Governance Committee
of the Russell Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting, May 4, 2022, 5:00 PM
(Online meeting)
Approved Minutes

Present: Ramona Burkey (Library Director), Brandie Doyle (Assistant Director), Jennifer Hadley (recorder), Gregory Harris, Thomas Russell IV, Cynthia Sanders (Chair), Alison Williams
Guest: Jennifer Billingsley (Head of Youth and Family Learning) (left at 5:26)

1. Call to Order: Trustee Sanders called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Trustee Sanders moved and Trustee Hadley seconded to advance discussion of the Unattended Children Policy to the top of the agenda.

Jennifer Billingsley discussed how after looking at many local policies and practices, the department came up with the current draft. Age ranges have been brought into alignment with state law (children 12 and under may not be left unattended) to prevent confusion for parents. 15 is considered old enough to supervise younger children. We discussed alternatives to calling the police. Staff may extend wait time for caregivers to arrive, but looking for children at the police department matches with parents’ expectations. Include translation of in loco parentis – in the place of a parent. Trustee Harris suggested using active rather than passive language and to provide more clarity about who is responsible for carrying out actions. Rather than naming specific roles, using general library staff in the policy works better because staffing is flexible. However, the person likely to handle this situation would be administrative or security, and there would be documentation in reports. Policy about not leaving children unattended is part of the code of conduct, and this is posted around the library. Trustee Harris moved and Trustee Williams seconded to forward the policy to the staff for comment. The motion passed unanimously. Assistant Director Doyle will share the draft with staff and bring responses to the next meeting. Trustee Sanders mentioned that we should aim to have this policy in place before the summer because of the many summer children’s programs.

2. Approval of Minutes
   a. MOTION: Trustee Williams moved and Trustee Harris seconded to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2022 Governance Committee Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment: No public present.

4. Unfinished Business
   a. Whistleblower policy – Trustee Sanders suggested delaying discussion of this policy until the fall to give us more time to work on it. Brandie agreed and will prepare a draft for September, working together with staff who have provided feedback. Trustee Williams raised the question of where will reporting forms go. Directory Burkey is considering whether we should have a third party, an HR firm, accept these forms, so that they do not need to be mailed to the library. We should run the policy by the library’s labor attorney. Trustee Harris asked about confidentiality. For example, executive sessions are not open to the public and don’t require minutes, but a Board member could speak openly about what was discussed; there isn’t a law that requires confidentiality. If a whistleblower makes something public, does that relieve the Board of maintaining confidentiality? Director Burkey also raised the question about whether staff are mandated reporters? Would they be in trouble if they don’t report something? Where are the rules defined? Talking about violation of library policy is pretty broad; where do you draw the line? Some policies are bent routinely to help patrons (e.g., renewing items extra times). Trustee Harris pointed out
that a law isn’t valid unless it’s promulgated, i.e., people must be given notice of what they should or shouldn’t do. This item will remain on Unfinished Business.

b. Personnel Policy Compilation – Assistant Director Doyle suggested we also delay this until September, to give her more time to work on it and run it by the labor lawyer. A part of this policy must wait to be voted on until later.

5. New Business
Unattended Children Policy – See above.

6. Discussion of Items to Be Placed on Next Agenda
Unfinished Business - Unattended Children Policy to be voted on in June.

There is nothing to forward to the Board for a vote in May, but Trustee Sanders can still give a brief report.

7. Announcements
The Russell Library Company Annual meeting will be June 13 at 6 pm on Zoom. There will be updates on Russell Library and votes on new and renewing trustees. The next full Board of Trustees meeting is May 17, and then June 21 at 6:30.

8. Open Forum/General Good and Welfare - No comments

9. Additional Public Comment: None

10. Executive Session to discuss strategies and negotiations about pending claims or pending litigation involving the agency or a member: Not needed.

We decided to continue holding meetings via Zoom.

11. Meeting Adjournment: Trustee Sanders moved and Trustee Harris seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52. Trustee Williams commended Chair Sanders, which was agreed upon by all.

Next meeting: June 1, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Hadley