



Dakota County Library Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: May 9, 2024

Location: Kaposia Library

Committee Members Present: MaryJanice Alongi – District 1, Kevin Hendricks – District 2, Robin Cerio – District 3, Rien Harms – District 5, Patricia Schoenecker – District 7, Charlie Schubert – At-Large Youth, Shefali Meagher – At-Large Youth.

Staff Present: Margaret Stone (Library Director), Jennifer Reichert Simpson (Library Deputy Director), Honora Rodriguez (Kaposia Library Branch Manager)

Call to Order:

Robin Cerio called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Kevin Hendricks called and MaryJanice Alongi seconded that the consent agenda be approved. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Public comments: none

Statistics:

Committee members provided a suggestion to use library names instead of abbreviations for library locations. Committee members expressed appreciation for the new format.

Kaposia Library update:

Honora Rodriguez shared the history of the South St. Paul Library, which had offered service for 101 years. 600 individuals attended the opening of the new Kaposia Library on February 20, 2024. Senator Amy Klobuchar, Representative Angie Craig, Dakota County elected officials, City of South St. Paul officials and many community members attended. Approximately 10,000 visits occur a month at the Kaposia Library. Community members

are expressing appreciation for the meeting and study rooms and space. The new library is next to a middle school and high school and in a central location for the community. Many teens visit the library after school. The staff is busy building relationships, offering services and events, and managing the environment.

Library Strategic Planning:

Margaret Stone shared that the library completed the first ever library strategic plan in 2022. Many of those strategic plan goals are items that will now be part of ongoing work. A few accomplishments under the previous strategic plan include creating consistent hours, adding more books in languages other than English, a focus on the digital collection, and strengthening staff development.

Jennifer Reichert Simpson shared outcomes and timeline of the Strategic Planning Process. A cross functional staff team of staff from a variety of roles, locations and perspectives is leading the process in collaboration with consultants. The library is about to begin community engagement which will take place throughout the summer. Strategic planning community engagement includes an online survey, outreach at events, informal interviews and community conversations with audiences where there is an opportunity to strengthen ties to the library. The library will bring back themes of community input at the July or September meeting.

Directors update:

Seven locations now offer Self-Service Hours. The Kaposia Library is expected to offer Self-Service Hours on May 20 with Galaxie Library and Wentworth Library to follow. All library locations are expected to offer Self-Service Hours by the fall 2024. To date, the library has seen no major safety issues. The Farmington Library, the first location to offer the service, has seen an increase in circulation. Customers are checking out material and using meeting rooms and spaces.

Summer Discovery, the library's reading and learning program, starts June 10th. We are shifting back to how the program ran before the COVID-19

pandemic. Youth will complete reading and learning activities and get a book when they return their activity log. Volunteens, teen volunteers, continue to support the program and other activities.

There is a bill in the Minnesota State House and Senate addressing requests to remove books from a library's collection. As currently written, the new bill allows community members to express concern about a book or item in the library's collection, but not remove a book from the collection.

Funded by grant from the Minnesota Department of Education using federal funding from Library Services and Technology Act grant, the library is working with community educators to host cultural stories in Bengali, Spanish and Somali May through September.

Committee members update:

MaryJanice shared that her daughter's book, Citadel by C. M. Alongi, was nominated for a Minnesota Book Award.

Kevin reported that the Bike Rodeo will take place on May 21 from 1-3 at the Wentworth Library. During the event, you can pick up a free bike helmet and get minor bike repairs. The West St. Paul police will provide a short bike safety course.

Robin noted the rotating public art at the Wescott Library. Robin shared feedback from the community member that the parking lot at the Heritage Library is full due to the License Center parking. Overflow parking is available in the City of Lakeville lot. Library staff is monitoring the issue.

Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Next meeting: 5:30-6:30 p.m. July 11, 2024 at the Farmington Library