

LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

June 8, 2020

Meeting held electronically via telephone conference call due to COVID-19 restrictions.

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Cheryl Miller (Chair), Kimberly Young (Vice Chair), Martha Hutzel (Secretary-Treasurer), Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Xavier Richardson, Diana Risavi

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Kathy Roberts

Cheryl Miller called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and read the following statement:

This Meeting is being held electronically by telephone conference call, pursuant to Fredericksburg City Council Ordinance 20-05, An Ordinance to Address Continuity of City Government during the Pendency of a Pandemic Disaster.

The Board members participating are: Cheryl Miller, Kimberly Young, Martha Hutzel, Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Xavier Richardson, Diana Risavi, and David Ross. CRRL staff participating are: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, and Kathy Roberts.

Members of the public have been invited to access this meeting by the telephone number provided on the CRRL website. A link was provided to submit written comments via email. Each Public Comment that has been received will be read aloud during the Public Comment period in the agenda.

Documents to be discussed during this meeting are available for public view at: librarypoint.org/board-of-trustees.

Cheryl Miller informed the Board that David Ross's term as a Board Member has expired and that the Library has not yet been notified by Spotsylvania County of a new appointment.



The minutes from the March 9, 2020 Board meeting were approved.

Cheryl Miller reminded the Board that they had received the Director's report in advance and that it had been posted on our website as part of the Board documentation. She asked Martha Hutzel to share a few highlights and any additional information.

Martha Hutzel expressed her hope that the Board had a chance to review the Director's Report as she is very proud of the hard work and innovations that staff have shown since the Library closed. Martha explained that the staff has had to reinvent a number of classes, events, and resources in order to make them available online.

Kimberly Young shared that she is very impressed with the work that's been done despite all that has been going on with COVID-19 and appreciates the continued, strong outreach of the library. Meg Bohmke said she was pleased to see how many new library cards we have issued during the closure. Kerry Devine added that she appreciated the 3D printing of PPE (personal protective equipment) for localities. She was also pleased to see the strong issuance of library cards online and hopes that will continue after we reopen. Martha responded that the Library was already issuing cards online prior to the pandemic and will continue these efforts after the branches reopen. Xavier Richardson said that the Library has been a great community partner and he especially appreciates helping to meet the needs of the healthcare community during the pandemic. Martha Hutzel responded that the staff has very much enjoyed offering this support and that it has been a learning process. She stated the Library has spent nearly all of the \$2,600 donated for this purpose, and that the Library may solicit additional donations if the need continues.

Xavier asked if the Library had qualified for or received any of the funds available for non-profit organizations to fund COVID-19 related expenses. Martha Hutzel shared that the Library has applied for five different grants, including one that would provide additional funds for production of PPE equipment at IdeaSpace. Martha Hutzel said that staff from two supporting localities have reached out to her and asked that she save and submit all receipts, and that the Library will be keeping a record of expenses and submitting them for funding consideration. Xavier Richardson asked Meg Bohmke for input on the local funding available through the CARES Act. Meg Bohmke shared that current requests for relief exceed the \$13 million in funding that Stafford has available for distribution and that the Stafford Board of Supervisors will be meeting next Tuesday to consider requests.

Martha Hutzel shared that small teams of staff working on a rotating basis are expected to reenter the buildings on June 15 to begin pulling the current 19,000 holds on physical materials



in preparation for no-contact, curbside pickup to begin in July. Once the number of items on current hold lists have decreased, the Library will once again be able to turn on the ability for customers to place holds on physical materials. Curbside pickup will likely become a permanent service. All classes and events to be held inside the buildings have been canceled through the summer. We are holding off on fall cancellations at this time. Our popular Music on the Steps event will be held virtually with several of the musical groups. Reopening will continue gradually with staff and customer safety foremost, and the next step will be adding access to computers, most likely in the meeting rooms at first.

Cheryl Miller asked staff to share any written public comments that had been received. Kathy Roberts shared that we have not received any public comments at this time.

In light of the multiple budget updates to be presented and necessary votes pending, Cheryl Miller asked Martha Hutzel to present summaries of the quarterly statistical and financial reports. Martha Hutzel presented the Fiscal Report sharing that third quarter allotments were paid in full by Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford and Westmoreland.

Martha Hutzel announced that the bottom line for expenditures is just under 76%. She explained that System Upkeep is overspent because of upfront spending on necessary security system equipment, which will result in savings in monitoring costs over the long term. She mentioned that both the Furniture and Equipment and Staff Training line items are part of requested budget amendments to be voted on later in the meeting. Hutzel announced that CRRL has received the expected \$88,252.80 in eRate reimbursements for computer services.

Martha Hutzel shared that the Law Library funding and expenses are as expected and the fund has a very healthy balance.

Martha Hutzel directed the Board's attention to the final page of the fiscal report, the Designated Accounts, and announced that the Vehicle Replacement fund would be sufficient at the end of FY20 to replace the courier vans. She asked the Board for approval to discontinue the previously approved annual transfer of \$8,000 from the Information Access fund to the Vehicle Replacement fund. Cheryl Miller asked for any discussion on stopping the transfer. The motion was made by Meg Bohmke, seconded by Kerry Devine, and passed unanimously.

Martha Hutzel presented the Special Use Statistics. She pointed out that even with the closure beginning in March, notary transactions, community events, and public technology training increased relative to the same quarter last year. She noted that use of the CRRL mobile app also increased dramatically. Hutzel stated that other areas showed decreases consistent with



the effects of the closure. She noted that the increase in visits to the Library buildings reflects, in part, the fact that all of the library buildings now have new, more accurate people counters. As noted in the last board meeting, the decrease in Librarypoint sessions reflects the combining of the online catalog and the website on the Bibliocommons platform.

Martha Hutzel presented the Circulation Report saying that circulation of eMaterials is up 27% with eVideo and eAudioBooks leading the increase. Hutzel noted that circulation of physical materials fell 26% due in large part to the suspension of lending beginning in March leading to an overall decrease in first time circulation. Martha went on to say this comes as no surprise as our physical branches were closed for two weeks at the end of the quarter. Martha Hutzel said that with the continued closure of physical branches, she anticipates these trends will continue. Martha said that circulation staff continue to adapt and that since our physical branches closed on March 16, we have issued 1,407 library cards online and added 4,021 items to our eResources.

Under old business, Cheryl Miller asked Martha Hutzel to present the FY21 Budget Adjustments document that details how the Library will manage the anticipated budget reduction of \$805,153.

Martha Hutzel informed the Board that there are no expected budget reductions from Westmoreland County, but in light of the other cuts there is no way to get through this with our salary budget at our current levels and without reducing services, materials and many other line items. She directed the Board's attention to the second page of the FY21 Budget Adjustments document, which details operational adjustments under consideration by library staff. Martha Hutzel went on to say that the Board will need to vote to approve a reduction in service hours at all Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, and Stafford locations to include closing all branches at 8pm instead of 9pm, closing on Sundays, and closing one weeknight per week for a total of \$363,973.87 in savings. She continued to explain that The Fried Center would close two nights a week and remain open on Saturdays. According to Martha, the Fried Center was already closed on Sundays and Germanna Community has been made aware of these proposed changes. The proposal includes closing Westmoreland Branches at 8pm for consistency and because research showed that 8-9 pm has fewest customers for these locations as well.

Martha Hutzel summarized that the plan's estimated proposed operational savings (\$486,180) combined with service hour reduction savings (\$363,973) will result in a total savings of approximately \$850,153, which will provide some cushion in the event there are budget cuts mid-year. Martha Hutzel said that immediate FY21 operational budget adjustments are detailed on page two, and asked the Board if they had any questions.

Diana Risavi asked how many of the individuals who have retired or resigned are from Westmoreland. Martha Hutzal responded that there were no retirements from Westmoreland. Martha Hutzal explained that the same retirement option was offered to all eligible retirees, but none from Westmoreland chose to retire.

Meg Bohmke asked what time the branches would be closing one weeknight per week. Martha Hutzal responded that libraries closing for the evening would close at 5:30pm, that the scheduled closings would be staggered on different nights of the week, and that there would always be at least one branch open with evening hours in the larger jurisdictions of Stafford and Spotsylvania. Martha Hutzal added that all branches would be closed on Sunday.

Meg Bohmke asked for the breakdown of retirements by locality. Martha Hutzal responded that the majority of retirements were part-time employees, many of whom worked in more than one jurisdiction. Martha Hutzal added that approximately 10 of the 43 retirements this year were full-time employees, and of the 16 that made the decision in May to retire, only one was a full-time employee.

Meg Bohmke asked if the part-time employees retiring would receive a large payout. Martha Hutzal responded that they will not. She explained that some will get zero payout, while others will get more based on years of service. Martha Hutzal continued to say a few will receive larger payouts because they have been with the library for 35-40 years. Meg requested a report of payouts since that is coming out of the fund balance, and requested that each payout be identified by jurisdiction understanding that no employees will be personally identified. Martha responded that the average retirement payout is \$8,500. Martha Hutzal said that she will send the Board the breakdown by locality and reminded the board that, while she appreciates and wishes to be generous with her staff, this model is unsustainable financially and exactly why she brought the leave payout system to the Board two years ago for revision. Martha reminded the Board that beginning July 1 of this year, payouts will be reduced significantly under the new system.

Cheryl Miller asked for any additional discussion on the proposed reduction in service hours. The motion to reduce service hours as proposed was made by Kerry Devine, seconded by Xavier Richardson, and passed unanimously.

Under New Business, Cheryl Miller asked Martha Hutzal to present the FY20 Budget Amendment requests.

Martha Hutzal informed the Board that we had expected the Friends to be able to cover some of our Public Library Association (PLA) staff training expenses, but because of their loss



of income they are unable to help in the way we anticipated. She also requested that the Board approve a line item transfer of an additional \$66,342 in the Furniture/Equipment line item to cover the cost of computer equipment to address recommended safety protocols regarding the coronavirus. For example, providing chromebooks in the meeting rooms for the public to use until access to the building can be expanded, washable mice for the chromebooks and staff, and washable keyboards for staff. The additional funds would also allow the Library to purchase 42 chromebooks with hotspots available for customer checkout. Savings in the line items indicated would provide the additional funding needed.

Meg Bohmke asked Martha to repeat the information about the Furniture/Equipment line item. Martha explained that this will be used for providing chromebooks in the meeting rooms for the public to use until access to the building can be expanded, washable mice for the chromebooks and staff, and washable keyboards for staff. The additional funds would also allow the Library to purchase 42 chromebooks with hotspots available for customer checkout. Meg Bohmke asked if we'd be purchasing Kajeet hotspots. Chris Glover shared that the Library is considering T-Mobile hotspots because of their record of service and replacement policy. He explained further that we were working on this prior to the pandemic and when vendors were compared, T-Mobile offered the best and most economical service for our needs. Meg Bohmke said that Stafford issued many Kajeets and would likely be in favor of providing additional chromebooks for students in the county. Meg Bohmke asked the price of Library purchased chromebooks and if the Library was under contract with a vendor. Chris Glover responded that the models purchased by the library under the state IT contract and cost \$210-370 depending on the model.

Cheryl Miller asked for any discussion on the requested FY20 budget amendments.

Diana Risavi said that many of the initiatives shared seemed to be COVID-19 related and urged staff to submit those to localities for potential funding, especially Westmoreland County, which is eager to provide for students. Martha Hutzel responded that there are many in line for those funds but that Library will definitely apply. Meg Bohmke suggested that the more rural areas in Stafford such as Hartwood and Widewater may have the greatest need for chromebooks and perhaps the staff at Porter Branch might be able to help with that need.

The motion to approve the amendments as proposed was made by Diana Risavi, seconded by Meg Bohmke, and passed unanimously.

Cheryl Miller asked Martha Hutzel to explain the refund request from the jurisdictions.

Martha Hutzel directed the Board's attention to the bottom of the FY20 Budget



Amendment document. She explained that Fredericksburg originally intended to cut the library's FY20 last quarter allotment by \$200,000. However, the City's loss of income was not as great as anticipated so Assistant City Manager, Mark Whitley suggested instead that CRRL refund \$200,000 to Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Spotsylvania divided according to the circulation percentages used to calculate the FY20 budget. He reasoned the refund would help offset losses all three of the localities are facing and felt dividing the amount by the circulation percentages would be the most fair way to redistribute the funds. Westmoreland's funding is calculated using a different formula so they are not included in the refund; additionally, Westmoreland has not made any changes to their FY20 funding.

Cheryl Miller asked for any discussion on the requested FY20 budget refunds. The motion to approve the refund to the jurisdictions as requested was made by Xavier Richardson, seconded by Meg Bohmke, and passed with 5 in favor and 1 abstention (Diana Risavi).

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14 at Salem Church Branch.

Xavier Richardson moved to adjourn the meeting, Meg Bohmke seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 P.M.