

DETROIT LIBRARY COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

May 22, 2009—5:00 p.m.

Commission Room

AGENDA

- Meeting Call to Order
- I. Reading of Special Meeting Minutes May 19, 2009
- II. Director's Search Recommendations
- III. Adjournment

DETROIT LIBRARY COMMISSION
PROCEEDINGS

Special Meeting

May 22, 2009

President Hill called the Special Meeting of the Detroit Library Commission to order at 5:09 p.m.

Present: President Hill, Commissioners Bellant, Keith, and Thomas

Commissioners Washington and Dr. Carla Scott, Ex-Officio were present via conference phone

Administrative staff: Skowronski, Cromer, and Machie, Moore, Norfolk

Present also: Joel Anyim, Vickie Baker, Sandra Bialic, Joan Brand, Randy Call, Lurine Carter, Glenda Cornelious, A.J. Funchess, Julie Fornell, John Gibson, Victor Ibegbu, Todd Kelly, President AFSCME 1259, Dorothy Manty, Robert Marcelain, Nicole Martin, Vernadette McAllister, Roger Morton, Rose Moses, Carolyn Mosley, Otis Mathis, Nicol Paige, Rosemary Patterson, Christine Peele, Yvette Rice, Cully Sommers, Bettina Strickland, Viola Taylor, Dorothy Williams and others.

The minutes of the Special Commission Meeting of May 19, 2009 were approved with necessary corrections to be made.

As a matter of record, Commissioner Bellant asked if anyone including themselves or family members, during the past three months, have benefited directly from the Library. If so, it may be appropriate to say so at this time. Commissioner Thomas noted his daughter is a contractor and that it was not a secret.

Commission Actions

Commissioner Kinloch moved to require a nomination of the candidates; Commissioner Thomas seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Kinloch nominated Juliet Machie; Commissioner Thomas seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Keith nominated JoAnn Mondowney; Ex-Officio Scott seconded. The motion carried.

Ex-Officio Scott nominated Kitty Pope; Commissioner Keith seconded. The motion carried.

Ex-Officio Scott nominated Roosevelt Weeks; Commissioner Washington seconded. The motion carried.

There were four nominations. Commissioner Kinloch said rounds would be done for the purpose of elimination.

Discussion

Ex-Officio Scott raised several concerns and asked to discuss them. She asked if Ms. Machie had hired two of her family members without disclosure and if a union position was rewritten to fit a family member. Mr. Cromer answered that one individual was hired by Kerry Sanders and came up through the ranks. He got an MLS degree and was promoted accordingly with the blessing of Dr. Rhea Lawson. He was later promoted to the Digital Projects Specialist with the blessing of the Director. He was hired prior to her being the Deputy Director. The position is a union position.

Ex-Officio Scott asked why the Director did not recommend Ms. Machie; Ms. Boulware informed her that the Director would not give her recommendation to the Deputy Director. Ms. Skowronski replied she had spoken with Christine Boulware numerous times and was never asked for a reference on Ms. Machie and that it was not an appropriate question to ask in a public meeting. Later Ms. Skowronski clarified that she had always supported Ms. Machie. Ms. Machie stated that Ms. Skowronski was listed as a reference on her application.

Commissioner Kinloch said this process was started today with many rumors that he had not previously heard. He said there were many insults and apparently no reason for these remarks except for a counter goal in this search process.

Ex-Officio Scott said she did interview the candidates individually.

Commissioner Thomas raised a concern about the alleged consulting relationship between the vendor in the audit report and the Director from Flint Public Library. Ms. Mundowney downplayed her involvement with LRM. Ex-Officio Scott asked why this relationship was important in terms of her directorship. Commissioner Thomas replied because if she still has the relationship, she would bring it with her. Commissioner Bellant said the vendor was prohibited from working with the Library no matter who was the Director.

Ex-Officio Scott questioned Mr. Weeks' being a finalist since he did not hold a Library Science degree. President Hill acknowledged there was some dispute on the issue but it was now clear that an MLS was actually a requirement to qualify for State funding. Commissioner Kinloch noted that he had previously asked for a written document outlining the process for this search.

President Hill asked if there was an un-readiness to vote or a problem with the process. Commissioner Kinloch said he was prepared to vote.

Commission Action

President Hill motioned to remove Mr. Weeks from the nominations; Kinloch seconded and the motion carried.

The vote on the candidates for Director was taken with the following results:

Machie (3) Kinloch, Keith, Thomas

Mondowney (4) Bellant, Hill, Scott, Washington

Pope (1) Scott

Discussion Continued

Commissioner Kinloch stated "There were some people who were involved in this process both officially and unofficially who should never have been a part of making a decision to hire or any other decision on behalf of the citizens of Detroit. This poison pill, hijacking of the fairness in the process should never be tolerated. The chaos in City Hall politics, I hope does not make its way into this institution." He further stated, "Dr. Scott has not attended any meetings except one in two years where it benefited another interest. The rest of us have attended commission meetings working each month to address issues of the Library. This is part of her sworn responsibilities as president of the Detroit Board of Education to attend meetings."

Commissioner Keith said his only interest was what was best for DPL. Citizens work harder than anybody else to get respect. He was extremely upset if they were played and lied to since a large amount of money was paid to the search firm.

Commissioner Thomas agreed with Commissioner Keith and said he was also told the Director did not recommend the Deputy Director; President Hill said she was also told the same. President Hill said if there was such distrust, the process should not go forward. Commissioner Keith said there was a strong appearance of untruth.

Commission Action

Commissioner Keith moved to have search firm provide an explanation. Scott supported and the motion carried.

Commissioner Washington said this was very baffling with confusing information but believes the four candidates presented an outstanding vision for the Library. She would like to see us move beyond where we are.

A motion was made to adjourn the Special Meeting. The motion carried. The Special Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.