



MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, March 15, 2023
Meeting of the Board
6:30 PM
Main Library, Community Meeting Room and Remote

Members Present

Tracy Fulce, Arikpo Dada, Rachel Hayman, Shawn Iles, Margaret Lurie, Benjamin Schapiro, Russ Shubet, Terry Soto and Esther Wallen.

Members Absent

none

Staff Present

Heather Norborg, Jan Bojda, Jill Skwerski, John Devaney, Lea Hernandez-Solis and Wynn Shawver.

Presiding Member

Tracy Fulce, President

Call to order/Declaration of Quorum

President Fulce called the meeting to order when a quorum of Trustees was established at 6:34 p.m.

Citizen Comment

Elliot Zashin, 9th Ward

It appears that the Library has not been at all transparent about the reasons why it decided to retain Mr. Altamirano-Sanchez as a guard at the main branch after the January incident. The Library owes its patrons an explanation because people are upset and confused and cannot see any good reason why he was not fired. However, I am going to assume that the Library leadership is really concerned about Mr. Altamirano-Sanchez and does not just want to put him in out in the cold. Perhaps the Board wants to avoid litigation and unfavorable publicity, too. So I would recommend that the Library find a suitable training course (perhaps through GARE or another racial equity organization) and require Mr. Altamirano-Sanchez to complete it successfully as a condition of remaining a library employee. The library would pay any fees for attendance and continue to pay his salary as long as he attends regularly. I would hope this would benefit both Mr. Altamirano-Sanchez and the EPL, showing that it is a compassionate employer, as well as being concerned about its patrons.

Maria Tolpin, 6th Ward

No written comment

Christina Padilla, 3rd Ward

I am a longtime Evanston resident and have been a regular library patron for the past 25 years. I have a teenager who makes use of the 3rd floor Loft, and as a professional, regularly uses the library as a resource and destination for my elderly clients living with dementia. I love the library, and have relationships with multiple people who work there, and so I have been concerned about and closely following news of the aftermath of the January 9th incident involving a firearm in the library space. I find

myself more than a little baffled by the most recent news that the sole consequence to a library employee for not only carrying a firearm into the library against policy, but then wielding it in a manner that endangered patrons, has been the loss of four hours of paid time off. I have to believe that I am missing some part of the story, so I am here tonight to ask the Library to provide those missing pieces.

I am not a believer in punishment but I firmly believe in the value of experiencing the natural consequences of our decisions as a way to learn, grow, and make amends with those around us. I fail to see how the loss of a half day of vacation is the natural consequence of the behavior displayed by Mr. Antonio, nor how it makes amends with the patrons who were endangered or with the wider community. I don't claim to know what the best or most right consequence would be in this situation, but considering that Mr. Altamirano-Sanchez, a member of a highly vulnerable population who was in distress, is still incarcerated for assault over one month later, the consequences to Mr. Antonio, who violated the no-weapons policy, was working in a position of power, and endangered multiple individuals with a deadly weapon, appear egregiously out of balance. It also sends at best a lukewarm message to the community about the seriousness of the policy against bringing weapons into the library space. Would an average community member be permitted to violate the no-weapons policy and endanger other patrons with equally minimal consequences? How can library patrons, particularly members of vulnerable and underserved parts of our community, be confident in their future safety within the library space? Please, help me understand how the library is going to make this right. We deserve, and the library has a responsibility to provide, swift and concrete answers to these concerns.

Kirsten D'Aurelio, 4th Ward
No written comment

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the Bills and Payroll and Minutes of the February 15, 2023 Board Meeting. Upon motion made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Wallen, the consent agenda was approved.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Joint Task Force):

- A. Racial Equity Task Force (Distributed in Advance)

Library Director's Report

Written report provided in advance.

Staff Report:

Administrative Services Report (Distributed in Advance).

Board Reports:

- A. Development Committee
- B. Endowment Investment Committee
- C. Executive Committee
- D. Management & Policy Committee
- E. Board Development Committee
- F. Facilities Committee
- G. Transition Team/Interim Team/Search Team

Unfinished Business

none

New Business

- A. Upon the motion made by Trustee Hayman and seconded by Trustee Fulce, approve Budget Adjustment for Social Worker in the Library position.
- B. Upon the motion made by Trustee Wallen and seconded by Trustee Sotto, Approve of rubric to evaluate submitted proposals from executive search firms
- C. Upon the motion made by Trustee Wallen and seconded by Trustee Sotto, Approval of proposal review form for executive search firms.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Lurie and approved by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Submitted by: Terry Soto