



**CITY OF NOVI LIBRARY BOARD
MINUTES, VIRTUAL MEETING
June 24, 2021**

Call to Order by President, Kathy Crawford

The meeting was held virtually with assistance from the City of Novi. The meeting was called to order by Kathy Crawford, President, at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call by Secretary, Brian Bartlett

1. Library Board – All members were present and stated their location.

Kathy Crawford, President
Kat Dooley, Vice- President
Brian Bartlett, Secretary
Sreeny Cherukuri, Board Member
Tara Michener, Board Member
Geoffrey Wood, Treasurer
Torry Yu, Board Member

Student Representatives

Sarah Chang (left virtual meeting at 7:28 pm)
Tarun Tangirala (left virtual meeting at 7:28 pm)

Library Staff

Julie Farkas, Director
Barbara Cook, Bookkeeper

Library Attorney

Tom Schultz
Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler

Approval of Agenda

President Crawford added item E – Juneteenth under President's Report. Trustee Michener added item 10 – Under Matters for Board Action - Amendment to add Juneteenth to the list of Holiday's in the Novi Public Library employee handbook.

A motion was made to approve the Agenda as amended.

1st – Trustee Michener

2nd – Trustee Dooley

Roll Call Vote was taken. 7 yes votes. Motion passes unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of:
 - A. May 27, 2021 – Regular Meeting
2. Approve Claims and Warrants of:
 - A. Accounts 268 and 269 (#603)

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda (items 1 and 2 above) as presented.

1st- Trustee Dooley

2nd- Trustee Michener

Roll Call Vote was taken. 7 yes votes. Motion passes unanimously.

Presentations

1. Eva Sabolcik, Support Services Supervisor Outreach: Will discuss the soft opening of the Lakeshore Lending Library. Grand Opening scheduled for Wednesday, July 7th 6-8pm.
 - a. Eva discussed the Lakeshore Lending Library Kiosk; the first self-serving library kiosk in Michigan. Guest can check out up to 5 items with their Novi library card.
 - b. There is a how to use video posted on the Lakeshore Lending Library webpage. Also, there are directions on how to check out and return items, next to the self-service screen, at the kiosk.

Trustee Yu has been receiving positive feedback from the community about the Lakeshore Lending Library. Community members in the North End have also inquired about expanding services to include remote ability to pick up holds and return items.

Reports

1. Student Representatives Report

On page 23 of the June Board packet. The June meeting is the last official meeting for the student representatives and they have been invited to return in July to present their successful year in review.
2. President's Report (Kathy Crawford)
 - A. 2019-2022 Strategic Planning Goals – page 24
 - B. 2020-2021 Goals Document Update – N/A
 - C. Library Board Retreat Scheduled for: Saturday, June 26, 2021 from 10:00am-2:30pm
 - D. Library Board Committee Assignments Chart 21/22 – page 25
 - E. Juneteenth
 - a. President Crawford commented that President Biden declared Juneteenth a Federal Holiday. She said that Juneteenth has been a topic of discussion at the Library DEI committee and at the listening session. She would like for the policy and finance committees to meet and revisit whether Juneteenth could be added as a paid Holiday for Library staff. Additionally, she would like the committees to bring their recommendation to the July Board meeting. She understands that some of the Board members would like a decision tonight because this issue has been discussed for over a year. However, some members of the Board did not have the benefit of that discussion and that debate.

President Crawford said that boards, commissions, committees have a process for a reason. There is a responsibility to over 60,000 residents of Novi and to the people and organizations that support the Library financially. Primary responsibility of making reasoned decisions after discussion, debate and thoughtful consideration is the primary responsibility of the Board. Therefore, surprise motions and knee jerk votes create a negative atmosphere and sometimes

create animosity; that is precisely what has created unnecessary conflicts on the Board in the past. It is Kathy's hope and many others in the community's hope that this Board can move past the discord of the past.

3. Treasurer's Report (Geoffrey Wood)- pages 26-37

A. 2020-2021 Library Budget Fund 268

The 2020-2021 Library Fund 268 budget (COVID column) calls for revenue of \$3,123,886 with expenditures of \$3,167,505 consuming \$43,619 of the fund balance.

B. 2020-2021 Contributed Fund Budget 269

The 2020-2021 Library Contributed Fund 269 budget (COVID column) calls for revenue of \$46,500 and expenditures of \$51,050 consuming \$4,550 of the fund balance.

C. Financial Report - May 2021

On page 30 of the June Board packet.

D. Library Fund 268 Expenditure and Revenue Report ending May 31, 2021

Revenue ending May 31, 2021 was \$3,175,024.

Expenditures ending May 31, 2021 was \$2,631,639.

E. Library Fund 269 Contributed Fund ending May 31, 2021

Revenue ending May 31, 2021 was \$34,994.

Expenditures ending May 31, 2021 was \$13,215.

F. Balance Sheets for Funds 268 and 269 as of May 31, 2021

Ending Fund Balance for Fund 268 as of May 31, 2021 was \$2,824,883

Ending Fund Balance for Fund 269 as of May 31, 2021 was \$1,728,758

Director Farkas commented that the answer to Trustee Michener's question regarding the Defined Contribution account, from the last board meeting, can be found on page 38 of the June Board meeting.

4. Director's Report (Julie Farkas)

On pages 38-61 of the June Board packet.

Staff members celebrating anniversaries for July are:

- Keith Perfect – Facilities - 9 years
- Lisa Brinkman - Support Services- 5 years
- Donna Filipiak- Support Services- 5 years
- Tracey Pelletier- Support Services – 4 years
- Barbara Cook- Administration– 3 years
- Sarah Vander – Information Services – 3 years
- Dana Brataniec – Administration – 2 years

A. Information Technology Report (pages 62-63)

B. Facilities Report (pages 63)

C. Information Services Report (pages 64-67)

D. Support Services Report (pages 68-70)

E. Library Usage Statistics Report (pages 71-79)

F. Friends of Novi Library – (pages 80-83)

G. City of Novi Historical Commission – (pages 84-87)

Director Farkas commented that the Novi Public Library will partner with Novi Community Schools to participate in OverDrive's Public Library Connect Program. OverDrive is one of the libraries digital distributors of eBooks, audiobooks and online magazines. More information can be found on page 38.

On page 42 is information about the Butterfly Garden Wall. A new donation opportunity for the community.

Trustee Cherukuri asked about what percentage of high school students do not have a public library card. Director Farkas will get this information for Trustee Cherukuri.

Matters for Library Board Action

1. Cease fine free exception status for materials returned late, due to Pandemic, beginning Tuesday, September 7, 2021. (Finance Committee)

A motion was made to cease fine free exception status for materials returned late, due to Pandemic, beginning Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

1st- Trustee Cherukuri

2nd- Trustee Dooley

Discussion: Trustee Bartlett explained that the Finance Committee discussed this motion. He said the average fees (fines) that were due to the Novi Library were \$2.00 per library card, which is not a tremendous amount of dollars from that standpoint. Also, with this consideration, fees will not be removed for lost or missing materials which encompasses a larger dollar amount owed. Additionally, the library has no control over fines charged to other libraries that are checked out with the Novi Library card.

Trustee Michener clarified that fines represent amounts owed to the library for books that are overdue and the term fees is for lost materials. Trustee Michener discussed fines charged to library guests and cited examples and recommendations from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity in libraries. She defined individual, institutional and structural racism. Based on her research, racial equity and inclusion must be at the forefront of how libraries form policies. Trustee Michener provided an example where staff judgement can be used in certain areas such as waiving library fines and this means that implicit bias may play a role in the decision. Also, she added that there is a sense of shame that comes with not being able to pay a fine, along with a feeling of being blocked from the library, which contribute to systemic barriers. Trustee Michener said that most library professionals agree that fine free is the way to go. Also, fines that accrue can put a hardship on guests that are struggling. Also, Trustee Michener said that the Novi school district recognizes there are disparities and gives away food without any questions asked.

Trustee Cherukuri thanked Maryann Zurmuehlen for providing data on the demographics and characteristics of cardholders with fines. He said in an ideal world there would be no fines, utility bills, parking tickets, etc... but that is not reality. Trustee Cherukuri said that a library card is a child's first independent relationship with a government entity. He wants that relationship to be approached with respect and responsibility. He added that the data shows that few of the blocked cards are actually children and the worst offenders are mostly adults in his age group. Going fine free only covers Novi Library books and does not cover the vast majority of TLN network books. Also, with going fine free a vast majority of this expenditure is recovered from the middle class. Renewing books is not at the discretion of the library staff and it is done automatically through the system. Appeals can be made to library management for special cases and card suspensions are flushed after 2 years. He said the library is approaching this issue

in a way that is much more targeted and financially effective and he does not think fine free is advisable for the community.

Trustee Dooley asked Director Farkas if (during the year of COVID when the library went fine free) there was a significant impact with regards to diminishing any services or value to the community, while the library was not collecting those fines. Director Farkas said there was not and in fact the library tried to enhance and add more ways to connect with the community better during the COVID restrictions. Trustee Dooley said the library was not able to take in those fines (during COVID) and although restrictions were in place in regards to visitation to the library, the value in terms of access to books, programming, etc... were not detracted from or diminished in any way. Therefore, there is proof now that the library was able to conduct business despite the circumstances of COVID and actually add more value with podcasts, etc... because of this Trustee Dooley does not believe the library needs to rely on the fines revenue anymore. She agrees with all Trustees that spoke so far on fees; that fees will continue to be incurred on lost materials. She would like to remain fine free and not start to collect fines again.

Trustee Yu one hundred percent agrees with what Trustee Dooley just explained. When going fine free was brought up originally during budgeting time a couple years back, he voted no because he wanted to see this in action and now this was implemented (fine-free) as a good faith effort. Trustee Yu said that students do struggle to get fines paid off and he would like to not see these student accounts blocked, citing the bigger goal is to get the materials back, so he does not see a purpose in charging late fines for overdue materials.

President Crawford asked if a person has extenuating circumstances if the library has a procedure in place for these guests. Director Farkas said the staff works very hard to be equitable and they have allowed for exceptions. President Crawford said that in the past, working with community action groups has enforced her concept of responsibility of having a borrowed book. It is easy in this busy world to forget that a book is due, but she personally has always felt a degree of responsibility to the library property.

Director Farkas personally has always been in favor of going fine free for reasons of good will to the community and embracing a barrier-free environment, which fits in with the strategic planning and making the library more barrier free. However, her financial concern is that during the COVID year although the library did not have the fine revenue come in, the library did not experience normal expenditures during that time frame. So there is no apples to apples comparison to take away from that year.

Trustee Bartlett discussed TLN network implications with Novi going fine free. If a patron through TLN has borrowed a non-Novu item normal fines would accrue and be paid to the borrowing library. Only Novi materials for Novi patrons would be fine free.

Trustee Dooley asked how much data would be required to make the apples to apples comparison. The motion as it stands, if approved allows the library to start collecting fines again beginning September, with the start of the school year. Trustee Dooley asked if the makers of the motion would consider extending the time before the fines start up again to gather an apples to apples comparison.

Trustee Bartlett was interested in a number of different measurements where the Board could understand the distribution of fines within the library network, the distribution of fines to other libraries and the liability situation where the library has to collect a fine for another library in the TLN network. He added that the library currently does not have that number. Trustee Bartlett

would like to see these numbers if all would go back to normal. Fine free is not a tabled issue forever.

Trustee Michener appreciates the comments from Director Farkas and Trustee Dooley. She wants to make sure the humanity piece is also a measurement and not entirely dollars and cents. She added that personal situations change and one situation is not always relatable to everyone. Trustee Michener wanted to address discrimination bias which is in the research that she read. For example, in one situation a person sympathizes with a sick person that is unable to pay the fines, but not with the person who was unable to get to the library due to a transportation issue. This example could lead to shaming for the person who had the transportation challenges. Trustee Michener is interested in a trial for fine free as recommended by Trustee Dooley and Bartlett. Trustee Michener recommends a fine free trial period for 6 months from, July – Dec, 2021 and the library would not be locked into fine-free and the Board can re-evaluate for January 2022. Her preference is fine free, but she is willing to work with the Trustees.

Trustee Bartlett suggested to the maker of the motion (Trustee Cherukuri) whether the board can amend the motion to remain fine free until the end of the year with fines being reevaluated at the January meeting.

Trustee Cherukuri is concern about finances and the opportunity cost that does affect some of the disadvantaged people. For example, less hiring of part-time people due to COVID, creating a reduction in part time salaries. If fines go away permanently and are not collected the money (approximately \$60,000) goes back to the middle class, creating a loss of potential job opportunities due to positions not being filled. He does not believe that this is a good use of the \$60,000 and believes little of that would even benefit the disadvantaged people and he prefers to stay with the original motion.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion failed. 3 yes votes and 4 no votes.

Yes Votes: Wood, Bartlett, Cherukuri

No Votes: Trustee's Michener, Yu, Crawford, Dooley

Director Crawford asked if a Board Member would like to make a new motion.

Trustee Michener made a motion to provide our library community, patrons and staff an opportunity for a 6 month trial for fine-free from July, 2021 – Jan. 2022. Director Farkas clarified the time frame, which is the 6 months of July-Dec., 2021.

1st-Trustee Michener

2nd- Trustee Dooley

Discussion: Trustee Michener said this is a really good opportunity for the Board. She said that people are struggling and the middle class is shrinking. It is the Board's responsibility to serve in the best way possible and libraries are free and open to all.

Roll Call Vote was taken. 7 yes votes. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Approve the expenditure for Parking Lot maintenance in account 976.100 Capital Outlay in the amount of \$10,700.00 with A&R Sealcoating for fiscal year 21/22. (Finance Committee)

A motion was made to approve the approve the expenditure for Parking Lot maintenance in account 976.100 Capital Outlay in the amount of \$10,700.00 with A&R Sealcoating for fiscal year 21/22. (Finance Committee).

1st- Trustee Bartlett

2nd- Trustee Michener

Discussion: Trustee Bartlett explained the motion was discussed in the finance committee and the original quote was less prior to COVID. He stated that asphalt increased unexpectedly, during COVID, by approximately 30 percent and asphalt is continually increasing as petroleum increases. He encourages all Board members to support this motion.

Trustee Cherukuri researched this and checked to see if the schools could coordinate efforts for better pricing. He discovered that the schools do crack filling and not seal coating as part of their maintenance.

Director Farkas commented that City employees recommended crack filling and seal coating and because it is a City building she does look to them for estimates/recommendations. She did look to see if there was a coordination opportunity with the City and they did provide companies that have done work in the past. This was not a bid because it was under the \$15,000 threshold.

Trustee Dooley finds the bid competitive and is in favor of the motion.

Director Farkas clarified that this is not a full seal coating of the entire parking lot, just fixing areas where cracks need filled and seal coated.

Trustee Michener is in favor of keeping up maintenance in order to put the library building and grounds in a better place to avoid long term costs.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passes with 7 yes votes.

3. Approve the expenditure for a 5 year maintenance agreement with Envisionware, vendor for Lakeshore Lending Library Kiosk, in account 734.000 Computer Software/Licensing in the amount of \$27,720 for fiscal year 21/22.

A motion was made to approve the expenditure for a 5 year maintenance agreement with Envisionware, vendor for Lakeshore Lending Library Kiosk, in account 734.000 Computer Software/Licensing in the amount of \$27,720 for fiscal year 21/22.

1st- Trustee Dooley
2nd- Trustee Bartlett

Discussion: None

Roll Call vote was taken and the motion passes unanimously with 7 yes votes.

4. Create an email address that includes ALL library board members as recipients and can be sent as one email; make available on the libraries website for public use. (DEI Committee recommendation)

A motion was made to create an email address that includes ALL library board members as recipients and can be sent as one email; make available on the libraries website for public use

1st- Trustee Cherukuri
2nd-Trustee Yu

Discussion: Trustee Dooley asked if this includes the entire board on the DEI email. Director Farkas said this is an email that would go to all 7 Trustees.

Trustee Michener wanted clarification that this does not eliminate the DEI email and Director Farkas said nothing is taken away and this just adds another email group which includes all 7 Board members.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with 7 yes votes.

5. Approve additional library closings for calendar year 2022

A motion was made to approve additional closings for calendar year 2022 with minor corrections made in discussion below.

1st- Trustee Yu

2nd- Trustee Dooley

Discussion: Trustee Michener pointed out minor changes to the document on page 43, in parenthesis the wording says Christmas Day for the 24th instead of Christmas Eve Day and the 25th shows closed instead of Christmas Day. Director Farkas will correct.

Trustee Dooley wanted clarification on the Friends event. It is not being held in 2021 but the event is planned for 2022. Director Farkas addressed the note at the bottom of the closures requesting that the February 24th meeting be held on February 17th due to a Directors schedule conflict.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passes unanimously with 7 yes votes.

6. Approve 2nd Draft: Charges for Damaged, Destroyed or Lost Materials (Notes: Only approve this policy if the Board is not charging late fees on materials)

A motion was made to approve 2nd draft of this policy - Charges for Damaged, Destroyed or Lost Materials (Notes: Only approve this policy if the Board is not charging late fees on materials). Updated with fine free dates as discussed below.)

1st- Trustee Bartlett

2nd-Trustee Michener

Discussion: Director Farkas clarified that since the Board is not charging fines, at this time, then this policy would need updated to reflect not charging for overdue fines on materials. Trustee Cherukuri expressed that a date was identified in an earlier motion, when the board extended fine free through and asked if that date should be reflected on this policy. Director Farkas said thank you and yes this policy needs updated to include the extended date that fines will not be collected through. Director Farkas will update the policy to reflect no fines from July –Dec 2021. Attorney Schultz suggested that the maker of the motion and the 2nd, are asked if they agree with the discussed changes to the 2nd draft of the policy. Both Trustees are in agreement.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with 7 yes votes.

7. Approve 2nd Draft: Distributions and Postings (Reviewed by attorney, staff and Policy Committee)

A motion was made to approve 2nd Draft: Distributions and Postings (Reviewed by attorney, staff and Policy Committee)

1st- Trustee Michener

2nd-Trustee Dooley

Discussion: Director Farkas noted that minor grammatical changes were made to the document.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with 7 yes votes.

8. Approve 2nd Draft: Unattended Child Policy (Reviewed by attorney, staff and Policy Committee)

A motion was made to approve 2nd Draft: Unattended Child Policy (Reviewed by attorney, staff and Policy Committee) as amended in discussion below.

1st- Trustee Wood

2nd-Trustee Yu

Discussion: Trustee Michener suggests amending point 7 to if any child 12 years or older has not been picked up at closing time staff will contact public safety to request assistance. She said that if you are under 12 you have to be accompanied by an adult at the library, so there is already someone at the Library with them. Director Farkas clarified that a child 12 years of age or older can be at the library without supervision and if the staff runs into a situation with a child under the age of 12 is at the library, at closing, without supervision, the library staff will call public safety for assistance. The attorney, Tom S., noted point 6 is addressing children 12 years and older. Point 7 is really about children 12 years and under. He thinks what is causing Trustee Michener's comment is the part about being picked up, not the age category. He suggested phrases the sentence different, for example if a child under 12 years is at the library unattended (without supervision), at closing time, the staff will call public safety. Keeping points 6 and 7 age groups the same. President Crawford asked the maker of the motion and the second if they agreed with the change and they both agreed.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with 7 yes votes.

9. Approve 2nd Draft: Campaigning, Petitioning, Interviewing and Similar Activities (Approved by attorney, staff and Policy Committee)

A motion was made to approve the 2nd Draft: Campaigning, Petitioning, Interviewing and Similar Activities (Approved by attorney, staff and Policy Committee)

1st- Trustee Dooley

2nd-Trustee Michener

Discussion: Trustee Cherukuri noted the policy is all red and asked if there is a current policy on this. Director Farkas included the draft in the last packet and the policy is similar; just cleaned up. Additionally, it was reviewed by Policy Committee and there did not seem to be many discrepancies or concerns.

Roll Call Vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with 7 yes votes.

10. Approve Juneteenth to be added to the employee handbook to the list of Library Holidays. (this would be a paid Holiday, as all Holidays are paid in the handbook)

1st- Trustee Michener

2nd-Trustee Dooley

Discussion:

Trustee Michener said this is a passion point for her, the entire community and this is an American issue. She said many board members have listened to the listening session and have heard the participant's passion for this and their turmoil with the Board's going back and forth on this topic. She said that the Board needs to do right for the community and honor this Holiday, like this country has. Trustee Michener said this all happened on American soil where Black people dedicated their lives freely and many people can relate to how important that is. She said as the longest Board member, she has seen a lot of camaraderie around a lot of issues and she is saddened that this has not been taken in the same way. She said it is a small gesture to make things right and aligned. She said be careful not to micro-aggress each other and she has been

waiting a year for this and it is not a knee jerk reaction for her. It is true Independence Day for many people and delaying is not acceptable. She implores the Board to be fair, equitable and inclusive and she implores the Board to say yes.

President Crawford addressed that the knee jerk reaction statement she made earlier is in regards to other motions made throughout the previous year and not about Juneteenth. She encourages members take time and give thoughtful consideration when bringing forth motions. This Board is relatively new and President Crawford likes to follow a process. The process she believes the Board is best served by is going to the committees and having them bring forward the recommendations. She has no problem with the Holiday, believes it is a part of American History. But she encourages following a processes by going to the Policy and Finance Committees for recommendations to move forward at the next meeting.

Trustee Bartlett discussed the paid Holidays offered to staff and would like that compared to what the offering is in the country. Director Farkas clarified that the library currently offers 10 paid Holidays to the staff; one of which is a floating Holiday for the month of November for Veterans Day. Trustee Bartlett said according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics the number of paid Holidays offered to hourly employees in the United States is 7.6 days, for professionals it is 8.5 days; both which the library is over. Trustee Bartlett is in support of moving the floating Holiday for Juneteenth. Holidays are different throughout the world, some US businesses offer 9 and in Germany they offer 20 paid Holidays. He feels 10 Holidays is a generous package compared to standards inside the country.

Trustee Dooley did some research on packages offered by other libraries. She reviewed class VI libraries that are city libraries and not district libraries. She reviewed hours that other class VI libraries (such as Detroit, Grand Rapids) are open and determined that Novi is open significantly more. The Novi Library is open 7 days a week, M-Th for 11 hours, Fri & Sat 8 hours and Sunday 6 hours a day, which is 66 hours a week and 344 days for the year. In the private sector, a typical salaried employee, in a year, works 2,080 core hours. Library core hours are approximately 3,102 not including added events or programs. She would like to include how much more the staff works and how many more hours the library is open, to be considered when it comes to reviewing packages offered. Trustee Dooley also added that Rochester Hills has 31 days off and Novi is not even close to that. She said on top of that the Novi Library has lots of amenities and value that it brings to the community. She is imploring the Board that adding one more paid Holiday is justified beyond the actual understanding of the Holiday and the Board knows where Trustee Dooley stands with that. She believes it is justified from a benefits package and she wants to add one more paid Holiday.

Trustee Cherukuri believes this is an important Holiday for America and he does support the idea. Respectfully he disagreed with two things in Trustee Dooley's analysis, which compares the opening of the library to the hours an employee works and employees are not expected to work 3,102 hours a year. He thinks it is not fair to benchmark other libraries and Novi is responsible to the taxpayers. He said there are an increasing amount of benefits accruing to public sector employees which do not accrue to the private sector. Novi Library has 10 Holidays, 12 sick days and 6 personal leave days and vacation from 10 to 25 days depending on seniority. He supports what President Crawford said about going through the process and he believes that the Board can get there and achieve this in an amicable way.

Trustee Dooley appreciates Trustee Cherukuri's insight and she is obviously aware that the staff does not work an employee the entire 3,100 hours a year. However, it is important to look at the other libraries. Novi has over 60,000 plus taxpayers and some of the other communities she

reviewed in the same class are significantly larger and yet they open and offer less. Also, comparing government to private sector is not a fair comparison. There is no comparison in terms of pay between these sectors, the benefits lie in the perks such as days off, Holidays, and benefits. Private Sector employees make way more compensation, have more opportunity for growth and that is not even including their benefits package.

Trustee Michener as member of the Black community and having ancestors that gave free labor to this country and are a part of the fabric of this country, to hear some of the debates around this topic is heart wrenching for her. She in the past year has been torn apart by so many semantics with approving this Holiday, as it was approved as a Holiday then taken away. She represents more than herself as a member of the board. Trustee Michener said that the libraries new HR Specialist wrote a letter today saying she listened to the listening session and she has researched and the Board definitely needs to do this. Trustee Michener said that the library HR specialist is an expert in DEI like herself. When the board is arguing labor over people who have worked in this country for free it feels ironic and unfair to her. Trustee Michener said she is only asking for a paid Holiday, and does not believe it is about money because this library has so much wealth. She wants the Board to honor this commitment and by not doing so sends a message to the community; this has been delayed for a year. Trustee Michener said that every person on the DEI Committee is for this, except Trustee Cherukuri.

Trustee Cherukuri said the perception that the public sector is less compensated is an outdated concept, studies have shown across the board that when you look at the benefits package, the quality of benefits, the retirement plan, and civil service benefits, etc... they vastly exceed what people get in the private sector. Beyond that Novi is a diverse economic community not all parents work for the big three corporations; it is a top to bottom community that also has plenty of parents working in blue collar jobs. Trustee Cherukuri wanted to clarify what Trustee Michener said and he said that everyone on the DEI Committee agreed to make Juneteenth a paid Holiday and the difference was that they could not agree on how to pay for it. He said it is not disrespectful to ask how to pay for something, as a Trustee they are entrusted with this. Trustee Cherukuri said that by failing to follow the process a poorly formed resolution was passed which has caused a lot of this angst. He said that people are working in the right direction but you have to let them work.

Trustee Michener said it was not a poorly formed motion and finds that offensive. When she brought it to the table it was discussed and it was quickly adapted. She said she represents every Black and non-Black person that believes in it. She recommends Trustee Cherukuri watch the library video.

Roll Call Vote was taken and motion failed. 3 yes votes and 4 no votes.

Yes Votes: Trustees Michener, Dooley, Yu

No Votes: Trustees Cherukuri, Crawford, Bartlett, Wood

Public Comment

President Crawford asked that remarks be limited to those pertaining to matters before the Board, to Board business or policy, or to issues of community concern or interest. While comment upon the action, inaction, or performance of the Board, the Trustees, employees, and consultants is allowed, inappropriate, profane, vulgar, or abusive language and personal attacks will not be tolerated. She asked Citizens to state their first, last name and Novi address.

Tia Marie Sanders, PO Box 107 Novi, MI. Tia Marie thanked Tara Michener for continuing to advocate for what she says the country understands and the planet understands but the newly appointed Board

members, whether they are able to articulate that they understand it or not, but she does know that they understand anti-Blackness. She said this process has been the most painful that she has ever gone through as a citizen of this City. She has sat through this and other Board calls and says she has listened to micro-aggressions, exceptions being made when it benefits those that are not Black and micro-aggressions towards the Black community. She said she has every single time come on these calls over the last year looking, searching, hoping, wishing, praying that based on just what has happened in this last year to citizens of this community that there would be some other kind of understanding. Tia Marie just listened to the recent comments about paying for Juneteenth and comments about private sector making as much money as the public sector. She said if the board is going to pull out those stats they need to go one more step deeper and understand that in the public sector Black people in Michigan make up 60% and yet they make the least amount of money; under \$30,000. She said in the private sector Black people make up 45% of the private sector and still make under \$30,000. She told the Board not to use another statistic to talk about what is comparative, when they do not understand Blackness. She said all that they have continued to do, as a Board, is continue to perpetuate anti-Blackness which does not make her feel safe as a resident. It does not make her feel confident in the choices the Board is making, that they are not doing the slightest amount of research on the community that is telling the Board what is needed and required. She added when the Board talks about taxpayers those are her taxpayer dollars in that building. She said her tax dollars decided that she does not mind paying taxes so that Juneteenth can be paid for. She is disappointed in the entire process surrounding the anti-Blackness that she has seen.

Regina Sharma, did not state her address. Regina said this is the third time that she has addressed the Novi Library Board in the last 6 months for what she has witnessed as bullying, suppression and discriminatory tactics by both Library administration and Board members toward Trustee Tara Michener and a continued failure to address anti-Black hate and honor the Boards responsibility of stewards of the community. In February when she first addressed the Board it was because Trustee Michener was questioned as to why a hate clause would be a DEI initiative, a policy that would protect visitors of the library from discrimination and since that time she has continued to witness a lack of transparency and continued dishonesty with regards to Juneteenth, a Holiday which referenced earlier in the meeting is now a Federal Holiday, a conversation that has been going on for over a year now. Regina said that the Board president's response suggesting that voting on Juneteenth would be a surprise vote or a knee jerk motion is simply inaccurate because this motion has been on the Board agenda for over a year and the rationale that the Board has new Board members undervalues their responsibility to the community because it is the responsibility of a Board to still honor full service to the community even in times of transition. She said that indicating that the Board is going to postpone this matter for vote once again rationalizing; is what has caused animosity despite it being on the agenda for over a year is suppression, avoidance and continuing to inflict harm on the community members. She said the feedback from Board members calculating the financial impact of the Holiday representing liberation in the Country for the Black community is to her is problematic at best and racist at worst. She asked if the Board would quantify that same financial impact if the Board were discussing whether employees would receive a paid Holiday for Christmas or the 4th of July. She has also heard members of the Board in recent past meetings question whether racism is really a problem in Novi despite numerous members of the community providing resources on Black hate and repeated harassment experienced by Black members of the community in Novi. She said their behavior as a Board is shameful, unacceptable and she said they are an embarrassment to the Novi Community. She is not sure why after repeated public comments that have gone on for many months including those from the DEI Listening Session on Tuesday that the Board at the very least is not humiliated by their behavior. She is not sure if the Board thinks that no one is watching them, but she assures them that the Novi Community is watching, the Metro Detroit Community, at large is watching and they will take the Boards racism into account if they so choose to pursue another public office again.

Sharon Trumpy, did not state address. Sharon wished she could say that she found the vote surprising and she is saddened to say that she does not. She said it is quite apparent that the only time the Board feels that they need more time to do research is when they are upholding their anti-Blackness. The only time there is confusion about policy is when it applies to the Black community and their needs. She does not even understand what the point is in having the community listening sessions are because she does not see that the community's needs are addressed by the Board. Sharon wished that they would uphold the same standards for the Board that is imposed on the commenters. She said the group comment policy talks about not using abusive or disrespectful speech yet she has seen that go on for over a year now towards Trustee Michener. She would invite anyone who is confused on this to go to YouTube channel and watch NNRAA where you can watch a compiled video of all of the Board discussions about Juneteenth. She said this is not a new issue and there is no excuse for any Board member not being prepared to vote on it tonight. She would like to invite anyone who is listening and outreached by this to join Sharon in person at the Library this Saturday at 10:30am when the Board will be having their annual retreat, which is open to the public under OMA guidelines. She said she will also be emailing the Board with her feedback on the Boards discussion of fines and she is glad that the Board took a pause on fines. She thanks Trustee Dooley for that suggestion and she said some of the Boards discussion tonight was uninformed and ignorant and there is plenty of evidence that shame and punishment do not motivate people. The boards thinks it is their job is to teach responsibility to children who have no ability to return their own materials or to shame people into having to disclose their personal extenuating circumstances to be extended grace at a resource that is supposed to educate and empower the community is shameful. She is livestreaming this right now and she will make sure that she is sharing this widely because the Board has let her down again.

Betsey Beaudoin, did not state address. Betsey thanked the Board for the thoughtful discussion on the fines. She really appreciated the professional way that that conversation took place and she thinks that the pause was a good start and she would like to see that continue and it to be extended as a permanent policy. Betsy was disheartened to see that all of the decorum that the Board showed disappeared when the Juneteenth discussion began, asking to have it sent back to Committee, in her opinion, is unnecessary as it has been a constant discussion with the Board for over a year. She understands that some of the Board members are newer, but they are able to read the minutes or watch the videos. She would think that given the amount of controversy surrounding this that they would have showed up prepared to do their job as Trustees. She thinks that the Board owes the community the fiscal responsibility and that is important, but she also thinks the respect that the board owes the community is paramount and needs to be a focus of their work. Asking people to wait longer after they have waited a year is appalling, unfair and unkind. She really would like to see the Board be more prepared to do their jobs professionally as they seem to be in regards to the fines discussion. Betsey thinks that everyone on the Board could have been more prepared to have this conversation in a graceful and not embarrassing way. She thinks the Board has once again embarrassed the community and she thinks there is way too much bullying towards Trustee Michener. She said to see it again and again and again is not an accident that it keeps happening when it has been pointed out to the Board and it continues to happen. Betsey said she doesn't think that it is that people don't realized that they are coming off as racist, she thinks it is something that the Board does not care about. She said if this was important to the Board to make sure that their behavior was not impacting the Black community in a negative way this behavior would have been corrected by now. She as a member of this community she would really like to see this go better and she's guessing that they have to wait longer now for this to be managed. She really hopes in the future that the Board gets things right and a lot quicker; please do better.

Committee Reports/Non-Action Items

1. **Policy Committee:** Review current public policies for the Library
(Wood-Chair, Bartlett, Michener, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - Staff Committee: Julie Farkas, Barb Rutkowski, Maryann Zurmuehlen, Betty Lang, Keith Perfect, Dana Brataniec and Hillary Hentschel.
 - No meeting; No report
2. **HR Committee:** Review HR Policies for the Library, Director Review & Goals
(Crawford – Chair, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas & Nicole Williams)
 - Staff Committee: Julie Farkas, Nicole Williams, Lindsay Gojcaj, and Kirsten Malzahn.
 - No meeting; No report
3. **Finance Committee:** Financial plan based on building assessment review, Library endowment investigation.
(Bartlett- Chair, Cherukuri, Wood, Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas & Barbara Cook)
 - A meeting was held on June 10, 2021
 - Discussion items: collection of fines for late returned Novi materials by Novi residents: reviewed parking lot quotes: moving forward with a library endowment & scheduling a meeting with City of Novi Finance Dept.; 5 yr. maintenance agreement for Lakeshore Lending Library with vendor.
4. **Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee:** Outreach opportunities
(Dooley – Chair, Bartlett, Yu, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas & Dana Brataniec)
 - Meeting Scheduled for Monday, June 21st 3-4pm via zoom.
 - Upcoming meetings on July 12 and August 2
 - a. Library/ Community Events Attended by Library Board Members
 - Will update at the next meeting
 - b. Grand Opening of Lakeshore Lending Library: Tentative for Wednesday, July 7th.
5. **Strategic Planning Committee:**
(Michener – Chair, Dooley, Bartlett, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - No meeting; No report
 - There will be a goal setting component at the Library Board retreat in relation to the current Strategic Plan 2019-2022.
6. **Building/Landscape Committee:**
(Yu – Chair, Cherukuri, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - Meeting scheduled for June 22, 2021, 3-4pm in person
7. **Bylaw Committee: Review of Library Board Bylaws**
(Wood – Chair, Bartlett, Michener, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)
 - No meeting; No report
8. **DEI: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**
(Cherukuri – Chair, Dooley, Michener, Staff Liaisons – Julie Farkas, Gail Anderson, Dana Brataniec, Nicole Williams)
 - Meeting was held on June 17, 2021.
 - Discussion items: Julie Farkas reported that a separate staff DEI Committee has been formed based on comments of the DEI Board Committee being too big, they met for the first time on 6/8/21; discussion on format for the Community Listening Session for Tuesday, June 22nd at 7pm and incorporating a very short video if time allows for updates; DEI

Committee email will stay active and will be monitored by the committee for public use to address questions/comments related to DEI; Tara Michener will provide examples of an Advocacy Kit and Multicultural Walk-thru to DEI Committee for library staff to execute.

- i. Update: Trustee Cherukuri commented that the listening session was Tuesday and many great, passionate comments were made. Most of the comments were towards the board and board actions and less towards the staff. He asked Director Farkas to share the comments to the board and review at retreat.
- ii. Trustee Michener asked if the comments are taken to the board is that taking away the DEI Committees jurisdiction. Trustee Cherukuri said good question and the comments were made about board actions and as a board they move as a whole, so he does not feel it is appropriate to respond without the board included as a whole. Trustee Michener would like to continue to discuss more about this in DEI Committee, that she is a part of. She voiced her concern for the direction the DEI Committee is heading and said that two employees are quitting DEI.
- iii. Trustee Bartlett commented on the listening session and said there were various requests by the public to have board members respond in that session. He said that is a dangerous situation and as soon as you go from the DEI of three members to adding another person from the board making comments in that session you have gone to a majority, a quorum, which OMA says specifically you can't do. He commends staff that commented this is a listening session repeatedly.

Communications

1. 5/26/21: Lee Linton, Re: Seed Library
2. 5/26/21: Erica Darby, Re: Volunteerism
3. 5/28/21: Sreeny Cherukuri, Re: Mental Health Teen Stress Program
4. 6/7/21: Carol Soborowski, Re: DEI Committee
5. 6/7/21: Sharon Trumpy, Re: DEI Committee
6. 6/8/21: Sharon Trumpy, Re: DEI Committee

Closed Session

1. Library Director Annual Evaluation and discussion for performance period July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021.

Entering into Closed Session: A motion was made to move to closed session for purposes of discussing Director Farkas annual review.

1st—Trustee Bartlett

2nd Trustee Dooley

Roll Call Vote to move to closed session was unanimous.

Closed session began at 9:45pm

Exiting Closed Session: A motion was made to end closed session and return to the Library Board Meeting.

1st— Trustee Dooley

2nd— Trustee Yu

Roll Call vote to end closed session was unanimous.

Closed session ended at 10:14pm

President Crawford commented that the director was given a more than meets expectations review for a number of reasons; providing key leadership in a number of categories.

A motion was made to approve a 2% increase in wage for Director Farkas who achieved a more than meets expectation review of 2020-2021.

1st-Trustee Wood

2nd-Trustee Cherukuri

Discussion: The library staff who meet expectations, received a 2% increase. Director Farkas thanked the board and appreciates the opportunity to work with the board.

Roll Call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously, with 7 yes votes.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn at 10:20p.m.

1st— Trustee Michener

2nd— Trustee Yu

Roll Call vote to adjourn was unanimous.



Brian Bartlett, Secretary

July 22, 2021

Date