

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

**Central Library
Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
814 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233**

PRESENT: Michele Bria, Teresa Mercado, Ald. Milele Coggs, Michael Morgan, Felicia Saffold, Ald. Scott Spiker, Larresa Taylor, Kathleen Vincent, Venice Williams, Joan Johnson

EXCUSED: Matthew Kowalski, Mark Sain, Erika Siemsen

STAFF: Kelly Bolter, Chantel Clark, Melissa Howard, Yves LaPierre, Tammy Mays, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Karli Pederson, Marian Royal, Rebecca Schweisberger, Kelly Wochinske, Joy Zanders

OTHERS

PRESENT: Budget & Policy Division: Nathaniel Haack
City Attorney's Office: Alex Carson
PFM Asset Management LLC: Wayne Sattler

Presiding Chair Michele Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:05 p.m. on January 28, 2025. Trustees Coggs, Saffold, and Vincent participated by conference phone.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Annual Review of Fund Investments**. Mr. Wayne Sattler, Senior Vice President & Managing Director at US Bancorp Asset Management, reviewed the account investment materials and provided a market overview. The investment performance of the trust fund for the period ending December 31, 2024 was reviewed. Mr. Sattler noted the MPL portfolio is well diversified and offers a buffer against market volatility, particularly as the trust fund is a very long-term investment. Informational item.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes November 26, 2024**
3. **Committee Reports**
 - a. Building & Development Committee Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2025
 - b. Innovation & Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2025
4. **Administrative Reports**
 - a. Financial Report
 - b. Library Director's Reports
 - c. Statistics

5. **MCFLS Acknowledgement Letter – Overdrive Contribution.**

Chair Bria asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda presented as attachment A, pages 3-63 of the agenda. Hearing no objection, the Consent Agenda was approved.

REPORTS

6. **Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board Meeting.** Trustee Vincent reported on the January 13, 2025 meeting. The Library Directors Advisory Committee discussed Hoopla costs and service changes. Several member libraries have discontinued Hoopla service. MPL will work with MCFLS to review alternatives to Hoopla. The Great Library Treasure Hunt marketing campaign runs from January 18th – May 3rd. It is designed as a scavenger hunt and encourages patrons to visit all member libraries. The campaign includes promotional materials, prizes, radio ads and a dedicated site to track engagement. Library Legislative Day will be held on February 11th. Library representatives will meet with state legislators to highlight library accomplishments and share information about areas for support. Member contracts and agreements, including MPL's, have been finalized. The annual report is in preparation and strategic priorities are being developed. Informational item.
7. **Urban Libraries Council (ULC) Executive Committee.** Chair Bria reported on the December 6, 2024 meeting. ULC has been meeting with congressional leaders to advocate for diversified library funding. The services provided by urban libraries could qualify for funding from various federal departments. ULC membership has increased from 172 member libraries in 2023 to 187 member libraries in 2024. The committee received a demonstration of the ULC Data Hive. The Data Hive will allow members to compare data with peer organizations and is a great tool for sharing library stories and impact. The ULC Academy will be introduced in 2025 and will contain 3 modules by the end of the year. The modules will be designed for training and support of library branch managers. Informational item.

OLD BUSINESS

8. **Martin Luther King Branch Redevelopment Project Update.** Chair Bria moved into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes sec. 19.85(1)(e), for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session," for the purpose of discussing the Martin Luther King branch redevelopment. Roll was called and unanimously passed. Library Director Johnson, Deputy Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, Library Construction Projects Manager Yves LaPierre, Administrative Assistant Rebecca Schweisberger, and Assistant City Attorney Alex Carson remained in the meeting. The Board reconvened in open session at the conclusion of its closed session.
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NEW BUSINESS

9. **State Annual Report.** Chair Bria referred to the Statement Concerning Public Library Systems Effectiveness, which was included as Attachment B of the agenda. The statement is part of the Public Library Annual Report presented to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Each year, MPL is required to report on the leadership of Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS). MCFLS Director Steve Hesel and his team have been great partners for MPL. Library Director Joan Johnson recommended the Board signify that MCFLS did provide effective leadership and adequately met the

needs of the library. Her recommendation is based on the following accomplishments of Mr. Hesel and the MCFLS team:

- Created a strategic plan that supports MPL and other member libraries in the areas of technology, education, marketing, and maximizing the use of budget dollars
- Mr. Hesel led the effort to update the Member Agreement so that MPL, as the MCFLS Resource Library, is better compensated for its role in supporting all member libraries. He effectively led the Member Agreement renewal process by developing a workable schedule for all members and their boards, produced helpful and supportive documentation, created an inclusive feedback loop, and presented clear information to library staff and board members.
- Provided reliable delivery of materials as well as maintenance and upgrades to the shared catalog.
- Continue to support MPL's LibraryNow program, which currently serves 60,000 students.
- Coordinating continued education for all members.
- Mr. Hesel has demonstrated leadership and supported MPL's goals.

Trustee Williams moved and Trustee Vincent seconded a motion to approve the statement, which will be signed by President Sain and sent to DPI as part of MPL's Annual Report. Motion passed.

10. **Black History Month Program Series.** Kelly Bolter, Library Services Manager - Coordinator of Adult Programming & Events, and Joy Zanders, Library Services Assistant Manager, shared information about upcoming programs to celebrate Black History Month. MPL has a robust calendar of events and has launched a landing page dedicated to Black History Month programs. The page includes links to resources, games and activities, and the special collection, Dr. James Cameron Pamphlet Collection. The Black History Month Reading Challenge returns for the third year. The challenge began with reading, as a way to help keep patrons engaged during the pandemic, but has grown to include other MPL resources. Participants will read 3 books or complete 3 activities during February. They can submit their entries using paper forms or an online portal. The kickoff event will be held on February 8th at Central Library. Winners will receive prizes from local Black-owned businesses. Ms. Bolter highlighted several upcoming events and Trustees were invited to attend and share with their networks. Informational item.

11. **Closing Remarks.** Trustee Bria shared updates about upcoming events: the 2025 Poet Laureate inauguration event and an author event with Christian Cooper. The Board will be on recess in February.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of January 28, 2025 was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.
