

Meeting Minutes: Special Board Meeting: September 30, 2020

Call to Order: At 9:01 am President Hill called the special meeting of the River Forest Public Library Board of Trustees to order. The roll was taken:

- Trustees Present: Bevan, Berry, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, Smedinghoff, and Stierwalt
- Also Present: Joanna Bertucci (RFPL Operations Manager), Mary Cherry (HR Source), and Cathy Parker (HR Source)

President Hill made the following announcement at the start of the September 30, 2020 meeting. Governor Pritzker signed Bill 2135, which specifies requirements for meetings of public bodies while Illinois is under a state of emergency and disaster declaration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill states that if an in person meeting is not practical or prudent, members of the public body can call into a meeting as long as one Trustee or the Chief Executive Officer are present at the public body's physical location. All votes must be roll call votes and the meeting must be recorded.

In order to comply with this law, Trustee Eleanor Long is present at the River Forest Public Library building (735 Lathrop Ave., River Forest, Illinois) and the meeting is being recorded via Zoom.

Public Comments

- None

New Business – Discussion of Director Position with HR Source representatives.

- Mary Cherry and Cathy Parker of HR Source introduced themselves to the Board and expressed their excitement to be working with RFPL.
- Ms. Cherry shared a document with the Board to help facilitate the process of refining the job description for the Library Director. The job description is used for legal compliance, classifying the job, determining essential functions, and also marketing the position. It is a foundation for the search process. Ms. Cherry recommended that the Board determine 4-5 “buckets” of duties and responsibilities relevant to the position. Trustee Bevan noted that HR Source provided the Board with a listing of potential responsibilities that can be considered to supplement our current job description.
- Trustee Long asked that Trustees agree on the big ideas for the position and build a job description that encompasses those ideas in 4-5 categories.
- Trustee Bevan asked Trustees what they felt were the most important duties and responsibilities the Board should seek in a new Director.
 - Trustee Bevan commented that the new Director should have strong communication skills and the ability to effectively interact with various groups of people (e.g. staff, patrons, Trustees, community leaders).
 - Trustee Long commented that it is important that the new Director have a strong sense of vision and strategic direction for the library.

- Trustee Hopkinson suggested that the new Director have experience with facilities management, particularly older buildings.
 - Trustee Berry expressed that the new Director should be able to be a strong team builder and keep abreast of trends in order to keep the library moving forward.
 - President Hill commented that strong communication skills are of the utmost importance. The new Director should be able to communicate effectively with various groups.
 - Trustee Smedinghoff expressed that the library Director needs to be a “jack of all trades” in areas of facilities maintenance, finance, community relations and management.
- President Hill asked Ms. Bertucci if she had any comments about duties and responsibilities for the job posting.
 - Ms. Bertucci expressed that the most important duty for the new Director is establishing vision and a strategic direction for the library going forward. Director Quinn has worked diligently to design an organizational structure that would support a new Director operationally in terms of finance, facilities, and personnel. Ms. Bertucci also commented that if there are tradeoffs to be considered in terms of candidates’ respective skills, perhaps soft skills (i.e. communication, working effectively with staff, board and patrons) may need to be prioritized over hard skills (i.e. financial experience, management of building repairs).
- After discussion, Ms. Cherry suggested that the board determine the top 4-5 key responsibilities to be included in the Library Director job description.
- Trustee Long expressed some frustration in that the Board cannot write the job description for the Director as a group. Trustee Long suggested that today’s time would have been more effectively spent coming to consensus about what qualities the Board is looking for in the new Director.
- Trustee Smedinghoff left the meeting at 9:58 am.
- Trustee Bevan asked if the Board would be comfortable with the Director Search Team drafting the Director job description for Board review. Trustees agreed and Trustee Bevan advised that a draft job description would be available by Friday, 10/2. Trustees agreed to review and comment over the weekend so as to allow the Director Search Team to remain on schedule for the Launch Meeting scheduled for 10/7.
- Trustee Stierwalt expressed concern regarding the nature of the meeting and had hoped it would be more productive. Trustee Stierwalt asked HR Source to more effectively communicate goals for future meetings.
- Ms. Parker apologized for the miscommunication about the intent of the meeting and stated that RFPL would be not charged for the meeting as Trustee’s expectations were not met.

Adjournment

- At 10:15 Trustee Bevan moved, and Trustee Hopkinson seconded, that the Special Meeting be adjourned. A roll call vote was taken:
 - Ayes: Bevan, Berry, Hill, Hopkinson, Long, and Stierwalt.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Hopkinson
Secretary