

## **Kent County Library Board of Trustees**

### Minutes of the April 26, 2021 Hybrid Meeting

Present: Elisabeth Tully, President; Valerie Overton, Vice President; Jay Silcox, Treasurer; Bronwyn Jones, Secretary; Alan Austen, Trustee; Erin Counihan, Trustee; Judi O'Brien, Trustee; Arnessa Dowell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Staff Member; John Venditta, ESRL Director; one member of the public

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Mr. Silcox moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Dr. Austen seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### Trustee Education

Mr. Venditta was introduced to the Board of Trustees and reviewed his history in libraries and qualifications.

Mr. Venditta reviewed the history of regional libraries in Maryland and the Eastern Shore Regional Library, along with the services the organization provides to the participating counties.

The trustees discussed the Polaris ILS with Mr. Venditta.

Mr. Venditta left the meeting following his presentation.

#### Finance Committee Report

Mr. Silcox reviewed current bank balances with the trustees noting that there was \$208,939.35 in the PNC Checking account, \$31,233.48 in the PNC Money Market account and \$218,572.03 at the end of March in Peoples Bank savings account.

Mr. Silcox noted that the budget presentation at the Kent County Commissioners meeting went well, but there was no word on the final budget yet. The final budget was anticipated by the second week of June.

Mr. Silcox informed the trustees that he and Ms. Dowell would be setting up a meeting with Mr. Haggerty related to the negotiation of the lease for the North County space.

Mr. Silcox reviewed the FY21 budget projection with the trustees, noting that there was an anticipated surplus for this fiscal year. Mr. Silcox reviewed suggested uses for the surplus such as improvements to staff spaces.

Mr. Silcox noted that second interviews for some positions were upcoming for applicants to approved positions.

The trustees discussed the FDIC limit and the current bank balances.

### Director's Report

Ms. Dowell thanked the trustees for their support in the presentation to the county commissioners.

Ms. Dowell reviewed the hiring process and updated the trustees on the current status of the approved positions, noting that some offers were being prepared and that hopefully people would be in position in mid-May. Ms. Dowell noted that one position would need to be reposted.

The trustees discussed the hiring process, what information the trustees should receive and their role in the hiring process. Dr. Austen expressed that the board should see resumes and the results of background checks. Ms. O'Brien noted that the trustees role should be establishing policies, not necessarily approving of individual applicants. Ms. Tully noted that once a staff member was on board at the library, they should be introduced to the trustees.

Ms. Dowell noted that a company had been retained for the purposes of the tech audit, which was mostly financed through grant funding, but which required a small amount of additional funding, which had come from the Software Maintenance line.

### Reopening Plan Update

Ms. Dowell reviewed the reopening plan, noting that it was desired to add a phase between 4 and 5, which broadened service times from Phase 4, but was different than the Phase 5, with an added trigger to Phase 5 related to the community vaccination rate.

Ms. Tully questioned the necessity of a community vaccination rate trigger for progressing within the reopening plan, and questioned if there were significant differences between the proposed Phase 4B and Phase 5 services. Dr. Austen noted that the goalposts for reopening were being moved .

Ms. Dowell noted that Kent County had a low community vaccination rate, and that she did not want to see the library become a transmission center for COVID-19, further expanding that the reopening plan was meant to change and adapt as more information was known.

The trustees discussed what triggers they would be ok with and issues related to the trigger.

Dr. Austen moved to modify Phase 5, to begin on May 3, with the modified Phase 5 plan to be sent to the trustees in the next few days. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion. Ms. Tully opened the

motion for discussion. Dr. Austen noted that should there be a serious question from the trustees, the trustees would be able to review before it went into effect. Mr. Silcox noted that he was in favor of increasing available services. Ms. Counihan clarified that the building would be open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 1 pm and from 3 pm to 6 pm, and on Saturday from 10 am to 12 pm and 1 pm to 3pm, with an increased capacity limit of 50 and use of additional materials and services such as the childrens toys and PS4. Ms. Tully called for a vote on the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### Programming update

Ms. Dowell reviewed the April programming with the trustees. Ms. Dowell reviewed upcoming programming with the trustees, noting that planning was underway for the summer reading program.

#### Staff Area Remodeling

Ms. Dowell noted that she was working with a consultant to get a range for what the renovation and improvement to the staff area would cost, which was looking at \$70,000-\$80,000 at the higher end of the range, and that revised funding partner requests would be submitted related to the project.

#### Funding Partner Reports

#### Friends of the Library

Ms. O'Brien reported that she had attended the Friends meeting, where the organization had discussed the timing for a book sale. Ms. O'Brien noted that the organization was out of storage space, and so would not be accepting additional donations until after a sale had taken place.

#### Foundation for the Kent County Public Library

Dr. Austen reviewed the minutes of the Foundation's meeting, noting that Ms. Dowell had presented funding proposals related to the purchase of a van to expand library services and a renovation of the staff and staff lounge areas of the library.

Dr. Austen noted that the Foundation would be meeting again in early September.

Mr. Silcox said that the finance committee may reach out to the Foundation.

#### Old Business

No old business was brought before the trustees.

## New Business

### Hotspot Lending Policy

Ms. Dowell reviewed hotspot lending with the trustees, noting that it was utilizing CARES Act funding. Ms. Counihan questioned if there had been coordination with the schools related to the project. Ms. Dowell said that there had not been since the schools were generally taking care of students.

Mr. Silcox moved to approve the hotspot lending program as outlined. Dr. Austen seconded the motion. Ms. Tully opened the motion for discussion. Dr. Austen requested monthly usage reports for the hotspots. Ms. Tully called for a vote on the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### Meeting Scheduling

Ms. Tully noted that the next trustee meeting was scheduled for June 1. Ms. Tully proposed that the meeting be used as a strategic planning retreat for the trustees rather than the regular meeting purposes.

The trustees discussed various dates and times for the meeting, but no consensus was reached at the meeting. Ms. Tully noted that she would poll the trustees and establish a meeting date and time, which would be communicated to library staff for posting.

No further business was brought before the trustees.

Mr. Silcox moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Austen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 pm.