

**Red Wing Library Board of Trustees
Workshop
Red Wing Public Library – Foot Room
August 13, 2025**

Members Present: Board Members Jacqueline West, Bruce McBeath, Amanda Motschke, Marm Nihart, Catherine Friend, Joan Heineman, Ron Skjong, and Kim Emery

Members Absent: Library Board President Natasha Yates; Council Liaison Vicki Jo Lambert

Others Present: Dan Brower, Library Director

1. Roll Call

Library Board Vice President West called the workshop to order at 6:00 p.m. It was noted that Library Board President Yates was not in attendance but that all other Board Members attended the workshop.

2. Workshop Items

A. Library History Book.

Director Brower referenced recent discussion of the Library history book during the last Library Board meeting. He reported that author Bruce Colwell has stated that the deadline to apply for a publishing grant will be in mid-October. He stated that Mr. Colwell suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to evaluate the book design. Member Friend noted that there have been a few versions of the history book by different authors and that recent-year history has not been included. Past involvement by the Friends of the Library was referenced. Director Brower stated his understanding that approximately \$3,800 was earmarked by the FOL toward publication of a Library history book in 2012. Director Brower indicated that he has read Mr. Colwell's book and asked whether there is a desire to have this book published. He provided examples of other library history books, including a history of SELCO. Member Skjong spoke in favor of keeping history alive and volunteered to serve on the committee.

Questions were raised with regard to whether there is any controversial information or risk involved in publishing the book and whether the book would need to be approved by the City Council prior to publication. Director Brower referenced information in the book relating to the performance of one specific Library employee and recommended omitting this information from the final version. He stated his understanding that approval of the book would lie with the Library Board and would be outside the purview of the City Council.

Director Brower stated that Mr. Colwell has offered to add historical information covering the last 13 years, but that this would delay the process by 12 to 18

months. It was noted that the book would be published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press.

A question was raised as to when the Red Wing Public Library was established. Director Brower noted that an educational group was formed in the 1860s shortly after Red Wing was founded, a reading club was established in 1894, and the first physical public library opened in Red Wing in 1904.

It was clarified that there are no legal concerns, funding sources have been identified to cover publication costs, and no funds would come out of the Library budget.

The next steps in the process were discussed, including the formation of a committee to polish up the design for publication. Director Brower indicated that, if there is a consensus to move the process forward, he will begin working on the grant application. The role of the ad hoc committee in terms of the book design was clarified. The history of the Library building was discussed. Members Skjong and Friend commented that the book could be published as is, with supplemental information potentially published later. A suggestion was made for the committee to consider the inclusion of a very brief summary covering the last 13 years. The time commitment for ad hoc committee members was discussed.

B. Long-Range Plan Updates.

Director Brower referenced the long-range plan document and reviewed items that will need to be completed over the next two years (highlighted in red on the document):

- **Monitor Circulation and Interlibrary Loan Reports for Trends.**
Director Brower stated that the new system will eventually be able to provide comprehensive reports. He commented that Red Wing's collection is impressive compared with libraries in similar-size communities.
- **Agency Accounts.**
Director Brower stated the RWPL is redoing the process for organizational accounts. He commented that he is working with the schools and senior living facility representatives to establish agency accounts. He noted that volunteer lists are also being updated.
- **Instant Digital OverDrive Cards.**
Director Brower reported that these cards are being phased out.
- **Semi-Permanent StoryWalk.**
Director Brower reported that this project has not been started.
- **Youth Collection.**
Director Brower commented that Red Wing's youth collection is outstanding.
- **Increase Spanish Language Fluency.**
Director Brower reported that Wendy, the newly hired clerk, speaks Spanish and has taught ESL classes to native Spanish speakers.

- **Collaborate with Hiawatha Valley.**
Director Brower reported that contact with Hiawatha Valley has not yet been initiated.
- **Partner with the Prairie Island Indian Community.**
Director Brower reported that he has shared ideas with the PIIC Activities Director, with a follow-up meeting to be scheduled.
- **Establish a Library Board Marketing Committee.**
It was reported that a committee will be meeting in the near future.
- **Technology Training and Resources.**
Director Brower stated that he will be working on this.
- **Provide a space for community connection events.**
Director Brower reported that an open mic and tiny art show event has been scheduled on October 23, with crafting night on October 9. The purposes of this event were discussed. It was noted that the event will be open to all ages, with expected participants being mostly young adults and older. Member McBeath suggested collaborating with other organizations, such as Minnesota State College Southeast.
- **Adopt a Shelf Program.**
Director Brower stated that he plans to work with the Friends of the Library on this program.

Director Brower commented regarding ongoing projects (highlighted in yellow on the document), including Spanish language brochures along with numbered and translated signage and maps. He suggested that the Long-Range Planning Committee meet in early 2026 to update progress toward goals.

C. Operating Hours.

Director Brower referenced past Library Board discussion of potential changes to the hours of operation resulting from the Downtown Main Street Late Night Thursdays campaign. He reviewed a report showing activity levels for the Library, including circulation data by day and by hour of day from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. He noted that Library activity on Thursdays is slower than on other days. He suggested consideration of slightly adjusting the Library's hours of operation, noting that more data will be available in September. He stated that Library activity has historically not trended upward during community events and periods of increased Downtown activity. Recommendations from ChatGPT pertaining to staffing were reviewed.

Director Brower reported that SELCO will be installing an automatic sorter, which has resulted in consideration of workflow changes.

Director Brower reported that completion of the Children's Summer Reading Program increased by 45% this summer, compared with 2024.

When asked about patron tracking, Director Brower indicated that door counts by week are available but not daily data. He reviewed a quote by EnvisionWare to install people counters, which will provide better data.

3. Adjournment

The workshop adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

ATTEST:



Joan Heineman, Secretary