



Central Rappahannock Regional  
**Library**

INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING  
FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

## LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

December 14, 2020

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

### ATTENDEES

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

**LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION:** Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Kathy Roberts

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Kimberly Young called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and read the following statement:

*This Meeting is being held electronically by live stream, 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: Kimberly Young, Xavier Richardson, Martha Hutzel, Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Cheryl Miller, 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 via livestream on the CRRL website Board of Trustees page ([librarypoint.org/board-of-trustees](http://librarypoint.org/board-of-trustees)). On this web page, documents to be discussed during this meeting are available for public view and a link is provided to submit written comments. Each public comment that has been*



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**540-372-1144**

*received will be read aloud during the Public Comment period in the agenda. Comments received after the Public Comment period will be forwarded to members of the Board following adjournment of the meeting.*

Xavier Richardson moved to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2020 Library Board meeting. Meg Bohmke seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Meg Bohmke moved to approve the minutes from the September 28 Special Library Board meeting. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Kimberly Young 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 said that the Director's report has always been tied to the Strategic Plan but that may not have been clear to members. In an effort to provide clarity to that end, the slides now include information identifying Strategic Plan items as well as initiatives tied directly to the the Director's goals. Hutzel said she continues to get strong, positive feedback from the community regarding curbside pickup and that we plan to offer that service indefinitely. She and her staff have been meeting with jurisdictional finance directors regarding the library's FY22 budget request. Martha provided an update on other Virginia Library closings. She said that 22 libraries have recently gone back to curbside only, including Caroline County, Henrico County, Alexandria, Tappahannock, and Richmond Public. She said this also includes most libraries in Southwest Virginia. Hutzel added that Falls Church and Arlington have still never opened, and that Prince William is not yet talking about closing again. Orange County had expanded their hours but recently reduced hours again. Rockbridge PL in the valley has also gone back to curbside only. Jefferson Madison never opened 3 of their 8 branches.

Kimberly Young asked if CRRL was affected by the most recent Governor's mandates regarding COVID-19 restrictions. Martha Hutzel responded that CRRL operations were slightly affected. Our meeting room capacity had been reopened to a 25-person maximum capacity, but with the new mandates that was reduced to a 10-person maximum capacity. Additionally, the guest capacity for the ribbon-cutting for CRRL's new facility, IdeaSpace, on Thursday, December 17 has been reduced from 25 to 10.

Martha Hutzel said that this year's annual climate survey will be conducted by an outside company rather than using our in-house, anonymous Google Forms. She said the administration is in the process of selecting a company and will narrow down the decision in the next few weeks. The survey will take place in January.

Cheryl Miller asked what the budget is for the climate survey. Martha Hutzel responded that her goal was to keep the cost below \$5,000. David Ross said that the Human Resources department for Spotsylvania County could conduct the survey for free. Martha said that she felt that would be a conflict of interest and preferred that an independent third party conduct the survey. Hutzel said the estimates they have received to date range from \$2,500-\$3,000. There was a discussion among board members about optics and potential cost savings.

Kimberly Young reminded the board that while board members are welcome to share suggestions and input on the mechanism for the climate survey, the board had expressed previously that they preferred an outside entity perform the climate service rather than the in-house survey that has been done by CRRL in previous years through anonymous Google Forms. Young also said that this is an operational decision and thus the final call would be made by the Library Director.

Xavier Richardson added that the Board's previous request for changing the in-house mechanism of the climate survey was because an independent mechanism was preferred. He said that this should not be tied to a locality in any way.

Martha Hutzel thanked the members for their input and assured them that the utmost professionalism and neutrality would be maintained.

Continuing with her report, Martha Hutzel shared that CRRL was asked to provide a tour of both the Howell and Porter Branches for Prince William County Supervisor, Margaret Franklin. Hutzel said that the Potomac Branch of PWPLS is in Franklin's district and in need of renovation, and Franklin was looking at some of CRRL's great spaces for comparison. Hutzel added that Franklin was very impressed with both of the Stafford locations.

Hutzel said that in addition to the Best of Stafford Award for Porter Library shown in the Director's Report, CRRL also received an Innovation Award today from MWHC for Excellence in Community Service for the thousands of PPE we created at IdeaSpace. Four staff members represented CRRL at today's Zoom presentation

Martha Hutzel informed the Board that Stafford resident, Mr. Brian Luedke, who had sent several detailed emails to Board members and CRRL staff regarding the Library's black lives matter statement on the library website, had requested that his comments be retracted and not included in the public comment period during today's Library Board meeting.

Kimberly Young asked staff to share any written public comments that had been received. Kathy

Roberts shared the following comments:

- **Becky Reed, Fredericksburg -**

*I am now a resident of Fredericksburg after living in Stafford Co for 50 years and being on the Library Board and the Stafford Board of Supervisors. I want to see the regional library system continue as I am sure we get better services at a more reasonable cost that way. I have been very happy with the library.*

- **Alane Callander, Stafford -** *I am a resident of Stafford County and have used the library since moving to the area in 1980. I have always found customer service at the library to be exceptional and our library system in general to be exemplary. I know there has been concern of late that Stafford County feels it should have more control over the regional system because more of its residents use the libraries and the county makes a substantial financial commitment. Please keep in mind that the participants in the regional library system have differing abilities to contribute financially, but their involvement regionally is important to all of us. Though I live in Stafford, and pay taxes in Stafford, I encourage you all to think regional and cooperative.*

- **Robert Thomas, Fredericksburg -**

*At a time when budgets are strained to provide library services, the library should consider whether it is wise to provide unlimited free printing of documents. There is much abuse of this privilege. I have witnessed people printing the equivalent of whole books. Other times they have allowed the printers to operate by mistake for long periods of printing which is then thrown away. The costs in paper, ink and machines can not be negligible. Even if the library merely limited the number of pages it would save money.*

- **Janet Kimbrell (on behalf of herself and her husband, Tom), Stafford -**

*My husband and I are longtime residents of the Falmouth area in southern Stafford County. We think our award winning, regional library system is one of the best reasons to live in this area, and an invaluable asset in the service it provides. We are concerned about any significant changes to the bylaws and the 1993 Regional Agreement, which has worked so well for the past 27 years. In an Oct 21 article in the Free Lance-Star, it was reported that Stafford County is seeking more than its two votes on the Library Board of Trustees. We are concerned that such a change could create an imbalance and potentially cause future harm to the cooperative spirit. Any cooperative system is always fragile, so we urge the Board of Trustees to treat this issue with extra care. Thank you.*

Kimberly thanked each of the residents that submitted comments for their input and praised their civic engagement.

Martha Hutzal presented the Fiscal Report from the first quarter. She shared that local and state revenue for operations is as expected based on budget approval. She said we were recently notified by the Library of Virginia that our State Aid for FY21 would go from \$724,103 estimated for this year to \$766,588 (an increase of \$42,485) and spending for the quarter is at 23.66% of the budget. Hutzal said that some expenses like Insurance and Memberships look high because those are always due at the beginning of the fiscal year. Hutzal said we would expect to see spending closer to 25% but because of COVID-19, several line items are less than normal, for example: Programming (which cannot be held in person), Continuing Education (there is simply no in-person training, education, or conferences), and Vehicle Operations (there is limited travel between branches and to training). Hutzal explained that some expenses like Insurance and Memberships look high because these are front-loaded expenses. Hutzal asked members to direct their attention to the Computer Services line item. She said that in addition to internet services for which we have not yet received e-rate reimbursement, this line item also covers software and that approximately \$250,000 of the \$369,645 spent so far this year is for front-loaded software.

Hutzal noted that the Law Fund is still in good shape. Stafford Law fees are received in the second quarter and will be reported on the 2nd quarter fiscal report. Hutzal said that during the renovations of the Fredericksburg Branch, the Law Library was moved to the third floor.

Meg Bohmke asked how the Law Library funding might be used given that the fund has an ample balance. Martha Hutzal responded that Law Library funding can be used solely for Law Library purposes, which include but are not limited to staffing, legal resources, furniture, and computers specifically used in the Law Library.

Martha Hutzal shared that the Vehicle Fund is also healthy, with enough funding to buy another vehicle should the need arise. She reminded the board that they had approved discontinuing the annual appropriation of \$8,000 into the Vehicle Fund due to its solvency. Hutzal said the status of the Information Access Fund is the same as it was last quarter - nearly depleted. She said this is due to current challenges in the community related to COVID and the necessity of quarantining materials with no overdue fees being charged for any materials at this time. Hutzal said that all second quarter payments have been received. She added that conversations with Fredericksburg city staff indicate we are very likely to receive the full 4th quarter payment and we will know in January. Hutzal explained that the salary line item is projected to be underspent by \$304,000 this year due to using almost no subs and several positions left unfilled. This provided enough funding to give staff bonuses, which was announced to staff Saturday.

Meg Bohmke asked how much staff received in their bonuses and what criteria were utilized. Martha Huzel responded that the average bonus was \$890 and was based on the level at which the employee had to change, pivot, retrain, and adjust facets of their job. She added that those whose jobs required significant adaptability and the need to serve above and beyond received a higher bonus, and those who did not have much change in their job received a lesser bonus. Hutzelt statedt that no staff member received less than a \$50 bonus.

Kerry Devine asked Martha Hutzelt if she anticipated changes in staff training moving forward. Hutzelt responded that yes, she believes the future will hold far more virtual training and less in-person training. Hutzelt said that she still plans to send staff to national conferences because those are hard to replicate virtually, but many other training needs will likely be met through online opportunities. Hutzelt said we are underspent on some items right now, but that will level out by the end of the fiscal year.

Martha Hutzelt directed members to the Circulation Report. She said the circulation of eMaterials is up 44% with eBooks showing a 73% increase, and the circulation of physical materials fell 85% compared to FY20 Q1 due to reduced access to branches during this quarter and COVID-19 restrictions. Hutzelt said this is not surprising because the library was limited to only filling requests during this quarter.

Kimberly Young asked if this was consistent with other library systems. Martha Hutzelt confirmed that it is. Hutzelt added that many senior customers are not accessing library services across the state due to COVID risks. Hutzelt said that numbers may drop a bit more with winter coming and the COVID numbers going up.

Martha Huzel said that physical circulation was up significantly compared to the previous quarter, over 62,000 versus less than 2,000 in FY20 Q4. Hutzelt said she anticipates that the circulation of physical items will continue to rise now that we have expanded hours of access to our branches. Hutzelt said it's likely the circulation of eMaterials will continue to rise also because we continue to make expanding our eMaterial collections a priority. Hutzelt said we have always counted as a circulation any item that is checked out to a customer's library barcode, regardless of the format of the item and this is standard library practice across the country. Hutzelt said that we continue to issue new library cards regularly.

Kimberly Young said she was pleased that CRRL continues to issue new library cards because not all systems have been doing that.

Meg Bohmke asked if it was possible to break down the circulation report by branch. Martha Hutzelt responded that staff has researched that possibility and found that the circulation of the

following materials can be broken down by jurisdiction but not by branch: Overdrive (eBooks, eAudiobooks), Kanopy (eVideo), and Zinio (eMagazines). She explained further that the circulation of the following materials cannot be broken down by jurisdiction because the platform does not collect that information: EbscoHost (eBooks), LinkedIn Learning (used to be Lynda.com - Training eVideos), and Universal Class (Training eVideos). Hutzel explained that these breakdown statistics will be collected beginning January 1 and collected for the calendar year, which will make the Circulation Report look a bit different starting with the 3rd Quarter.

Meg Bohmke asked why circulation data is collected by calendar year instead of fiscal year. Martha explained that this is how the information was collected prior to her becoming Director and the practice has been continued. Hutzel added that the Library of Virginia requires this information for calculating state funding but is not aware of whether this timeframe is mandated. Hutzel let the members know that she would research that and report back to the Board.

*[Martha Hutzel reported to Board Members via email 12/16/2020: The 1993 Agreement to form CRRL stipulates that data would be reported by calendar year.]*

Hutzel referred board members to the Special Use Statistics. Hutzel said statistics remain down due to CRRL's COVID-19 closure; however, staff training was up 55% over last year and specified that this is through virtual training, most of which has been free. Hutzel said nearly 115,000 requests were placed even while the library was closed, a likely marker of CRRL's curbside pickup service popularity. Hutzel added that CRRL's mobile app sessions also remained relatively steady with nearly 49,000 sessions recorded. Hutzel said that although curbside pickup was active during the first quarter and staff were in the buildings, CRRL facilities were closed to the public so Visits to Library Buildings is 0. She added that Library Express was implemented October 12 so the second quarter report will show visits from customers.

Meg Bohmke suggested that the reports to the board be enhanced to provide the public with a more accessible picture of library spending as opposed to a generic spreadsheet of numbers. Discussion among members and staff included highlighting the variety of services the library offers in addition to physical materials.

## Old Business

Martha Hutzel provided a CARES Act update. She said that CRRL has received a CARES Act reimbursement from Westmoreland in the amount of \$2,842.19 and from Stafford in the amount of \$35,051. She said additional reimbursements are expected from Fredericksburg (approximately \$9,000), Stafford (approximately \$30,000) and Westmoreland (approximately

\$4,600) before year-end. Spotsylvania will not be providing any CARES Act reimbursement at this time because their funding was appropriated for first responders.

Meg Bohmke asked, given that Spotsylvania is not providing CARES Act funding, how the enhanced cleaning of Spotsylvania branches is being funded. Martha Hutzal responded that all jurisdictions except Westmoreland are handling the cleaning of branches. Westmoreland has provided funding directly to CRRL to cover that expense.

Martha Hutzal presented the updated FY22 Budget request. She shared that the updated version includes additions suggested by the Stafford County budget office such as two additional years of previous revenue and expenditures, Fund Balance details, the number of FTEs by position at each location, a detailed Benefits calculation, and an explanation of locality contributions. The additions provide greater clarity as to how CRRL's annual budget is calculated and the updated FY22 Budget request has been forwarded to Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Fredericksburg for their review.

#### New Business

Kimberly opened the floor for discussion on a potential update of the Bylaws. Meg Bohmke requested more time to allow for input from Stafford County staff and fellow supervisors. Discussion among the members included confirmation that while the jurisdictions have purview over the 1993 Agreement to form CRRL, only the Library Board has the authority to make changes to the Bylaws. The members also confirmed that there is no timeline for changing the Bylaws and that a Library Board member may request the matter be added to the agenda in order to offer suggestions for consideration at any time.

David Ross said he will meet with Meg to discuss changes, followed by meeting with their county administrators. He agreed with Meg that the Bylaws need to be updated.

Kimberly Young opened the floor discussion and review of the 1993 Regional Agreement. Meg Bohmke said that much has changed since 1993 and that the agreement should be made current. Bohmke cited an example of outdated information being that several new branches of CRRL are not listed in the agreement such as IdeaSpace, Germanna's Fried Center, and the Spotsylvania Towne Center branch. Martha Hutzal explained that not all branches are listed in the 1993 agreement and that those that were listed were commitments made as a concession to keep the regional agreement intact.

Xavier Richardson said that the Agreement should be kept as general as possible so as not to require changes often.



Martha Hutzal affirmed Xavier's recommendation and said that the reason the agreement is vague is so that it does not require adjustment every time a branch is added or closed, or materials are updated. Hutzal said that broad, general terms are preferred to enhance the longevity of the agreement.

Diana Risavi stated that jurisdictional administrators have sole authority over the agreement, not the Library Board, thus she was confused as to why the Board was discussing this matter. Meg Bohmke responded that much has changed since 1993 and it's reasonable to want to update the document.

Kimberly Young said that Diana Risavi is correct - the board can provide input but only the political subdivisions may change the agreement. Young said for this reason, this is listed only as a discussion item on the agenda.

Kimberly asked Meg what was her catalyst for requesting that the 1993 Agreement be reopened. Meg said the reason was solely because the agreement is dated 1993. Bohmke said she agreed with Diana Risavi and suggested that the jurisdictional managers can all get together to propose changes. She reiterated that the agreement needs to be updated and should be dated 2021.

David Ross said that while jurisdictional personnel have the sole authority to reopen and change the agreement, Library Board members are the most knowledgeable about the details of the agreement. He said he would reach out to his administrators and fellow supervisors to get them engaged.

Meg Bohmke said she would reach out to the Stafford County Administrator and ask him to take the initiative on reopening discussions about potentially changing the 1993 Agreement.

Kerry Devine said she has already spoken with the Fredericksburg City Manager about the matter. She agreed with Diana that jurisdictional administrators are the ones to consider changes to the agreement and agreed with Xavier that the agreement should be fashioned in a manner that allows for growth and changes so it does not have to be revised often.

David Ross expressed that all of the localities except Westmoreland have representatives from their respective boards and council and thus are qualified to discuss potential changes to the agreement.

Martha Hutzal responded that the 1993 agreement and preceding agreements were signed only by jurisdictional administrators and attorneys, not by any members of their board or council.

David Ross said that he and Meg would write the proposal, then have their jurisdictional staff reach out to other jurisdictional administrators for discussion.

Kimberly Young expressed concern that David's proposed action overlooks the intent of regional collaboration. She asked if there were any other reasons for reopening the agreement other than the date of the document. None were offered. In response, Cheryl Miller asked why then, was reopening the document even being considered?

Meg Bohmke said that she had no other suggestions, that there was no reason for the Library Board to discuss the matter further, and that she would take it to the county administrators.

Kimberly Young opened the floor for discussion and review of the budget process and reporting.

Martha Hutzel said that the requests for enhanced reporting were covered in her earlier report on the proposed FY22 budget. Hutzel said that when she became library director in 2016, she continued the existing budget process because it was working well. She said that only recently had there been a request for changes and that the library has made all of the changes requested by Library Board members and local administrators.

Meg Bohmke said that Stafford's budget director would like to see additional improvements to the reporting structure moving forward. Bohmke added that she has been watching board meetings of the Jefferson Madison Library system and found it interesting that they have budget, policy, and compensation committees made up of varied library staff members as well as customers from the public. Bohmke suggested that in the future, the Library Board should have a discussion about including the community and more staff in some of these decisions. Bohmke added that her suggestion is not a slight toward the current library administration, but rather a suggestion to be more inclusive and broaden the scope of ideas.

Martha Hutzel responded that the library culture is famous for sharing and using ideas from one library system to another and will continue to do so.

Kimberly Young announced that the Central Rappahannock Regional Library Board of Trustees wishes to convene a Closed Meeting under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act in order to discuss the Library Director's evaluation and goals and cited:

*Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(1).*

*1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body.*

Xavier Richardson moved that the Board enter closed session. Diana Risavi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote. All CRRL staff left the meeting. Martha Hutzel was called back into the closed meeting by the chair at the appropriate time. The Board convened a closed session at 5:46 P.M.

Diana Risavi moved that the Board return to regular session. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

CRRL staff members Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, and Kathy Roberts rejoined the meeting at 7:33 P.M. Martha Hutzel and all Board members were on the call at that time.

Kimberly Young reconvened the regular meeting and announced the Board of Trustees of the Central Rappahannock Regional Library does hereby certify that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed in the Closed Meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the said Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to certify the closed session. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously by roll call vote. The meeting was reconvened at 7:36 P.M.

Kimberly Young announced that the next Board meeting will be March 8, 2021 at 4:00 P.M.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 P.M.