

Kent County Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the February 28, 2022 Meeting

Present: Valerie Overton, President; Judi O'Brien, Vice President; Jay Silcox, Treasurer; Peggy McKee, Trustee; John Murphy, Trustee; Amy Sine, Trustee; Arnessa Dowell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Staff Member; two members of the public

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

The minutes of the previous meetings were reviewed.

Mr. Silcox moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Silcox reported that the finance committee had met on February 16, and had received a presentation from Enterprise Fleet Management related to their rental program. Mr. Silcox reviewed the costs associated with the rental program and concluded that it was not cost-effective for the current planned use of a vehicle.

Mr. Silcox presented the revised Finance Committee charter to the trustees, noting that the modification was to remove the stipulation that the chair of the finance committee could not also be the treasurer. Mr. Silcox moved to accept the modified finance committee charter as presented. Ms. Sine seconded the motion. Ms. Overton noted that this practice was in line with other organizations. Mr. Silcox called for a vote, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Silcox reviewed a revised Fines and Fees policy, noting that there was a modification to the fees for items borrowed from a library outside of the state of Maryland. Mr. Walmsley explained the change and how it would impact the fees for lost items. Mr. Silcox moved to approve the policy as revised. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Mr. Silcox reviewed a draft of the Fiscal Year 2023 budget request. Mr. Silcox noted that the request was due on March 7, and this request put the library in line with a linear funding increase. Ms. Dowell reviewed the request justification and reasons for increased expenses in the previous year. Mr. Silcox expressed that he was confident in the approval of the request as all the increases were justifiable and well reasoned. Ms. Overton questioned the reserve fund balance use and reviewed the financial history of the organization. Ms. Dowell noted that the request had been drafted with the fund balance in mind and leaving an amount which respected the current desired reserve balance.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the budget request as discussed. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion. Ms. O'Brien asked for clarification of the total increase in the request. Ms. Dowell clarified the requested amount and the overall increase in the budget. Ms. Overton called for a vote, which was approved unanimously.

Mr. Silcox reviewed the current bank balances, noting that the PNC checking account had a balance of \$149,863.77, the PNC money market account had a balance of \$31,236.10, and the Peoples savings account had a balance of \$218,681.98.

Director's Report

Ms. Dowell informed the trustees that she had visited the Galena and Rock Hall town council meetings. Ms. Dowell noted that she had discussed additional funding needs for the new facility in Galena with the council. Ms. Dowell noted that supplemental one-time funding had been provided to the library, and that the town would be looking at ways to increase their allocation for the library. Ms. Dowell continued that the new facility was performing incredibly well with increases in all metrics such as circulation and visits.

Ms. Dowell reviewed the meeting with the Rock Hall town council noting that the council is unclear as to their future location. Ms. Dowell reviewed discussions with the facilities planning people who had indicated that the current facility was too outdated to renovate. Ms. Dowell discussed with the town related to the remediation of books.

Mr. Murphy raised questions related to the fees for the North County facility and particularly the gas bill. Ms. Dowell responded that the fee was unexpected, and that the system had been inspected for leaks or other issues, with none identified.

Ms. Overton noted that an email had been received from a patron of the North County branch, which expressed concerns about programming and the times that the branch was opened. Ms. Dowell noted that the branch manager had communicated with the patron related to ongoing improvements in branch availability and programming.

Ms. Dowell reviewed concerns expressed about the use of the library over social media. Ms. Dowell noted that the rules of conduct policy was being reviewed to make the language more inclusive and open. Ms. Dowell noted that none of the concerns had been brought directly to library administration, which made it difficult to respond to the concerns and address them appropriately.

Ms. Dowell reviewed changes in masking guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, and noted that the Kent County Public Schools had ended masking requirements. Ms. Dowell reviewed a proposed staged system of masking based on the community COVID levels available through the CDC. Ms. McKee questioned if masks would be provided if the community level

increased. Ms. Dowell noted that the library had been providing masks to patrons during the pandemic and would continue to do so for as long as necessary.

The trustees discussed masking in the library and how best to remain consistent with other organizations, communication with the community, and the role of the library.

Old Business

Trustee Bylaws

Ms. Overton reviewed the revised bylaws with the trustees. Mr. Murphy moved to approve the bylaws as presented. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion. Ms. Overton called for discussion, noting that the comments received from trustees had been incorporated into the document. No discussion was raised. Ms. Overton called for a vote, which was approved unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Murphy noted that he would be meeting with the Foundation for the Kent County Public Library, and questioned if there were capital expenditures which are planned that he needed to be aware of going into the discussions. Ms. Dowell indicated that there were. Mr. Murphy asked if there was a written plan which could be reviewed. Ms. Dowell reviewed the current strategic planning state for the library, and that goals and planning were based on the fiscal year as part of the larger plan, but there was no larger document specific to capital needs. Mr. Murphy requested that a document of capital priorities be developed for the trustees. Ms. Dowell noted that two letters of intent were submitted to the state library for the meeting room and rock gill facility, which would require a 50% match to secure funding.

Public Comment

Ms. Julie Gill questioned the finance committee meeting schedule. The timing of the meetings was discussed with the trustees, and Mr. Silcox indicated that the committee would follow up related to scheduling the meetings.

Trustee Education

Ms. O'Brien presented to the trustees related to the open meetings act, how this impacted the trustee meetings, and what needed to be done to remain compliant with the act.

Ms. Dowell noted that Ms. Overton had requested a brief trustee calendar to develop expectations for what each meeting would contain, which was presented in the supplemental documents for the meeting.

No further business was brought before the trustees.

Mr. Silcox moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 pm.

The next meeting of the trustees will be on Monday, March 28, 2022 at 4:30 pm.