

**DEARBORN PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING**  
Henry Ford Centennial Library - Room 111  
Wednesday, November 12, 2025  
**APPROVED**

**Commissioners:**

- Chairperson Dr. Cheryl Hawkins - Present
- Vice Chair Ali Dagher - Present
- Secretary/Treasurer Jihan Jawad - Excused
- Adam Abusalah - Present
- Amira Haidar - Present
- Dr. Ryan Lazar - Present

**Library Administration:**

- Assistant Director of Technical Services Mark Hancock - Excused
- Assistant Director of Programs & Services Rebecca Hermen - Present
- Assistant Director of Operations Patty Podzikowski - Present
- Office Assistant III Daniel Smith - Present

**Historical Advisory Commission:**

- Chairperson Kayne Karnbach - Present
- Commissioner Mary Bugeia - Present

**Legal Department:**

- Deputy Corporation Counsel Bradley Mendelsohn - Present

**Department of Public Works & Facilities:**

- Director Tim Hawkins - Present

**I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Hawkins called the meeting to order at 5:02PM

**II. Public Comment**

No comments presented.

**III. Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

No conflicts of interest disclosed.

**IV. Approval of Minutes - 09/10/2025, 10/08/2025, 10/22/2025**

A motion to approve was made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Lazar.  
Minutes approved.

**V. Approval of Agenda**

A motion to approve was made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Haidar.  
Agenda accepted.

## **VI. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Historical Museum Report**

Chairperson Karnbach reported the success of the November 8 Bake Sale.

He reported that the Museum would be participating in the Jingle Bell Bash at Peace Park West, adding that Santa Claus would be arriving in a 1916 red Model T.

On December 3, Michael Skinner will be giving a lecture on Ford Aviation at the McFadden-Ross House.

On November 15 from 10AM to 3PM, the McFadden-Ross House will host a porcelain art show and sale.

The Victorian Tea Open House will be at the Commandant's Quarters on December 6 from 1PM to 4PM.

Commissioner Bugeia reported that attendance at the October 11 beer festival was down from 2024. She surmised that the difficult parking at the Commandant's Quarters was likely a factor.

Bugeia reported that the children's Halloween event on October 11 was attended by 700 people.

### **B. Director's Report**

Item tabled.

## **VII. Financial Report**

The board discussed the Library's October financial report. Chairperson Hawkins urged the Commission to review the documents, and noted to invite the Finance department to the December meeting for assistance.

Vice Chair Dagher inquired whether any unspent funds are returned to the City's general fund. Assistant Director Hermen clarified that these funds are instead returned to the Library fund.

Vice Chair Dagher noted that he would like to see more information about capital and other special projects, and how they align with the Library's stated mission.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **A. Interim Director Position\*\***

Following meetings with HR, the Mayor's Office, and the Library's assistant directors, Chairperson Hawkins recommended Assistant Director Podzikowski for the role of Interim Library Director.

- A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Lazar, second by Vice Chair Dagher. A roll call vote was requested:
- Ryan Lazar - Yes
- Adam Abusalah - Yes
- Amira Haidar - Yes
- Cheryl Hawkins - Yes
- Ali Dagher - Yes

The board unanimously approved the appointment of Podzikowski as Interim Director.

**B. Library Director Hiring Committee\*\***

Commissioner Hawkins updated the Commission on the process for hiring a new Library Director, stating that HR suggested forming a committee. This committee would consist of commissioners, an Assistant Director, and a Library staff member. Commissioner Hawkins noted that the job description requires revision and anticipated that the entire hiring process would be lengthy, with no significant developments expected until the new year. Commissioners Abusalah, Haidar, and Vice Chair Dagher volunteered to join the committee.

The Library Commission discussed the job description, finding discrepancies between the stated duties and the actual responsibilities. Following a review by another library director, it was noted that the updated job description must reflect the role's management over the entire library system rather than a single branch. Additionally, the director's authority regarding staff hiring and firing requires clarification and updating.

Commissioner Abusalah inquired about the reviewing library director's feedback. Hawkins relayed the director's concern that attracting applicants might prove challenging. Commissioner Lazar asked whether a salary increase had been considered. Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn clarified that the salary is governed by the Executive & Administrative salary plan and is subject to collectively bargained negotiation terms.

Chairperson Hawkins requested a motion to appoint Abusalah, Dagher, and Haidar to the Library Director hiring committee.

- A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Lazar, second by Commissioner Haidar. Motion carried.

**C. December Commission Meeting\*\***

Assistant Director Podzikowski noted that department budgets are due in December and a meeting would be necessary for review. Chairperson Hawkins requested a motion to schedule a meeting for December 10.

- A motion made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Lazar. Motion carried.

**D. Library Professional Development Days\*\***

Assistant Director Podzikowski proposed the elimination of full-day staff development days that necessitated the closure of facilities. She added that certain staff members were not comfortable closing the facilities to the public, and several questioned the value of the training. She proposed that future staff development days occur over separate morning and afternoon sessions while the building is open.

- A motion to approve was made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Lazar. Motion carried.

**E. Library Transitioning Update**

Chairperson Hawkins informed the Commission about her meeting with the assistant Library directors to discuss the transition plan. The conversation was multi-faceted, covering both concerns and strengths, with a focus on ensuring staff well-being throughout the transition period. She also reported an issue with the HR department, noting that a minor matter had been resolved and that she would continue to update the Commission as other issues are addressed.

**F. Esper Project Update**

DPW Director Tim Hawkins reported that he is currently assisting the Library Administration with the Esper renovation. He stated that there had been very little movement on the project since the facility closed, and timelines were not matching up to proposals. He reported that he had been in contact with project managers at McCarthy & Smith. They are able to oversee the process from bidding, vendor interviews, and selections, to approvals. He added that by doing so, the process would be streamlined to avoid excessive proposals for Council approval. McCarthy & Smith are also able to oversee the renovation at Bryant.

Chairperson Hawkins reported that the ground breaking for the Esper project will likely not occur until April. She expressed regret for the early closure of the facility, as the project was initially to begin in December. She encouraged the Administration to maintain communications with the community throughout the process.

Assistant Director Hermen reported that she and Assistant Director Podzikowski are researching grant opportunities where applicable to the project. She also suggested room naming rights in lieu of available grants.

The group discussed how the Library could serve Esper patrons during the facility closure. Assistant Director Hermen noted that they tend to use the facility for the space, as well as faxing, and internet, as opposed to book checkouts. The group

discussed potential alternate locations for this purpose. Chairperson Hawkins noted to add further discussion to the December agenda.

As an aside, Vice Chair Dagher noted that the owners of the former Snow Branch Library were waiting for an update to host a smart locker. Assistant Director Hermen noted that the funding for the project was cut in favor of the Esper renovation, and progress stalled. She added that the lockers formerly installed at Salina could potentially be relocated, and software updates for the lockers are now available.

#### **G. Current Projects Update**

The Commission and Administration updated contacts and leads for current building projects. DPW Director Hawkins and Assistant Director Podzikowski will oversee the Esper renovation and the Bryant building projects. Podzikowski will also oversee the Bryant garden hub project. A masonry repair at Henry Ford Centennial was removed, and will be revisited in the future. Chief Curator Jack Tate will continue to oversee the Museum stairs project.

The Library repair and maintenance reserve fund was removed. The R&M fund for the McFadden-Ross House was discussed. DPW Director Hawkins noted that City department R&M funds were otherwise abandoned in favor of the Facilities Advisory Board.

#### **H. Building Closure Policy**

Assistant Director Podzikowski provided an update regarding the Library's inclusion in the Fire Department's newly drafted building closure policy. She noted that the policy addresses various elements, including the authority to close a facility and staff compensation. Podzikowski stated she would distribute the policy to the Commission.

#### **I. Rates & Fees**

Assistant Director Podzikowski reported that the tiered system that was approved at the June 25 Commission meeting was never implemented. She proposed to instead adopt hourly rates on room reservations, with included tech and custodial support. She further proposed to make room rentals free for Dearborn residents and civic groups.

- A motion to accept the new fee schedule was made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Chairperson Hawkins. Motion carried.
- A second motion to approve free rentals for Dearborn residents and civic groups was made by Vice Chair Dagher, supported by Commissioner Haidar. Motion carried.

### **IX. Public Comment**

No public comments made.

**X. Further Discussion**

Vice Chair Dagher suggested naming a conference room honoring former Commission Chair Marcel Pultorak. Chairperson Hawkins requested information regarding the City's room naming policy, and that the matter be placed on the agenda for the December meeting.

**XI. Next Meeting - December 10, 2025**

**XII. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Haidar. The meeting adjourned at 6:17PM.