



**CITY OF NOVI LIBRARY BOARD
MINUTES, VIRTUAL MEETING
July 23, 2020**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was held virtually with assistance from the City of Novi. The meeting was called to order by Melissa Agosta, President, at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call by Secretary, Torry Yu
Library Board**

Melissa Agosta, President
Kat Dooley, Vice President
Bill Lawler, Board Member
Craig Messerknecht, Board Member
Tara Michener, Board Member
Geoffrey Wood, Treasurer
Torry Yu, Secretary

Student Representatives

Sarah Chang (left virtual meeting at 7:36pm)
Tarun Tangirala (left virtual meeting at 7:36pm)

Library Staff

Julie Farkas, Director
Barbara Cook, Bookkeeper

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Approval and Overview of Agenda

Changes to the Agenda: Under 14. Matters for Board Action item C. was added by Director Farkas to approve adjustments to the end of year 2019-2020 268 Budget for auditing purposes. Under 7. Presentation/Special Guest item B was added by Trustee Michener re: Trustee communication. Under 12. Committee Reports Trustee Michener added that under item H. Equity and Inclusion Committee has met and there will be a report. Under 12. Committee Reports item D Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee, Trustee Michener added that she attended two of the Talking Racism live events. Under 14. Matters for Board Action item D was added by President Agosta to approve adopting the City's Diversity Statement. Additionally, President Agosta changed the order of agenda item 14. Matters for Board Action. Item A is Approve Retirement Incentive opportunity. Item B is Approve Adjustments to the end of year 2019-2020 268 Budget. Item C is Approve Commitment to the Novi Community from the Novi Public Library. Item D is Approve adopting the City's Diversity Statement.

A motion was made to approve the Overview of the Agenda as amended.

1st – Torry Yu

2nd – Craig Messerknecht

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2020

Changes to the Regular Meeting Minutes from June 25, 2020: On page 6 the sentence that currently reads, Trustee Michener would like a way to connect with silent intellectuals – intellectuals will be changed to individuals. On page 7 the second bullet currently reads Director Farkas would like to survey the Community – this will be changed to Black Community. A stand-alone sentence was added after the Trustee's individual comments, stating that the commitment letter was well received. On page 7 where the sentence says, A Special Board Meeting is planned for Tuesday, June 30th at 7pm- at the end of this sentence a phrase was added that this meeting was not held.

A motion was made to approve the regular meeting minutes as amended.

1st – Bill Lawler

2nd – Kat Dooley

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Claims and Warrants – Warrant 592 for Accounts 268 and 269

A motion was made to approve Claims and Warrant 592 for accounts 268 and 269.

1st – Bill Lawler

2nd – Kat Dooley

The motion passed unanimously.

6. Correspondence

A. Email from Sharon Trumpy, Novi Resident RE: Library Role in Anti-racism

- o Looking for statement/commitment from the Library Board regarding race relations (pg. 47)

B. Email from Anonymous RE: Board Commitment Draft

- o Questioning the discussion the Library Board had on June 25th and the commitment statement brought forth (pg. 48)

President Agosta commented that it is important for everyone to see the feedback that the Library has been getting. Trustee Dooley mentioned that anonymous called themselves Novi Friend.

7. Presentation/Special Guest

A. Check presentation for \$40,000 Sponsorship for Lakeshore Lending Library (to be received in four \$10,000 installments over the next four years 2020-2023) by Community Financial Credit Union, Sarah Cousineau and Natalie McLaughlin.

- o Natalie McLaughlin of Community Financial Credit Union was present at the virtual meeting. Community Financial Credit Union has been a huge supporter of the Novi Library for many years, largely in relation to literacy. Director Farkas is very thankful for Community Financial's commitment to grow our literacy and connection with the north community through the Lending Library kiosk. Natalie McLaughlin mentioned that financial literacy is now called financial wellness and that all literacy starts with reading. Highlighting the importance of getting books into the hands of people who are not able to make it into the main building.
- o The Board is greatly appreciative of Community Financial's generosity and support.

- B. Trustee Michener addressed Trustee communication regarding important details/data. As a mental health private practice owner, she fields important/urgent phone calls daily and prefers email for business matters. Trustee Michener wanted to make sure it was addressed here because Director Farkas sent Trustee Michener texts requesting a phone call, therefore, Trustee Michener wanted to stress when it is business, email is best for her. President Agosta made a note of this and mentioned that sometimes email isn't always the best way to communicate because it can be misinterpreted, but she will make sure it is on record. Trustee Michener mentioned that email is important because she will always have a record.

8. Student Representatives Report

- A. Student Representatives Annual Presentation for 2019-2020
The annual report for 2019-2020 can be found on pages 17-19. Teen Space visits for 2019-2020 school year was 3,359. Upcoming virtual programs include the STEM Building Challenge: Three Little Pigs- August 5th, and BETWEEN the Pages: Tween Book Club Trivia- August 26th. Student Representative Tarun Tangirala will act as a liaison for North End students for the Lending Library kiosk.
- B. Teen Space Annual Report by Yolanda Hockaday-Dennis, Teen Space Monitor
The Teen Space End of Year Report is on pages 20 -22. On the bottom of page 21 are recommendations for the coming school year.

Trustee Dooley commented, as a member of the Novi Rotary, how much we appreciate TAB being involved and volunteering for Feed the Need and really promoting and communicating this program.

President Agosta asked about the SAT Practice test online. Ms. Gojcaj is working with her current SAT partners.

9. President's Report (Melissa Agosta)

- A. 2019-2022 Strategic Objectives (3 year plan)
 - o Strategic Objectives are on page 23
- B. 2019-2020 Goals Update (**July**, October, January, April)
 - o Updates are in red on pages 24-33
- C. Library Director Goals for 2020-2021 submitted by HR Committee
 - o The committee met on the 20th and feedback has been received from all Trustees. A final document is expected by next month.

10. Treasurer's Report (Geoffrey Wood)

Trustee Wood presented the Treasurer's Report.

A. 2019-2020 Library Budget Fund 268

The 2019-2020 Library Fund 268 Budget can be found on pages 34-36 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- The 2019-2020 Library Fund 268 budget, 4th quarter amendment, calls for revenue of \$3,145,948 and expenditures of \$3,145,914 contributing \$34 to the fund balance.

B. 2019-2020 Contributed Fund Budget 269

The 2019-2020 Contributed Fund 269 Budget can be found on page 37 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- The 2019-2020 Contributed Fund 269 budget, 4th quarter amendment, calls for revenue of \$39,500 and expenditures of \$39,000 contributing \$500 to the fund balance.

C. Library Fund 268 Expenditure & Revenue Report (ending June 30, 2020)

The Library Fund 268 Revenue and Expenditure Report can be found on pages 38-40 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- Revenue ending June 30, 2020 was \$3,197,796.
- Expenditures ending June 30, 2020 was \$2,961,124.

D. Contributed Fund 269 Expenditure & Revenue Report (ending June 30, 2020)

The Contributed Fund 269 Revenue and Expenditure Report can be found on page 41 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- Revenue ending June 30, 2020 was \$59,447.
- Expenditures ending June 30, 2020 was \$24,567.

E. Balance Sheet for Fund 268 (as of June 30, 2020)

The Balance Sheet for Fund 268 as of June 30, 2020 can be found on page 42 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- Ending Fund Balance for Fund 268 as of June 30, 2020 was \$2,331,073

F. Balance Sheet for Fund 269 (as of June 30, 2020)

The Balance Sheet for Fund 269 as of June 30, 2020 can be found on page 43 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

- Ending Fund Balance for Fund 269 as of June 30, 2020 was \$1,710,966

Trustee Wood commented with all the challenges this year and with COVID potentially impacting revenue to come through in a positive position is highly recognized.

11. Director's Report

The Director's Report can be found on pages 44-61 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet. Staff members celebrating anniversaries in August are:

- Rebecca Powell – Information Services – 20 years
- Elizabeth Kopko – Support Services – 10 years

This year, 2019-2020, Director Farkas is recognizing the entire staff, as a whole, for their amazing dedication and support through a productive and challenging year. Director Farkas commented that donated dollars from the Friends of Novi Library provides a small gift or meal for the staff to acknowledge them for their customer service. Taxpayer dollars are not used for this purpose.

Directors Report Summary

- On page 45 is Our Commitment to Novi Community from the Novi Public Library, which is discussed under 14 Matters for Board Action item C.
- On page 46 is the City of Novi's Diversity Statement, which is discussed under 14 Matters for Board Action item D.
- On page 47 is an email from Novi resident Sharon Trumpy.
- On page 48 is an email from anonymous
- On page 49 is the Retirement Incentive, which is discussed under 14 Matters for Board Action item A.
- On page 50 is photo of team Robo Rhinos from the Middle School who donated 20 face shields that can be given to Library guests.
- On page 51 and 52 is Governor Whitmer's executive order strengthening masks.
- On pages 53-57 is Novi Library's eNewsletter.
- On pages 58-62 are photos capturing the Library's reopening with COVID-19 changes. These photo's appeared in Novi News online.

A. Information Technology Report

The Information Technology Report, provided by Barb Rutkowski, can be found on page 62 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

B. Facilities Report

The Facilities Report, provided by Keith Perfect, can be found on page 63 of the July 23, 2020 Library Board packet.

C. Information Services Report

The Information Services Report is found on pages 64-65 prepared by April Stevenson. Raising a Reader continues to have wonderful numbers even with it being held virtually.

D. Support Service Report

The Support Services report is found on pages 65-66, prepared by Maryann Zurmuehlen.

E. COVID-19 Usage Statistics

The COVID-19 usage statistics update is included on page 66. This is a record of marketing and outreach video, facebook and programming posts and the statistics.

F. Library Usage Statistics

The Library Usage Statistics report can be found on pages 67-75.

G. Friends of the Novi Library

On page 76 is a letter prepared by Director Farkas and Sue Johnson, President of the Friends. This letter was sent to the Friends members. At the bottom is a photo of Director Farkas and Sue Johnson holding a check for \$19,800 that Friends have committed to the Novi Public Library for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Even though the Friends experienced changes to their budget, their support of the Library continues to be very generous.

Trustee Michener commented that the Friends did not have their Gala and have not been able to get the typical money they are able to get and what an example to still give, which is cool and inspiring.

iCube committee continues discussions about opening up for appointments or grab and go items. Plans of action on moving forward are taking place.

Trustee Dooley noted that 17 podcast and videos completed in the month of June is a tremendous amount of work by the Library staff. Trustee Dooley echo's Trustee Michener and Director Farkas comments on the Friends generosity. The Friends were unable to sell books, which is a huge revenue source for the Friends, and still donated generously to the Novi Library. Trustee Dooley mentioned that the Friends are always welcoming of volunteers.

Director Farkas commented that the Friends did have a reserve of books and were able to stock the Book Nook. The Honor Box is open and sales have been made.

H. City of Novi Historical Commission – Agenda Wednesday, June 17, 2020

On page 77 is the Historical Commission Agenda for their July 15th virtual meeting.

I. Bits & Pieces – N/A

Additional Comments Section:

- Trustee Yu inquired about the Phase 4 reopening with Election Day on the horizon and what changes/procedures are in the works. Director Farkas said the Library will be closing August 4th for Election Day. The building will be open with the gates down. Guests can get or renew library cards, pick up holds, use drive up and locker service. However, Library guests will not

be able to walk into the building and grab from the shelves. A notice that the Library is closed will drop Monday morning, August 3rd, through communication channels to the community. The café will open early and remain open for voters.

12. Committee Reports

President Agosta stated that when we have committee meetings Julie Farkas, our Director, should be invited to all of them unless it is something we are specifically making a decision on regarding the Director, then she will be informed. This is kindly requested as she is part of the planning.

A. Policy Committee: Review current public policies for the Library

(Michener-Chair, Agosta, Staff Liaison- Julie Farkas)

- Staff Committee consists of: Julie Farkas, Marcia Dominick, Barb Rutkowski, Maryann Zurmuehlen, Betty Lang, Keith Perfect, Dana Brataniec and Hillary Hentschel.
- 1st draft of building policies were sent to the attorney for review/edits as of 7/6/20.

Director Farkas commented that the attorney will address any concerns prior to committee review. Trustee Michener commented that last year meetings were held and she asked to be included, at that point she said she was told it was in-house stuff. Trustee Michener feels out of the loop and was not informed about any of this. Director Farkas commented that over the year the staff has been taking on the brunt of the work to review and look at concerns, questions, and issues on how it relates to the staff. Trustee Michener acknowledges that the staff worked hard on this, but she explained the importance of communication and when the discussion changed to committee reports Trustee Michener said of course there was something and she did not even know. Director Farkas commented that the bullet point in the agenda says it is going to attorney review. Also, Director Farkas said last month that the policy would be going to the attorney for review. Trustee Michener said that what she is asking is that she would like to be included in communications and she doesn't want to just be a figure head, she wants to be involved like she is with other committees. President Agosta stated that the committees have never been a part of the behind the scenes process with the staff. Director Farkas said the full committee will be brought into conversations to see the suggested revisions to the policy, but we are not at that stage yet. Trustee Michener will be brought in when the full committee is brought in to review the suggested revisions. Director Farkas said she has not changed her process.

B. HR Committee: HR Policies, Director Review, Salary Study

(Agosta – Chair, Wood, Dooley, Staff Liaison – Marcia Dominick)

- Staff Committee consists of: Julie Farkas, Marcia Dominick, Lindsay Gojcay, Kirsten Malzahn and Christopher Nadeau.
- Committee still in review as of 7/18/20.
- HR Committee meeting to discuss Library Director's goals for 20/21 on Monday, July 20, 2020.
 - President Agosta thanked the Committee for their feedback.
 - Full report for the Board next month
 - Director Farkas mentioned the Retirement Incentive is on page 4. The Library has 4 Library staff that are eligible for a retirement incentive. This will be addressed under 14 A. Matters for Board Action.

C. Finance Committee: Financial plan based on building assessment review, Library endowment investigation

(Wood – Chair, Messerknecht, Lawler, Staff Liaison -Julie Farkas)

- Committee met virtually on May 15, 2020: Recommendations for the Financial Policy were reviewed and will be submitted to the Policy Committee for inclusion into the larger document.
- Director Farkas shared that the City is planning for year end and the upcoming audit. Director Farkas commented that Library personnel expenses are over budget and

recommends amending the 2019-2020 personnel expenses. This is addressed under 14 B Matters for Board Action.

D. Events/Marketing/Fundraising Committee: Outreach opportunities

(Yu– Chair, Michener, Dooley, Staff Liaison -Julie Farkas)

1. The Marketing Plan was approved at January 23, 2020 meeting.
2. Library/ Community Events attended by Library Board Members in the last month:
 - o Trustee Michener commented that she attended the first two Talk of Racism events. Trustee Michener stated that Gail was a good moderator and her background in journalism shows. Trustee Michener said the presenters were good, they asked great questions and really call us higher and they don't back down. They are very honest and authentic about where we are at as a community, as a state and as a people. She felt it was an excellent series. Trustee Michener suggested sending thank you cards to each presenter.
 - o Trustee Dooley attended the Talk of Racism Series Live on the 16th.
 - o Director Farkas mentioned that all programming will remain virtual through the end of December. However, there is a possible in person end of summer reading event at Paradise Park. April Stevenson is currently reaching out to see what that end of summer reading event will look like.
 - o The September Songfest will be held every Thursday in September from 7-8:30pm. Entertainment and music will be enjoyed outside at the Paradise Park pavilion. Community Reads will be virtual.

E. Strategic Planning Committee: Annual review of current plan

(Dooley – Chair, Yu, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)

- No report at this time.

F. Building/Landscape Committee: Entrance project

(Messerknecht – Chair, Lawler, Wood, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)

- Grounds- North-end drain work completed as of June 30, 2020.
 - o Update: Work was not completed satisfactorily. Director Farkas said the vendor agrees there is a concern and will come back to work on it.
- Lakeshore Lending Library Kiosk- A new date, based on communications with City of Novi CIO Rob Petty, has been determined for the installation of the kiosk – Monday, September 14, 2020. This is due to the construction project timeline being pushed and no confirmation date of kiosk utility work being completed by August 17, 2020. Kiosk vendor has been notified.
- Library Van- Van wrap completed. Pursuing \$2,500 sponsorship opportunities at this time.
 - o Director Farkas will keep us posted on sponsorships. Community Financial is on the van.
- Café – Café resumed operations Monday, July 6, 2020. Café is opening at 10am when library opens, Café is reporting very low sales at this time. New Starbucks products have been introduced. Extra marketing by the Library is ongoing.
 - o Trustee Messerknecht informed the Board that the Café has had very little business due to the shut-down. Trustee Messerknecht suggests the Board consider forgiving their lease payment for a reasonable amount of time. Director Farkas commented that this can be implemented by simply sending a letter and no Board vote is required. All trustees were in agreement to forgive the Café lease payment now through the end of the year.
- Friends of Novi Library Book Nook – Book Nook opened July 6, 2020. The HONOR BOX is being used for collecting sales of materials. Friends were pleased with the first two weeks of sales. NO DONATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME.

- Trustee Yu commented that since the City has relaxed some of the signage ordinances perhaps we should re-consider this for the Café and the Library. Director Farkas will look into this.
- Director Farkas was on a Class VI Library call with Directors and a recently released study suggests a 96-hour quarantine of materials returned. The Novi Library has started to follow this standard and no concerns have been reported to date.
- The August 21st staff in service date has been cancelled. The Library will be open as a normal usage day. A future November date will be considered. Gathering is allowed in groups of less than ten therefore, it was decided to cancel the staff in service.
- Trustee Dooley noted that Strategic Planning Committee was skipped over and commented that no report for Strategic Planning under item E. at this time.

G. Bylaw Committee: Review Library Board Bylaws

(Lawler – Chair, Agosta, Staff Liaison – Julie Farkas)

- Bylaw revisions were approved at the March 28, 2019 meeting.
- No activity at this time

H. Equity and Inclusion Committee

(Michener – Chair, Dooley, Wood)

- Trustee Michener appreciates the nudge to make sure Julie is included and it was not an intentional snub. The original meeting was scheduled for the 30th and the meeting was cancelled, and Julie will be included going forward. The equity committee has met twice on Zoom (July 7th, July 14th). Trustee Michener emailed an Equity Committee Research summary packet to everyone on the Board. Trustee Michener mentioned that a lot of what she emailed is research which is really helpful knowledge.
- Trustee Michener noted that as of this week, we (the Board) has some differences of opinion on the Commitment Statement, but before that that wasn't the case.
- Trustee Michener read from the Public Library Association (PLA) Call to Action Statement. This Call to Action for Public Library Workers to Address Racism can be found on the PLA website under the Public Libraries online tab. Trustee Michener said since the Library has benefitted so much from PLA she wanted to read their full statement.
- Trustee Michener suggests watching the reruns on the Talk of Racism Series.
- Included in the packet is Chief Malloy's podcast called Police Matters, as well as PLA and MLA's statements. Additionally, Trustee Dooley included a link from Harvard Business review about systemic racism and philanthropy and the groundwater approach.
- The Committees discussions involved: the MLA's homepage starting with Black Lives Matter, organizations dedicated to Black professionals and libraries, the importance of us having a presence/membership in those organizations, and in order to have the diverse/great talent pool to pull from we need to be there. Discussion about partnering with the Policy Committee to add in a hate speech clause. Trustee Michener added that there is a bullying policy but it doesn't say hate speech. Discussions of a possible list of diversity consultants and about a possible open meeting to hear from staff and the community. Possibility of a Black Internship/jobs shadow program. Also, at a committee meeting, Trustee Dooley suggested an African American Children's Literature Specialist Librarian. Trustee Michener discussed encouraging Black part-time employees to

- consider a degree in Library Science, a Black substitute librarian program, and a specific plan to target the community that has been underserved and marginalized.
- o Goals established are to positively and effectively influence outreach and partnerships pertaining to race relations at the Novi Public Library. Increasing hiring opportunities upper mobility for marginalized populations. Staff and community advocacy awareness and education focus. Monitoring our racial footprint as far as collections involvement and accountability.
 - o The committee also discussed the #Libraries Respond Program from the ALA. Asking people in the libraries to be prepared to respond to an All Lives Matter Stance. Be aware of ways your library may not seem welcoming. President Agosta asked apologetically if she could interrupt and ask a question. Trustee Michener asked to finish, please, because if we are not educated on how Black Lives Matter how can we commit to our community. President Agosta commented that the Board just received this packet from the Committee right before the meeting and haven't even had a chance to review the information. President Agosta appreciates the education and asked about what this has to do with the Committee and what was accomplished. Trustee Michener continued the discussion about promoting Black Lives Matter, staff development and hiring Black workers emphasizing that our industry speaks to this. Trustee Michener said that she does not feel respected and wants that on record. Trustee Michener continued with the discussion and said that these are words of leaders in the Library industry and hoping that we would want to align with that.

13. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

14. Matters for Board Action

A. Approve Retirement Incentive Opportunity

President Agosta re-summarized that 4 individuals are eligible and if all 4 took the incentive this would cost up to \$48,000, plus vacation payout.

A motion was made to approve the Retirement Incentive Opportunity.

1st – Tara Michener

2nd – Kat Dooley

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Approve Budget changes for FY 2019-2020

Director Farkas will provide final numbers, ending 06-30-2020, to the Board for the personnel services expense category. The Library will still be within budget with these approved changes.

A motion was made to approve the newly amended budget for FY 2019-2020.

1st – Geoff Wood

2nd – Craig Messerknecht

The motion passed unanimously.

C. Approve commitment to the Novi Community (2nd draft)

President Agosta is not comfortable passing this current commitment statement. Trustee Agosta acknowledges that we are late coming to the game and said that more work needs to be done including attorney review, which costs the taxpayers money. She has felt a lot of pressure and has great intentions and wants to do the right thing and perhaps moved too quickly, missing a few steps. After the last month doing a lot of reading, watching and reviewing what the City wrote, President Agosta believes what the City wrote is a statement for the entire Novi Community in comparison to our statement which, is not inclusive. Trustee Michener inquired

about President Agosta's research. President Agosta answered and then referenced the Libraries Strategic Goals for 2019-2020. President Agosta read the City's statement on page 46.

Trustee Michener said the first two Talks on Racism addresses the importance of the first statement made vs. a blanket statement. Trustee Michener suggests review of the educational information in the packet she sent to the Board and the library books suggested by our Library about race relations. There are some opportunities for education if people are open to them. Trustee Michener says racism is active in Novi and referenced the Novi Community School Board's meeting where complaints were made. Trustee Michener wants to follow and be true to our own industries statements and would still approve the first statement or something along those lines. Trustee Michener had thoughts on the City's statements saying it is well written and she can't find it anywhere and it doesn't mention the Black community. Systemic racism is a real thing and if we are not educated about that then she encourages us to get educated about it otherwise, we are failing our community. Trustee Michener respects these three people and says they are smart people, we have to be clear they are white, they are men. Understanding the depth of systemic racism needs to come from a place of experience, but there is no Black leadership in Novi. Trustee Michener is eager and willing to help and educate and is here because she is needed.

Trustee Wood is not in support of either statement as is. We are our own organization and should not copy and repeat what the City states. We are our voice and it should come from us. Trustee Wood agrees with points that Trustee Michener stated. The reason for this statement is because of events that have occurred and so we should address that head on. Trustee Wood restates his comment from the prior meeting that the Novi Commitment Letter is a good first draft, emphasizing draft, and not a final product. After reviewing what other libraries and other corporations have posted, our statement includes a lot of specific commitments. The purpose of the Equity Committee is to look at what actions we need to take and where we can improve. As an engineer, he is always in an improvement mode. Yes, there is racism out there and are there things that we could be doing better? We need a better statement, something that we can vote 100 percent that we are all in support of.

Trustee Dooley is not in agreement to fully support either draft or recommendation to use the City's statement. The initial draft, in which Trustee Agosta put a lot of heart and soul into what she thought was right as the initial statement. After reviewing the draft, in another lense based on other feedback, what Trustee Dooley feels was left out was not acknowledging the work that the Library does for the community, when it comes to discussing racism and diversity. Trustee Dooley also referred to the email from Sharon Trumpy about a diversity audit of materials. This was not exclusively stated and we need to revise for these things. We are late when it comes to supporting the Black community and we were called out on it. Trustee Dooley does not want people to look at this commitment and automatically get defensive because that is not what it is for. We have to acknowledge the pain and the systemic racism that the Black community went through, and to not acknowledge it in our commitment or a statement, is a complete disservice. At the same time we also need to make sure we are continuing with the inclusion and equity of Novi's diverse community. To negate the pain and not acknowledge the Black community when we do work on the statement is an issue for Trustee Dooley. Libraries are the great equalizer and this comes from a place of humanitarianism. We are open for all, but when there is a segment of society that does feel physical pain, we have to open our door and recognize that through education, information and inclusion. We have to review the draft and think about it together and come up with something we can stand behind. If there are things in the verbiage that we can change and create a bridge, we should review that. If we decide to

do a statement first and then release the commitment, that is alright, but we do have to acknowledge what is going on right now in a thoughtful matter to the Black community.

Trustee Lawler said that when he came into the meeting last month, he was interested in what the City would do and discussed whether each City branch would be issuing their own document. Trustee Lawler mentioned it is a volatile and important topic that had developed momentum and upon reflection there is tremendous work, action items, and ideas in the commitment. Trustee Lawler thinks the commitment has gotten a little too broad and is trying to accomplish a few too many things for what might be the real intent of it. Trustee Lawler is not in a position to approve the document right now, but is interested in doing something. Trustee Lawler would like to address some of the wrongs that have happened and although he is not Black, he is a human and the actions are wrong and upsetting. Trustee Lawler is not in the position to approve the document today, but he is interested in working on something that meets everybody's needs.

Trustee Messerknecht appreciates everyone's comments on this. We have some difference of opinion and it is good that we are able to express them as we have. Trustee Messerknecht thinks we already have three statements that are part of the Library and that are very similar to and address some of what is already in the commitment on page 45. Our mission statement: To provide the resources and programs to support the educational, cultural, informational and recreational needs of its diverse community. Our value statement: We support intellectual freedom and access to informational resources for all, while maintaining the privacy of its patrons and providing a safe and secure environment. Our vision statement: NPL is the center of a community activity and a source of local pride. It is a library that fulfills the needs of the community in a comfortable, user-friendly, well-staffed facility that is capable of adapting to change. For several years the actions of the Board has been guided by those statements as well as our motto to Inform. Inspire. Include and has served us well. There are aspects as Trustee Lawler has indicated as well, some of what we have all seen on television is totally unacceptable. Our Library has a strong history, both recent and past history that demonstrates significant educational and programming opportunities/activities addressing the needs of all of the various communities that make up Novi, including the Black community but not limited to it. We have had programs for the wide array of the community of Novi. When Trustee Messerknecht reads page 45 it seems like that was ignored and it suggests pretty strongly that we need to do things specifically for the Black community, and although it does not say in lieu of others, one could get that impression. We want to be the Library for everybody in Novi. One of the things the letter on page 45 talks about is diverting money (primarily from taxpayers in Novi) and resources to go to non-Novu libraries and to unnamed organizations and task forces. Questioning if Novi taxpayers are in agreement with this and if it is even legal? Trustee Messerknecht said the words Black Lives Matter by itself makes a lot of sense to him. What he struggles with is what appears to be the Black Lives Matters Movement encompassing so many other things, for instance the Breathe Act, a piece of legislature calling for a variety of things like police defunding, police demilitarizing, the elimination of DEA, elimination of ICE and more. As a citizen of Novi, Trustee Messerknecht is proud of the Novi police department and the way the City is run, and he would not be willing to support something that is supporting defunding or eliminating the police department. We need to focus on Novi. That is what the Board is for, to focus on the operations of the Novi Library, it is not for bigger and broader areas than that. Trustee Messerknecht is in favor of supporting and adopting the City letter on page 46.

Trustee Yu agrees with and appreciates a lot of the comments the previous Trustees have spoken. At the moment he can't support either statement going out the way it is. Trustee Yu started out this week thinking our commitment letter is good, we have action plans and his

mindset was we have not put out a blanket statement like other organizations. However, looking back at this, Trustee Yu thinks we still need it, but especially now with the formation of the Equity and Inclusion Committee and Trustee Michener's excellent job of research, this can be used to feed and fine tune the statement into something we can commit to and support. The statement can be fine-tuned to us, the Library, as an information source. Trustee Yu researched libraries around our area and these libraries have a blanket statement, but they also talked about what they have done to combat racism or to enhance their diversity. Trustee Michener's research with the ALA and PLA are also important if we agree on that route. Trustee Yu can't support right now but we are on the right track to put something out.

President Agosta asked for a Trustee to make a motion to approve the Commitment to Novi Community statement that is in the packet. No Trustee made a motion.

The draft of the Commitment Letter will continue to be edited. Trustees agreed the commitment statement would go to the Equity Inclusion Committee then it would go to the Marketing Committee. Also, Director Farkas has staff members that would like to be included on drafting the document. Trustee Wood is interested in a healthy debate, difficult and courageous discussions and work on a statement. Trustee Wood believes the statement should come from the Board. Trustee Michener will contact members of the Committee to plan future dates.

President Agosta mentioned that the Commitment letter would undergo attorney review. Trustee Wood believes that if the Commitment letter is drafted appropriately, it does not need to be reviewed by an attorney.

D. Approve City of Novi's Diversity Statement

Trustee Messerknecht made a motion to adopt and support the City's Diversity Statement. Motion not seconded; motion failed.

15. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn at 10:13 p.m.

1st— Tara Michener

2nd—Torry Yu

The motion passed unanimously.



Torry Yu, Secretary

August 27, 2020

Date