

**MINUTES  
ELMHURST PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Tuesday, June 21, 2022  
Kossmann Room  
ELMLIB.ORG/VIRTUAL, 7:00 PM**

This meeting was held in the Kossmann Room.

President Susan Sadowski called the June 21, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:05 p.m. She stated the meeting was not virtual due to technical difficulties.

Board members in attendance in the Kossmann Room included: Marsha Baker, Ingrid Becton, Jane Chornij, Teresa Menolascino (arrived 7:10 p.m.,) Bill Ryan, and William Shanklin.

Trustees Taylor Holop and Carol Jacobsen were absent.

Also in attendance were Library Director Mary Beth Harper, Assistant Director Marcy Rodriguez, and Admin/HR Manager Rita Andreuccetti.

Visitors in attendance were: Laura Bennett, Chris Czarnowski, Justin Czarnowski, Rocio Czarnowski, Christopher Deardurff, Rosanne Deardurff, Brendan Gilboy, Rachael Gilboy, Steve Hipskind, Kim Kolbert, Bonni Ponticelli, and Rose Wilkes. There were also four children in attendance.

Board President Sadowski read the Public Participation at Board Meetings Policy.

Ms. Sadowski read a letter from patrons Justin and Rocio Czarnowski:

6/18/2022

Elmhurst Public Library  
125 S Prospect Ave  
Elmhurst, IL 60126

To the Board,

As taxpayers in the city of Elmhurst and longtime library patrons, we are writing to protest the 'Pride Month' display and associated craft activities (including the "rainbow pride window") in the children's section of the Elmhurst Public Library.

Flags, signs, book displays, and activities based on how adults experience sexual attraction and gender identity have no place in an open and public space for children.

We believe that minor children have the right to belong to a community that respects their innocence and allows families to have conversations about sex and sexual attraction privately, and only when parents deem it appropriate.

As parents, we should be able to bring our children to the public library without exposing them to displays of adult pride.

We ask you to immediately take down your "Pride Month" displays and associated crafts, starting with those placed in children's and young adults' sections.

It's time for the American public libraries to once again be a respectful space for young children to freely explore great ideas that unite and inspire us all, rather than places where controversial and divisive new ideological movements are given free rein to promote their theories and policy positions about sexuality to children without the consent or notification of parents.

Respectfully,



Justin and Rocio Czarnowski  
Elmhurst, IL  
jczarnusa@gmail.com  
630-708-0216

**CC:**

**Susan Sadowski**  
**Marsha Baker**  
**Carol Jacobsen**  
**Ingrid Becton**  
**Teresa Menolascino**  
**William Ryan**  
**Bill Shanklin**  
**Jane Chornij**  
**Taylor Holop**

Public comment:

Justin Czarnowski stated that he has lived in Elmhurst all his life. He has many fond memories of the Library. He and his wife Rocio have seven children. He was shocked and deeply saddened to see a pride rainbow craft for kids in the Kids' Library. According to search engine results, "The rainbow flag is a symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer pride." There is enough hypersexualization in the world already and his children do not need any more of it thrust upon them when they come to the children's department or at the main entrance. He said he is not here to say that sex is bad or dirty. On the contrary, sex is wonderful, but his children should not be confronted with the many facets of human sexuality every time they come to the Library. They are children after all. They have a right to their innocence. He said he loves his wife and it should be clear from his family size that they believe sex is beautiful, but his children do not need to learn about sex until an appropriate time that is determined by him and his wife. The Library has no right to plaster sexual material in front of their faces. Symbols have meaning. The pride rainbow craft is not just a cute kids' activity, but a symbol of various adult sexual lifestyles. This is abusive and an affront to their children's innocence. He and his wife have spoken to other families who will not come to the Library in June. Many said they intentionally avoid visiting the Library in the month of June because the pride displays are unavoidable and completely inappropriate for children. Although the celebration of pride aims to signal inclusivity, in reality they divide, isolate, and marginalize. He stated that he is aware that his views are likely at odds with ALA. He said that is okay because the Elmhurst Library belongs to the people of Elmhurst not to ALA. Trustees have been placed in a position of trust to watch over the Library. It is the Board's responsibility to do what is best for the local community regardless of what a faraway organization decides. He asks that the Library remove pride displays, activities, and craft from the children's department so that all can feel welcomed and their children's innocence is respected.

Kim Kolbert, 169 West Fremont, Elmhurst, stated that she has lived in Elmhurst for 24 years. She has two kids ages, 19 and 12. When her son was young she used to love coming to the Library in June. Now she will not bring her 12-year-old into the Kids' Library in June. She said that she agrees with all that Justin said.

Chris Czarnowski stated that he is Justin's brother. He has kids in town and two of them are here at the meeting today. He thanked the Board for their work. He said that this is not a political issue. It becomes so divisive. It's great that there are resources for everyone at the Library and that no one is trying to put that away. It's the targeting of a certain ideology to his kids and other people's kids in town. This is what people have a problem with. There are many other people that don't come to the Library. This is about age-appropriate content no matter what the content. There are plenty of other things that are not in the Kids' Library for good reason and this is one of them.

Chris Deardurff stated that he has lived in Elmhurst for 20 years. He thanked Justin and his brother. He agrees with what they said.

Rose Wilkes, 316 Ridgeland Ave., Elmhurst, stated that she has lived in Elmhurst for 35 years. She does not have children but she uses the Library. She said that when she sees these displays she turns the other way. She congratulated Justin and his brother and those who are standing up against this kind of display.

Steve Hipskind suggested that the Library should survey the community to see what the public would like. And if it's 90% of the public wants this, then this group maybe in the minority and that's reality. He doesn't believe that that is the reality, but doing a controlled survey would be a good telling to the Board to direct the Library to be more reflective of what the public wants.

Brendan Gilboy, 246 South Street, Elmhurst, stated his support for Justin's comments. He said that it's important to recognize appropriate boundaries for the innocence of children but he also thinks that the Board should consider what policy it has or should develop around the formal adoption of implicit or explicit endorsement of cultural ideologies. Displaying pride manners and pride flags is in his view an implicit endorsement and adoption of a cultural ideology that may or may not be reflective of the entire community. In addition to Justin's comments, he asks that the Board also consider that as well.

Bonni Ponticelli she lived in the community for many years. She has 4 kids and 5 grandkids. She has friends that are homosexuals that she loves. She is against kids doing projects that she believes they are trying to infiltrate their minds on homosexuality when they are just little children. They are innocent little people and she is against that.

Laura Bennett, 440 E. Webster, Elmhurst, has lived in Elmhurst for 35 years she has 5 kids. In the past, she has used the Library for her robotics club. She does not come to the Library in June. She believes it is detrimental to the kids. She would be interested in a poll to see if this is what the community really wants.

Rachael Gilboy, 246 South Street, Elmhurst asked who determines what goes in the display case. Director Harper stated that one of the displays cases is a community display case and groups can sign up to do a monthly display. Rachael asked if they wanted the Sacred Heart of Jesus display next June, how would they do that. Director Harper said she could fill out a form but that the Library can't guarantee a specific month.

Steve Hipskind asked if the group could get a public response to the survey. Director Harper stated that it can be added as an agenda item if approved by the Board President.

Ms. Sadowski thanked everyone for participating.

The first order of business was the approval of the Minutes of the May 17, 2022 Regular Board of Trustees Meeting. Bill Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the May 17, 2022 Regular Board of Trustees Meeting be approved as presented.

Bill Ryan seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

The next item of business was the approval of Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Bill Shanklin moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Executive Session Meeting Minutes dated May 17, 2022 be approved as presented.

Marsha Baker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next order of business was the approval of the June 21, 2022 Accounts Payable. Marsha Baker moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Accounts Payable be approved as presented.

Director Harper responded to questions about the invoices. Bill Ryan seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Director Harper discussed the financial reports. A property tax payment of \$880,122 was received. She stated that another payment is expected next month.

Ms. Harper reviewed the expenditure report. She reiterated that under Employee Benefits, the IMRF contribution rate has fallen from 12.5% to 7.9%. The line has been adjusted in next year's budget.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Harper stated that Summer Reading is in full swing with kids finishing their first 20 days of reading. She also mentioned that the Library was packed last Tuesday because of the power outages from the storms. People were looking for a place to work and get out of the heat. We opened up the meeting rooms to provide additional work space. The Kids' Library opened the programming room and set up crafts.

Ms. Harper also noted that she, along with Bryan Blank and Rita Perona, attended NeoCon at the Merchandise Mart. NeoCon is the large furniture showcase for work and public spaces. It's helpful to view the furniture and try it out before deciding to buy. They looked at lounge chairs and task chairs to replace furniture on the second floor that's original to the building.

In the President's Report, Ms. Sadowski reminded the Board that there is a Strategic Planning meeting starting at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The first order of Unfinished Business was the Strategic Plan. Director Harper stated that the all-day meeting will be held on June 22 to review the information collected and identify initiatives for the Library. Director Harper stated that the goal is to have the plan approved by the end of the year.

The first item of New Business was the Fund Balance Report. Director Harper reviewed the spreadsheet with the fund balances. The operating fund needs at least \$2,500,000 to bridge the gap between January and May, when the Library receives its first property tax payment.

The next order of New Business was the Draft of the 2023 Budget. Ms. Harper reviewed each line of the budget for 2023. Highlights from the revenue report include: a 0% increase in property tax collection, an increase of \$110,000 in replacement tax revenue, and a decrease of \$10,000 in copier revenue.

Under the expenditure report, Director Harper stated that the biggest portion of the budget is devoted to personnel. She noted that the Full-time and Part-time lines include a 4% merit raise increase for staff. In years past the merit increase has been 2%, but due to market conditions, organizations are giving more and we want to remain competitive. The Part-time line also includes funds to increase the minimum wage to \$15 in 2023 because Managers are having trouble hiring staff. The 4% merit raise increase will help widen the gap between minimum wage and staff members closest to the \$15 threshold. Director Harper stated that she wants to avoid wage compression, which occurs when there is little or no difference in the pay of existing staff and those newly hired staff regardless of experience, skills, grade, or longevity.

Other highlights from the expenditure report include: \$25,000 for Wifi Access Points, \$17,000 for new computer monitors, \$20,000 for exterior limestone cleaning, \$15,000 for outdoor painting, \$45,000 to replace fixtures, \$10,000 for concrete repairs. Overall there is a decrease of \$331,000 in the 2023 expenditure report from 2022. She asked the Board to prepare for further discussion at the July meeting.

The next order of New Business was the approval to close the Library for Staff Institute Day. Bill Ryan moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That the Library will be closed to the public for a Staff Institute Day on Friday, August 5, 2022.

Teresa Menolascino seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next order of New Business was the approval to purchase a New View Scan. Director Harper stated that this new MicroFilm viewer has newer components that will allow future compatibility with modern computers. Ingrid Becton moved:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Administrative Staff is authorized to purchase a New View Scan at a cost not to exceed \$8,465.

The motion carried.

The next order of New Business was the Director Review Materials. President Sadowski asked Trustees to return the completed review forms to her a week before the July meeting.

The first item of Other Business was a statement from Director Harper about renewing Board appointments. She noted that she has not heard back from Mayor Levin. She will keep the Board posted.

There being no Other Business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.