
OMAHA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 @ 5:00 P.M.

Milton R. Abrahams Branch – 5111 North 90th Street

CALL TO ORDER

1. The Omaha Public Library Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at the Milton R. Abrahams Branch, 5111 North 90th Street. President Kennedy called the meeting to order at 5:01 P.M.

Jenna L. Garcia, Recording Secretary, took the Roll Call:

PRESENT: John Barrett
Cameron Gales
Keegan Korf, Vice President
Rochelle Mullen
DeJuan Reddick
Albert Varas
Jen Rae Wang, Secretary-Treasurer
Bryan Wilson
Mike Kennedy, President
Laura Marlane, Executive Director, Omaha Public Library (Non-voting)

CERTIFICATION OF PUBLICATION – NOTIFICATION OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

2. President Kennedy stated that the meeting is held in accordance with the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#), a copy of which is available on the table and wall. The Library certified [publication](#) of the meeting in the Daily Record, the Official Newspaper of the City of Omaha, on May 12, 2023.

BRANCH REPORT

3. **Stacy Lickteig, Senior Manager of Branches**

Stacy Lickteig, Senior Manager of Branches, appeared and spoke in the absence of Katy Lofgren, Branch Manager. She discussed important facts about the Branch and its patrons, and answered questions from Board members. It was noted that Do Space is relocating to this Branch to enable construction to begin on the new Central Library.

DEPARTMENT MANAGER REPORT/PRESENTATION

4. **Wendy Robinson, Business Office Manager**

Wendy Robinson, Business Office Manager, appeared and spoke. She highlighted work her department does and answered questions from Board members.

ACTION ITEMS

President Kennedy stated that any person who has been invited to speak or has requested to speak before the Trustees is requested to be brief and to limit his or her comments to five minutes or less, after identifying themselves by name and address for public record. When more than one person wishes to address the Trustees on a Consent Agenda item or Resolution, the proponents will be invited to speak first, followed by the opponents. The proponents will be given a brief period for rebuttal of any new information presented during the opponent's presentation, after which public comments will be concluded. Trustees will ask any questions at the conclusion of any public comments, prior to voting. The President, or presiding officer, may use reasonable discretion to limit or extend a speaker's time to avoid redundancy, to assure a thorough public discussion on matters before the Board, and to end discussion.

RESOLUTIONS

5. **[Approval of minutes – April 19, 2023](#)** (*Public comment and Board approval today*)

President Kennedy opened up the public comment period on Agenda Item 5.

No one spoke, and the public comment period was closed.

MOTION by Korf, SECOND by Reddick, that Agenda Item 5 (Approval of minutes – April 19, 2023) be approved.

ROLL CALL:

Yeas: Barrett, Gales, Korf, Mullen, Reddick, Varas, Wang, Wilson, President Kennedy

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED 9-0

6. **[Res. 2023-06 Approval of amendments to By-Laws of the Board of Trustees](#)** (*Public comment and Board approval to be held on 6/21/2023 pursuant to Article VI of the By-Laws*)

REPORTS

7. **[Director's Report](#)** – Laura Marlane, Executive Director

Ms. Marlane appeared and spoke, highlighting items from her report.

8. **[Advisory Committee Report](#)**

Trustee Mullen provided an update regarding the Advisory Committee.

9. **Neighborhood Steering Committee Report** – Elizabeth Johnson, Senior Manager of Operations

Elizabeth Johnson, Senior Manager of Operations, appeared and spoke.

10. **Board President and Vice President Report** – Mike Kennedy, President, and Keegan Korf, Vice President

A. Board Officer Nominations (Resolution to approve Officers at June 21 Board meeting)

TRUSTEE VARAS EXITED THE MEETING AT 6:01 P.M.

President Kennedy stated that he and others met with Mayor Stothert last Friday regarding the Library projects and funding. The ribbon cutting for the new [Downtown Branch](#) is on Sunday, May 21 at 12:30 P.M.

Trustee Korf emphasized that board members should be using their Omaha Library email account for all Trustee-related communications.

Trustee Korf read a statement (emailed to all Trustees on May 9) in summary stating that, her employer previously had contractual work with Heritage Omaha, resulting in a perceived or real potential conflict of interest that was brought to her attention with the Board of Trustees in November 2021. The City of Omaha Law Department advised her to abstain from matters pertaining to Heritage Omaha and/or Community Information Trust at that time. Due to ethical and professional reasons, she abstained from many conversations related to Heritage Omaha and/or Community Information Trust because her employer was facilitating them. Trustee Korf stated that her employer's contract with Heritage Omaha expired on February 28, with transitional services finalized on April 7. Since this matter no longer results in perceived or real potential conflicts of interest, she can move forward with matters related to Heritage Omaha and/or Community Information Trust.

President Kennedy stated that if the Resolution amending the By-Laws is approved at the next meeting, the Board would have four (4) officers to vote/approve: President; Vice President; Treasurer; and Secretary. If the Resolution is not approved and the By-Laws remain unchanged, the Board will vote for three (3) officers: President; Vice President; and Secretary-Treasurer.

11. **Friends of Omaha Public Library** – Meghan Hope, President

Meghan Hope, President of Friends of Omaha Public Library, appeared and spoke.

12. **Omaha Public Library Foundation** – Wendy Townley, Executive Director

Wendy Townley, President of Omaha Public Library Foundation, appeared and spoke, highlighting items from her report. Tickets for the Foundation's 10th annual fundraiser *Between the Lines* featuring Molly Shannon and Susan Orlean will go on sale soon. For details and sponsorship opportunities, please visit the [Omaha Public Library Foundation's website](#).

13. **Library Liaison Reports** – Library Trustees

Trustee Korf provided updated Library Liaison assignments to the Trustees, encouraging all to visit their assigned branch(es) and connect with staff and patrons.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

14. **Finance Committee** – Korf (Chair), Kennedy, Mullen, Wilson

Trustee Korf briefed the Board on the status of the 2024 budget.

15. **Community Engagement Committee** – Barrett (Chair), Reddick, Varas

Trustee Barrett stated that the Community Engagement Committee met Monday at the Community Engagement Center with project partners for a Citywide Facilities Plan Community Input preview. The Trustees look forward to the Downtown Branch Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting on Sunday, and welcome the community to see the new library.

16. **Facilities Committee** – Mullen (Chair), Gales, Wang

Trustee Mullen provided an update regarding the Facilities Committee.

PUBLIC INPUT, COMMENTS, AND QUESTIONS

President Kennedy stated that any member of the public may address the Board on a topic of relevance to the Omaha Public Library, after identifying themselves by name and address for public record. Persons are to be brief and to limit themselves to five minutes or less. The President, or presiding officer, may use reasonable discretion to limit or extend a speaker's time to avoid redundancy, to assure a thorough public discussion on matters before the Board, and to end discussion. Trustees may engage in questions and discussion of any topic presented, but any desired action will be placed on a future agenda.

17. **Input, Comments, and Questions**

President Kennedy opened up the public comment period on Agenda Item 17.

The following person appeared and spoke:

- Connie Remkus, 5027 South 178th Street

No one else spoke, and the public comment period was closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

18. The Board may recess and go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, personnel issues, and/or any other matter allowed by law.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Reddick, SECOND by Wang, that the meeting of the Omaha Public Library Board of Trustees be adjourned.

ROLL CALL:

Yeas: Barrett, Gales, Korf, Mullen, Reddick, Wang, Wilson, President Kennedy

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED 8-0

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:45 P.M.

Jenna L. Garcia, Recording Secretary

Jen Rae Wang, Secretary-Treasurer