

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

BOULDER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Held: Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder, Colorado.

Attendance

The special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boulder Public Library District was called and held as shown above in accordance with the statutes of the State of Colorado. The following Trustees, having confirmed their qualifications to serve on the Board, were in attendance:

Katharine (Joni) Teter
Benita Duran
Sam Fuqua
Jennifer Yee
Doug Hamilton
Sylvia Wirba

Trustees Absent: Cara O'Brien (absence excused)

Also present were Kim J. Seter, Esq. and Marissa M. Peck, Esq. (via Zoom), Seter & Vander Wall, P.C.; David Farnan, Director of the Boulder Public Library; Jennifer Phares, Deputy Director of the Boulder Public Library; Chris Barge, Executive Director of the Boulder Library Foundation; and, Kelly Hansen, Legal Assistant at Seter & Vander Wall, P.C.

Call to Order

Trustee Teter called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. noting that a sufficient number of appointed trustees were present to create a quorum authorized to act on behalf of the District.

Public Comment

None.

Consider Approval of Minutes of August 29, 2023

Following discussion, and upon motion by Trustee Teter and seconded by Trustee Fuqua, the August 29, 2023 minutes were unanimously approved.

Review Employee Handbook

Mr. David Farnan presented the Draft Employee Handbook ("**Handbook**"). The Handbook is a heavily modified version of

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the Employee Council's ("**Council**") template. It incorporates staff feedback and survey results to better match the District's needs. The Handbook still needs to be reviewed by the Council's legal team, which will likely result in a few minor modifications.

Mr. Farnan requested feedback on the Handbook from the Board in advance of presenting it to the staff at the September 12th meeting. He anticipates that most of the staff feedback and questions will be focused on benefits and paid time off ("**PTO**").

Trustee Teter found the Handbook complex and bureaucratic, and suggested revising the language to make it more approachable. Mr. Farnan noted that this suggestion may be hard to implement given the difficulty of fitting several different policies into the document.

The Board indicated that it would like to see information in the Handbook regarding the difference between the City benefits the staff was receiving, and the District benefits it will receive once the transition is complete. Mr. Farnan indicated that the greatest differences between the policies are PTO accrual and sick leave. Notably, the Handbook responds to and satisfies all requirements under FMLI and other federal leave benefits, which have greatly expanded the definition of eligible leave.

Trustee Yee suggested changes to the table presented showing breakdowns between short-term and long-term disability leave. Trustee Teter pointed out several grammatical and spelling errors to be corrected.

Next, the Board discussed the most effective policy approach to achieve the living wage standards required by the City of Boulder and the District's goals. The conversation began with a discussion of benefits such as bonuses and raises.

Mr. Farnan began with an explanation of the difference between the City's structure and the proposed District structure. First, the City has the advantage of time as it develops its budgets for the following budget year. The value of all bonuses, raises, and benefits offered by the City are calculated far in advance of the new budget year, and are bolstered by historical data from years past. The District does not have the ability to set its budget so far in advance, nor does it have the same historical perspective

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that the City does. Second, the City uses performance based metrics to award its bonuses. For example, a City staff member may get a 3% bonus for a “good” job, and a 3.2% bonus for an “outstanding” job. The monetary difference between achieving these performance categories or levels is negligible, and thus the bonus structure fails to incentivize staff to do their job well. The District’s plan distributes a 5% bonus among all staff equally, and serves as a mechanism to move lower-level staff closer to a livable wage. Following this explanation, Trustee Teter requested that this difference be communicated in a simple manner. She also requested that compensation be represented in the table summarizing bonus benefits, as it is currently not included.

Next, the Board’s discussion turned to a conversation about wage increases. The City utilizes the same performance-based bonus structure to determine the percentage wage increase each staff member will get. The District plan awards the same amount of money to every staff member, regardless of pay rate. This will be another mechanism to rapidly redress the low median and average wage of staff, bringing staff closer to a livable wage. Across all pay tranches, the Library staff strongly supports this plan. Mr. Farnan did flag the potential challenge of wage compression and employee retention, but the Board did not take any action on the matter.

The Board then entered into a conversation about the prudence of Board members attending the Employee Handbook presentation staff meeting on September 12th. On one hand, Board participation may deter staff from speaking candidly about their self-interests in relation to these matters. On the other hand, staff tend to appreciate the Board’s visibility and participation. Upon motion made by Trustee Teter, seconded by Trustee Fuqua, the Board voted to unanimously permit two Board members to attend the September 12th meeting, and for the meeting to be recorded for the rest of the Board to review.

Mr. Farnan then finished his review of the employee handbook and answered questions from the Board.

Review 2024 Revenue
Report from County
Treasurer & 2024 Budget

Mr. Farnan received estimated total assessed property tax values from the Assessor’s office, and feels positive about the numbers, especially given the 30% increase in total assessed property tax values from 2023. He outlined trends and the ways in which those trends impact budget planning.

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Trustee Teter provided a further breakdown of the taxable property, which is composed of 50% commercial properties, many of which are owned by out-of-state companies/operators.

Mr. Farnan emphasized that presenting the budget highlights in a digestible format is his top priority, and requested feedback on the infographic from the Board. The Board suggested various aesthetic and grammatical changes.

Mr. Chris Barge from the Boulder Public Library Foundation (“**Foundation**”) indicated the Foundation’s desire to assist and collaborate with the District in the transition process.

Director Update

None.

Review/Approve Rules for Public Participation in Board Meetings

Trustee Teter gave an overview of the participation rules as adopted by the Library Commission, and requested feedback from the Board on the rules as presented. Trustee Duran requested that a second, streamlined document be developed with these rules, for use by the general public. Trustee Wirba, however, emphasized the need to reduce complexity and bureaucracy, which is better achieved with just one document. The Board determined that it would produce a singular document.

The Board reviewed the Rules of Meeting Procedure Document, and upon motion by Trustee Yee and seconded by Trustee Wirba, adopted the policy with the following modifications discussed.

Subcommittee Updates

None.

Trustee Matters

None.

Legal Counsel Status Report

Mr. Seter did not have any updates on the Legal Status Report. He relayed his recent conversation with the City attorney regarding Library volunteers. The City will give notice to volunteers that they are no longer city volunteers, but does not have a date at which this will happen. At this point, the District will need to develop a process for establishing these individuals as District volunteers.

The Board hopes to run the volunteer program jointly with the

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City in order to preserve the unified management of volunteers. Discussion ensued regarding the best way to manage this transition, with a Board emphasis on successfully supporting the volunteer force.

Executive Session

At approximately 7:55 p.m. Trustee Hamilton moved the Board of Trustees to enter into executive session as allowed by Section 24-6-402 (4), CRS for a conference with the attorney on specific legal matters and to determine matters that are subject to negotiations concerning the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City and County as allowed by subsections (4) (b) and (e). Upon second by Trustee Wirba and unanimous vote, the Board entered executive session for the above-stated purposes. The Board did not take formal action nor did it adopt any policy, rule, or regulation while in executive session.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.



Secretary for the Meeting