

DEARBORN PUBLIC LIBRARY
LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING
Henry Ford Centennial Library - Room 111
Wednesday, December 10, 2025
APPROVED

Commissioners:

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

Library Administration:

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

Historical Museum:

- Chief Curator Jack Tate - Present (via video call)
- Assistant Chief Curator Matthew Graff - Present
- Historical Advisory Commissioner Glenn O’Kray - Present

Legal Department:

- Deputy Corporation Counsel Bradley Mendelsohn - Present

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Hawkins called the meeting to order at 5:01PM

II. Public Comment

Dearborn resident and long-time patron Rob Byrnes requested that the Library consider subscribing to Naxos Music, a streaming service for classical music. Interim Director Podzikowski noted that they are an MCLS vendor, and informed everyone that Library Administration would look into a trial.

Chairperson Hawkins thanked Mr. Byrnes for attending the meeting, and encouraged him to return if he had any further requests or suggestions.

No further comments were made.

III. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

No conflicts of interest reported.

IV. Approval of Minutes - November 12, 2025 regular meeting

Motion to approve made by Vice Chair Dagher, second by Commissioner Lazar. Minutes approved as submitted.

V. Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Haidar, supported by Vice Chair Dagher and Commissioner Lazar. Agenda approved as submitted.

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Historical Museum Report

Assistant Chief Curator Graff reported that Historical Commissioner O’Kray saved the Museum over \$1,500 in performer fees by agreeing to appear as Santa Claus for Museum programs.

Chief Curator Tate reported that 110 people attended the Victorian Tea Open House. He reported that the Museum will have a table at the Jingle Bell Bash on December 13, and will drive Santa Claus into the event in a 1916 red Model T.

Graff reported that new shelving was installed in the Museum’s storage office. He reported the success of the November 8 Craft and Bake Sale, and the November 15 Porcelain Artists Show and Sale.

He reported that nine internship applications were received. He added that interns are typically employed to assist with digitization, archives, and programming. He further added that a volunteer will assist in revamping the Museum’s website.

He reported that a Historical Commissioner is researching potential locations of Native American burial grounds on the former site of Ford World Headquarters. Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn noted that the historic district certification was passed by City Council, and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office can assist with archeological investigations.

VII. Financial Report

Chairperson Hawkins noted to contact Finance for assistance closer to the new fiscal year. A cursory review of the financial report suggested that everything is stable.

VIII. New Business

A. Library Budget

Interim Director Podzikowski reported that the projected FY26 and FY27 budgets were submitted on December 5.

She reported that a 10% increase for general spending was requested to allow for inflation, and that a 2% increase was requested for the part-time staffing budget. She added that part-time staff brought up significant issues that affect them and asked for a resolution. Chairperson Hawkins added that pertinent information

regarding job specifications is being compiled for the Civil Service Commission, addressing inconsistencies with job descriptions, proper rates of pay, and duties.

The group discussed a payment from Wayne County for the Library's share of penal fines. The Administration will confirm its acknowledgement by City Council.

Assistant Chief Curator Graff reported a 10% increase across the board in the Museum budget. He noted an increase in the parking lot repair & maintenance fund. Chairperson Hawkins noted a substantial increase in the communications & teleservices budget. Graff explained that the Museum has historically underprojected spending, and raised it for consistency. Assistant Director Hancock added that the City IT Department added in fiber costs for all departments, likely resulting in the increase.

Hawkins inquired if fees were charged for Museum research. Graff confirmed that they are not locally. The group discussed Museum capital projects. Graff confirmed that there is one in place for the exterior steps of the Commandant's Quarters. He noted that a quote that would encompass all renovation projects was recommended, adding that he was referred to Ram Construction. A quote is expected before final budgets are due on December 26.

Vice Chair Dagher inquired into the availability of grants to offset costs. Graff noted that a federal matching grant program was being pursued until reductions were made to IMLS. He added that State supplemental grants were being researched. He reported that the Museum is applying for a \$20K grant to redo the McFadden-Ross House classroom.

Chief Curator Tate reported that he had received a quote for \$49K to repair the air conditioning system, adding that it struggles when temperatures rise above 80 degrees.

B. Library Commission Bylaws

Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn presented amendments to the Library Commission bylaws. Sections were added to regulate a consent agenda, public comments, and electronic communications among the board. An amendment was also made to Article VII clarifying the Library Director's role as a City department head.

Vice Chair Dagher noted a typo, but generally expressed approval for the amended bylaws.

Commissioner Lazar inquired if the amended bylaws addressed the Library's State classification. Mendelsohn clarified that the bylaws are intended to guide how

meetings are conducted, and the board's general authority is determined by State law and the City Charter. He added that the Commission can amend the bylaws as they feel appropriate.

- A motion to approve the amended bylaws was made by Vice Chair Dagher, seconded by Commissioner Haidar. Motion carried.

IX. Old Business

A. Room Naming Rights

The group discussed naming a room, honoring former Commission Chair Marcel Pultorak. A City Council resolution for naming rights, and the related process were shared with the board. Chairperson Hawkins requested a volunteer to lead. Vice Chair Dagher agreed.

The group discussed the potential of using naming rights and corporate sponsorships to offset costs of the Esper renovation. Podzikowski and Hermen reported that there is a meeting scheduled for the first of the year with the Director of Philanthropy and Grants to discuss grant opportunities and other funding options.

B. Esper Library Alternative Service

Chairperson Hawkins reported that City Council has been made aware of the delayed project timeline. She added that the facility has been cleaned out, and the contractor has been approved by Council. No further progress is expected until the new year.

The group discussed a present lack of options in alternative service sites, and discussed options for community transport to and from the Library facilities.

X. Additional Comments

Interim Director Podzikowski presented the Library's 2026 Top 10 List, and noted that it will be shared on social media. She expressed her thanks to the Commission and the Library staff.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Mendelsohn announced that he has accepted a position elsewhere and is resigning from the City. He noted that the Legal Department will continue to have a representative present at Library Commission meetings.

XI. Next Meeting - TBD

XII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chair Dagher, supported by Commissioner Lazar. The meeting adjourned at 5:57PM.