



**MEETING MINUTES  
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Wednesday, November 18, 2020  
Meeting of the Board  
6:30 PM via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Tracy Fulce, Rachel Hayman, Ruth Hays, Denia Hester, Shawn Iles, Margaret Lurie, Benjamin Schapiro and Terry Soto

**Members Absent:** Adam Goodman

**Staff Present:** Karen Danczak Lyons, Teri Campbell, John Devaney, Tim Longo, Jan Bojda and Heather Norborg

**Presiding Member:** Shawn Iles, President

**Call to order/Declaration of Quorum:** President Iles called the meeting to order when a quorum of Trustees was established at 6:33 p.m.

**Citizen Comment:** Written statement attached

**Consent Agenda:**

**A. Approval of the Bills and Payroll and Minutes of the October 21, 2020 Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Soto, the consent agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

**Information/Communications:** *Together, We are the Library*

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** Joint Task Force (update)

**A. Joint Task Force (Update)**

Assistant Director Campbell reported that during the last meeting of Racial Equity Task Force, members frankly interrogated EPL progress toward standing out in communications and whether our language and messaging resonate in the communities we intend to prioritize. They are eager to further this conversation at the next meeting. The RETF requested an update on the merger of Family Focus and CCS and the status of the Foster Center clearly reiterating advocacy for future collaboration at this site. There was also discussion of the cost and perceived need for a Technology and Book Mobile. Campbell and Trustees congratulated the internal EDI committee on their outstanding work facilitating racial equity curriculum in yearlong study including an outstanding all staff day training. Staff feedback will guide future policy and services.

**Library Director's Report:**

Executive Director Danczak Lyons - EPL has been thoughtful and strategic, about safety of staff and patrons. EPL remain opens while many consortium members and nearby systems have closed. We are following public health guidelines mandating safety protocols – staff are divided

into teams to limit interaction, all must wear masks properly and social distance, the number of patrons granted access to the building and number of public computers is limited as well as length of visit, and services are largely contactless. If the Governor mandates closure, we will pivot. We offer reasonable accommodations to the most vulnerable. We continue to regular, steady demand for the use of public computers and Wi-Fi.

**Staff Report:**

**A. Administrative Services Report**

Campbell welcomed two new Family Engagement Coordinators to the team – Carmen Francellno and Tracy Olasimbo. Hiring activity is continues. Expenditures have been reduced in anticipation of decreased revenues; revenues and expenditures are on pace to balance. The closure of CAMS and North branches are on pace to be completed on schedule.

**Board Report/Development:**

**Reimagine Campaign (Update)**

Trustee Lurie announced the kickoff of the Reimagine Campaign began with mailed letters. EPL anticipates a strong response and hopes to achieve the success of last year. Stay tuned for a Challenge Match on Giving Tuesday. Lurie encouraged the Trustees to help raise enthusiasm and thanked them in advance for their participation.

**State Per Capita Grant Requirements**

Campbell reported that the official application has not been posted, but IL State library contacts have indicated that the application will require accountability to the newly updated version 4.0 Serving Our Public, Standards for Illinois Public Libraries, and that the due date will be in March.

**Unfinished Business:**

**A. FY2021 Library Revenue Budget (For Approval)**

Upon motion made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Hayman, it was resolved to approve the FY2021 Library Revenue Budget by unanimous voice vote. The budget projects total revenue of \$9,272,467. Director Danczak Lyons welcomed the attendance of Trustees at the City Council meeting the following Monday as they deliberate approval of the City's total property tax levy, including the library portion.

**New Business:**

**A. Resolution 2020 – R1** providing for the budget and setting the annual tax levy for FY2021 (For Approval)

Upon motion made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Hays, it was resolved to approve the FY2021 Library Revenue Budget set the annual tax levy by unanimous voice vote.

**B. Approval of the 2021 Board Meeting Schedule** (Karen Danczak Lyons)

Upon motion made by Trustee Lurie and seconded by Trustee Schapiro, it was resolved to approve the amended 2021 Board meeting schedule with a September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting in lieu of the proposed September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting by unanimous voice vote.

**C. Approval of the 2021 Library Closing Schedule** (Karen Danczak Lyons)

Upon motion made by Trustee Fulce and seconded by Trustee Lurie, it was resolved to approve the 2021 Library closing schedule by unanimous voice vote.

**D. Review of 2021 Per Capita Grant Application Requirements** (Teri Campbell)

This matter was discussed during Board Report earlier in the agenda.

**E. Approval of December 24, 2020 closing**

Upon motion made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Hays, it was resolved to approve closing the library on December 24, 2020 by unanimous voice vote.

**Adjournment:**

**Approved 12.16.2020**

The motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Hays, seconded by Trustee Schapiro and approved by roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Terry Soto / Teri Campbell

# Public Comment Sign-In

Sign-in must be completed in advance of the Library Board meeting in order to be considered valid.

Registration will open when the agenda is published and will close when the meeting begins.

You may also submit written comments. Written testimony will be shared with the Board of Trustees and attached to the minutes.

The length of your comment will be determined by the number of speakers. Please unmute your audio when your name is called to speak, and adhere to the time limit. A chime will alert you that your time has ended. The next person will be called, and your audio will be muted. Disruption will result in removal from the meeting.

Email address \*

lneal@cityofevanston.org

Full Name

Lorena Neal

Are you an Evanston Resident? \*

Yes

No

In what ward do you live? \*

7th Ward



How would you like to make your public comment? \*

Phone In

Video Comment (through Zoom)

Written Statement (see below)

Other: .....

Please leave your phone number (for phoning in) or email (for video comment through zoom) so that we may contact you for your public comment. \*

lneal@cityofevanston.org .....

## Written Statement:

I have been asked by several other staff members to convey their concerns about the fact that the library has not announced a new closure plan to date. Gov. Pritzker has declared that Illinois goes back into Stage 3 on Friday, Nov. 20. The last time Illinois was in Phase 3, at a time when case numbers and hospitalizations were going DOWN, our library reopening plan had the building closed to the public, and limited staff inside for curbside pickup-related operations and other tasks: <https://www.epl.org/phased-reopening-plan/>. The LLL (adult services) department got an email today to say that sufficient numbers of patrons have called in to report that they are quarantined with COVID to require a new procedure for extending holds dates (and for specifically refusing to provide curbside service to people who are actively diagnosed with COVID) worked out between LLL and Circulation. And these are just the patrons who (a) know they are sick, and (b) aren't selfish enough to try to come in to get their books to pass their quarantine time without telling us - in other words, the tip of the iceberg.

The governor's order for the new Phase 3 in Illinois calls for "all office employees who are able to work from home to do so," and specifically closes all museums, cultural institutions, and recreation centers (although libraries are not specifically mentioned). All of the other libraries in the CCS consortium are either already closed (some doing curbside, some just closed), or will be by Friday.

There have also been numerous mask violations reported over the past few days. In the past 4 days, the 2nd floor has recorded 21 people either not wearing masks correctly, or not wearing them at all. There have been similar reports from staff on the 3rd floor. There have also been two incidents that required an entry in the security log this week, including a disturbed anti-masker who apparently wandered through the building without a mask at all on Monday, and had to be escorted out by security. One staff member reported to me that so many people pull down their masks as soon as staff are out of sight, it would require having someone walking the floors every 10 minutes to keep up with correcting them. Currently, floor sweeps only occurs once every 30 minutes, under "ideal" circumstances. There is not enough staff to do more frequent sweeps. That means that if patrons' masks are down or off, it could be for up to 30 minutes or more (if staff is helping patrons and can't do the sweep on time). Today, another staff member observed a patron pulling his mask up to cover his nose every time he entered their field of vision, leading them to believe that he wasn't wearing it (or wasn't wearing it properly) as soon as they couldn't see him. But because the staff member didn't actually see him NOT wearing the mask, they couldn't do anything about it. Whether staff can see patrons not wearing their masks or not is irrelevant - they are in the library, unmasked or improperly masked, for an unknown period of time. This is dangerous to other patrons as well as staff members.

One staff member asked the following: "Which services do we offer that are so essential that we need to risk staff lives to continue to offer them? Access to physical materials? We can offer curbside pickup again. Access to computers? We can close the other floors of the library and set up the limited computer lab in the community room which we operated at the end of July/beginning of August, or check out the laptops/hotspot combos we have to the few patrons that are coming in to use them. Printing and faxing? Other libraries have demonstrated that staff can print things for patrons and then have patrons pick them up at the door. We don't currently have a library social worker, and are referring social work related questions to other organizations anyway.

I want to know why I am continuing to put my life and my long-term health at risk to come in to work and be exposed to patrons who, in many cases, openly disdain our safety procedures. Is it because closing again would result in layoffs? Tell me, so that I know that I am risking my life so that I and my colleagues can keep

my job. I would at least know what the stakes are. Is it because the administration worries about backlash from library patrons unhappy about closing? That would be no different from the last time. I have suffered worse verbal abuse from upset library patrons during the first round of shutdowns than in the rest of my entire career in libraries.”

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These are the staff concerns that have been shared with me, and I am sharing them with the Board tonight.  
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