CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF PITTSBURGH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
Monday, February 28, 2022 - 4 p.m.
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
South Wing Reading Room

Present:
Joel Bernard
Molly Brean
Marc Brown (phone)
Jay Costa (phone)
Kenyokee Crowell (phone)
Betty Cruz (phone)
Samuel DeMarco (phone)
Patrick Dowd
Bethany Hallam (phone)
Sue Kirsch
Jeremy Kubica
R. Daniel Lavelle (phone)
Eboné Lockyer (phone)
Monica Malik
Dan Miller (phone)
Laura Miller
Alice Mitinger
Huma Mohiuddin (phone)
Cary Reed
Carol Robinson
Pat Siger (phone)
Erika Strassburger
Gia Tatone
Lou Testoni
LaShawnda Thomas (phone)
Sylvia Wilson (phone)
Greg Zovko

Absent:
Carolyn Hess Abraham
Jim Galitsis
Deb Gross
Frances Jordan
Theresa Kail-Smith
Justin Krauss
Bruce Kraus
Barbara Logan
Lafe Metz

Trustee Emeriti Present:
Betsy Watkins (phone)

Community Committee Members Present:

Present by Invitation:  
Maggie Pike (RAD)
Carlton Stout
Jen Styran
Paul Vanderwiel
Karlyn Voss
Pat Winter

Linda Barsevich
Molly Bennett
Lisa Boyd
Anita Greene-Jones
Toby Greenwalt
Marta Honores
Mary Monaghan
The meeting was opened by Chair of the Board of Trustees, Patrick Dowd.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

   Mr. Dowd welcomed the Board of Trustees and called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of the December 13, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

   On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes from the December 13, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously by the Board.

III. Chair's Report

   The Board Chair noted the Search Committee update would be presented in Executive Session. The Chair also welcomed Ms. Boyd back to the library and thanked the Interim Executive Team for their work over the first two months of the year.

IV. President and Director's Report

   For the Mission Moment, Jennifer Styran, Assistant Director, Main & Statewide Services, and Carlton Stout, Assistant Director, Neighborhood Libraries, presented an update on the library’s 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan. It was noted that the Regional Asset District requires assets to submit a long-term plan at least once every five years; the library’s current plan expires this year. In order to provide adequate time for the library to hire and fully onboard the new President and Director, the library has asked RAD for an extension and is awaiting formal confirmation of approval. Ms. Styran briefly reviewed the current plan’s focus areas and timeline of initiatives, noting the disruption caused by the pandemic beginning in early 2020, and highlighting areas for continued action for 2022 and the extension period. Mr. Stout provided a more in-depth update on three of the six strategic plan focus areas - Inclusive & Equitable, Responsive & Adaptable, and Collaborative & Innovative. Board members were encouraged to view the library’s 2021 report to RAD included in the meeting materials for additional details on the library’s work and accomplishments in all six strategic plan focus areas.

   Ms. Voss reviewed the Stats Sheet, which reports statistics and trends for all of 2021, plus a timeline of library services and programs, which were strongly dictated by pandemic restrictions and conditions. Highlights include steady use of electronic resources at around 33% of total circulation (up from 17% in 2019) and modest increases in visits, which have quite a ways to go to fully recover to 2019 levels. It was noted that in-person programming and meeting room availability for public use were not restored until October, and that in-person outreach to schools and childcare centers has yet to resume. The Board was also updated on upcoming changes to the mask policy. The library follows CDC guidance, and masks have been required by staff and visitors in all library spaces since the onset of the Delta variant. In order to align with the most recent CDC recommendations for areas with low transmission, masks will be recommended, but optional, in all library spaces starting Friday, March 4.
V. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

The Board heard a report from the Finance Committee on the final 2021 operating results. The library had a budgeted operating deficit of $1,043,652 for 2021, but finished the year with a final operating surplus of $1,168,823. The operating surplus is due to higher than expected revenues from the library tax, table games, and trust income, combined with lower expenses for salaries and benefits. It was noted that the library hopes to return to pre-pandemic staffing levels to fully restore library services, and will be monitoring the salary and benefits line items. The Board was also updated on current plans for the 2022 projected deficit of $2.3 million, which will be covered by a combination of CARES Act funding for Shared Services and the use of the 2021 operating surplus, plus Employee Retention Credit funds, for the Operating deficit. The committee emphasized the importance of RAD advocacy and noted that staff and committee leadership are working to develop reports to fully represent all shared services spending. The committee is also planning to offer additional, in-depth finance sessions for all Board members.

B. Committee on Trusteeship

The Board was updated on recruitment for 2022. The committee is planning to nominate two new term trustees for election at the May Board meeting. There are six trustees eligible for a 2nd 3-year term; five of the six are willing to serve a second term, with one declining due to a job relocation out of state. The committee has spoken with a number of great prospective candidates and appreciates the high number of recommendations Board members have submitted.

Ms. Reed also reported on the results from the 2021 Board Survey, which were shared in advance of the meeting. The response rate, 77%, was the highest since 2015, and participation from public trustees was stronger than in previous years. Responses continued to rate Board and Sr. Staff relationships highly, and awareness of the DEI Task Force and comfort with discussions and/or education about race and equity were among the highest scores as well. As with prior years, the lowest ratings were related to fundraising participation. Strategic plan awareness was also among the lowest scores, as were responses to two new questions related to board diversity. It was also noted that respondents submitted extensive comments and there is consensus on key issues. Committees will be asked to share and discuss the specific sections related to their work at their spring meetings.

C. IDEA Committee

The IDEA Committee shared a report on recent activities. Members of the committee met recently with the Zoo & Aquarium Board Equity Committee and the Children’s Museum’s JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) committee to share insights, ideas and best practices. A key area of discussion was the benefit of maintaining a distinct EDI standing committee of the Board, even as EDI becomes integrated more fully into the full work of the Board and other committees. The committee also reviewed the results from the 2021 Board Survey, noting robust feedback to the open-ended questions and a strong interest in training.
The Board was also briefed on the Vibrant Pittsburgh Index, which is a collaboration between Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Allegheny Conference on Community Development that identifies areas of success as well as critical actions that are needed to improve the practices, policies, and cultures of organizations in the Pittsburgh region. The library has completed the Index data submission and will receive a report with benchmarks to other regional organizations. The committee is also planning to review and update the 2010 Board Diversity Plan.

D. Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee provided a brief update on a project to create a more accessible front entrance at CLP-Main, which will include repair of the front steps and foundation, improvements to the ADA accessible lift and entrance, and replacement of the glass vestibule. The preliminary estimate of costs is around $2 million, which will close out the remaining capital campaign funds. The final budget will be presented to the Board for approval at the May meeting. The committee is also working on a list of priority future projects.

E. Development Committee

The Board was briefed on fundraising results for 2021. The library raised $8.2 million, 138% of the $6 million goal for Realize: Our Power, Our Future campaign in 2021. Included in the $8.2 million figure is $6 million in campaign commitments for operating support, capital, transformational programs, and endowment and sustainability initiatives. The total also includes recognition of a significant planned gift eligible for campaign counting. The Realize campaign has now reached $44.9 million, or 90%, of the $50 million goal. An endowment report was also shared; $1.7M has been raised since 2018, with 27 new named funds. On 12/31/21, CLP’s Endowment was valued at $23.6 million. The Board was also briefed on Board giving for 2021; 89% of trustees participated, short of the 100% annual participation goal.

For 2022, the library has set a fundraising goal of $6 million, with an internal stretch goal of $7.3 million. Priorities include completing Realize and planning for the new Director and next campaign. Upcoming fundraising activities were also highlighted, including the April 6th Library Giving Day, the Spring direct mail appeal, and the Summer Reading Program & June 12 Summer Reading Extravaganza, for which sponsorship packages are available.

F. External Relations Committee (ERC)

The Board heard a progress update on the rollout of the library’s elimination of fines for overdue items, which occurred in January. Active promotion begins in March with a multi-pronged campaign that will run through June. Mr. Brown also highlighted the Fine Free talking points, which are included in the Board meeting materials. The Board was also updated on other committee activities. At the January External Relations Committee meeting, Anita Greene-Jones provided a progress report on Shared Services participation, oversight and reporting, which are all going well. Brief updates were also shared on the upcoming meeting with the Friends Council officers and CLP’s lawyer to address outstanding compliance issues and the ERC committee review of the Board stat sheets. Key upcoming events were also highlighted, including the April 11th
Annual Public Meeting, the Harrisburg advocacy trip (April 12th – 13th), for which Board volunteers are needed, and the Spring 2022 Board Branch Tour. Staff will be sending a poll to the Board to select a date in late April, May or early June for the branch tour.

VI. Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:15 pm.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.