Kelly's comments are detailed in Old Business.

Old Business

Phase two room renovation project – estimate discussion with Shaun Kelly, Engberg Anderson Architects

Mr. Kelly presented a summary of the project work to date by Engberg Anderson (EA) and the RFPL Project Team/Facilities Committee. The project is currently at the end of the design phase. The next phase will be design development with a goal of July bidding for fall/winter construction since contractors will be dedicated to work on schools during the summer. Mr. Kelly presented two space designs: Option A as originally planned by Williams Architects and Option B which optimizes the space, creating larger office/workroom/storage and restroom areas and better flow; the meeting room space is the same in both options. EA estimates Option A would cost 20% less initially but requires another project in the future to create a workspace for the Children's Services staff elsewhere in the building. Option B delivers more usable space that meets staff workspace and storage needs along with a more functional restroom. To move ahead to the next phase, EA needs the Board to authorize EA to proceed with one of the options and authorize a revised budget since both options are estimated to exceed the initial project budget.

Following Mr. Kelly's presentation, the Board discussed the two options and decided to proceed with option B and its associated budget. The budget could be adjusted downward depending on which construction alternates are ultimately selected and any additional cost savings that might be identified. The Board will consider funding options to cover the higher budget, particularly the possibility of additional grant(s) from the RFPL Foundation.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting: March 18, 2025
- b. March 2025 Revenue and Expense Reports

- c. March 2025 Bill Payment List and Credit Card Charges
- d. March 31, 2025 Fund Balances Report and Capital Reserve Fund

Trustee Hopkinson moved to approve Consent Agenda items a-d, and Trustee Berens seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Delano, Hopkinson, Long, Ruggeri, Saddleton, Berens

Patron Suggestions:

Director Compton reported patron suggestions of an adult paper-making class and more Ernest Hemingway books in the collection.

Director's Report:

Director Compton reported recent social media chatter about the Library regarding on-site tutoring and damaged materials fees. Unlike some libraries in the area, RFPL allows private tutoring and does not ask tutors and their clients to leave. When an item is found damaged upon return, the Library bills the patron for its cost. The fees are often forgiven when the source of the damage is in question or the charge creates significant hardship for the patron. In cases where the patron has been forgiven multiple times, the Library will request that they pay the fee.

Director Compton reported that the asbestos testing for the second floor came back negative, and the lead testing indicated the building's water measured the lowest quantity of lead so no further action is needed in either area. The Library's local artisan fair on April 5th was very successful. Approximately 250 people visited during the fair and provided positive feedback about the event. The Library plans to have another in the future.

Grove is on-site this week to repair the masonry. The broken glass panes on the exterior of the second floor windows will be repaired the week of April 20th and ACR will begin interior restoration the following week. Director Compton ended her report by noting that the staff appreciated the lunch that the Foundation brought them for National Library Workers Day.

President's Report:

President Ruggeri reminded Trustees to file their Statement of Economic Interests by May 1st. She also stated that the Board's Annual Meeting will take place on May 20th. New Trustees will be sworn in, officers will be elected, and committees will be formed. There may be a Special Meeting before the Annual Meeting to approve revisions to the Trustee Bylaws. The person of interest was released from Cook County Jail on March 24, 2025. They still have upcoming hearings at Maybrook and will be monitored by the Cook County court until October 2025 and by the federal court until August 2027. So far, they have respected the federal No Contact Order which is in effect for two and a half years and which bars all communication and contact with the Library and its staff.

New Business

Committee Reports

Facilities Committee

Trustee Delano stated that his updates were covered in Old Business.

Finance Committee

President Ruggeri stated that the committee hasn't met since the last Board meeting. The Library's CDARS accounts are rolling over until the money is needed.

Policy Committee

Trustee Long stated that the committee will meet on April 21.

Village of River Forest Collaboration Committee Liaison

Trustee Berens reported that the committee has not met since February, but they will meet on April 23.

RFPL Foundation Liaison

Trustee Berens reported that the Foundation will meet on April 22.

River Forest Township IGA regarding funding of youth & family and senior & disability programming – vote

Director Compton worked with the Adult and Teen Services department to determine language for a new Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) which provides funding from the River Forest Township for youth and senior programming. In formalizing this long-standing partnership, the only significant changes are that the Township will no longer cover library personnel costs, and it will be named as an insured on the Library's liability insurance for their partnership programs.

Trustee Berens moved to approve the Library entering into the proposed IGA with River Forest Township. Trustee Delano seconded the motion which passed on a roll call vote

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Hopkinson, Long, Ruggeri, Saddleton, Berens, Delano

Lauterbach & Amen proposal for audit services (3-year: \$8,900, \$9,400, \$9,900) – vote

Director Compton received three proposals for audit services: Eisner Amper, Sikich, and Lauterbach & Amen (L&A). She eliminated Eisner Amper due to their cost and lack of experience working with government agencies in Illinois. Director Compton recommended staying with L&A. Their timeline starts the audit process earlier, which means the audit will be completed sooner. L&A proposed lower fees and additional services relative to Sikich including preparing a draft Management Discussion & Analysis.

Trustee Berens moved to approve L&A's proposal for audit services for the next three years. Trustee Delano seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Ruggeri, Saddleton, Berens, Delano, Hopkinson, Long

Closed session – 5 ILCS 120/2c(1) To consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the library.

In open session, Trustee Berens made a motion to adjourn to closed session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2c(1) to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the library. The motion was seconded by Trustee Saddleton and passed on a roll call vote. Open session was adjourned at 7:40pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Berens, Delano, Hopkinson, Long, Ruggeri, Saddleton

The Board returned to open session at 8:15pm. Present were Trustees Berens, Delano, Hopkinson, Long, Ruggeri, and Saddleton; Director Compton, and Operations Manager Duffy.

President Ruggeri reported that while in closed session, the Board discussed the Library Director's performance and compensation in fiscal years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. Under consideration was the Director's performance vs. goals for 2024-2025, including the security situation at the Library. Also discussed was setting the Director's compensation for the 2025-2026 fiscal year

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Trustee Delano moved to approve a bonus of \$2,500 in fiscal year 2024-2025 and a raise of \$4,500 in fiscal year 2025-2026 for RFPL Director Emily Compton. Trustee Hopkinson seconded the motion which passed on a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Berens, Delano, Hopkinson, Long, Ruggeri, Saddleton

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm following a motion by Trustee Berens which was seconded by Trustee Saddleton. All approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Elan Long, Secretary