

Carroll County Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting - Virtual
January 27, 2021
Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis the Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) Board of Trustees met virtually on January 27, 2020.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Ms. Griffith called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm and declared there was quorum.

Present:

Leza Griffith	Virginia Harrison	Kendra Hart	Joyce Muller
David Peloquin	Cindy Piazza	Karen Soisson	

Staff Present:

Andrea Berstler	Tony Eckard	Bob Kuntz	Lisa Picker
Emily Ogg	Muffie Smith	Dorothy Stoltz	Stephanie Szymanski
Joe Thompson	Mary Wells		

2. 403b Committee Report

Mr. Peloquin reported on the 403b Committee's recent meeting. On December 18, 2020 Board members Bill Bates and Mr. Peloquin, attorney Marika Ostendorf, plan advisor Al Morrison from Asset Strategy Consultants, and staff members Andrea Berstler, Muffie Smith, Terri Simmons, Tony Eckard, and Ed Leiter received a very detailed review provided by Asset Strategy Consultants of CCPL's 403b Retirement plan that is managed by TIAA. The detailed annual review shows that CCPL's plan is in good condition. After examining the performance of each individual fund offering and each target date fund, they report that overall, the 403b funds were suitable, with reasonable fees and performance. The real estate fund appears to be a poor performer due to its extremely conservative approach. However, TIAA owns the real property in this fund and it does provide some income for conservative investors. It was noted that CCPL's plan is considered by industry standards to be a small plan that holds, as of January 27, 2021, \$8.9 million in assets. Mr. Peloquin noted that the minutes of the December 18, 2020 meeting were taken by the attorney, Ms. Ostendorf, to serve as a template for future minutes. This is to assist in the understanding of the complicated jargon that is part of the review. Previous minutes have been tabled for a re-write to make them more understandable and should be approved at the 2021 annual meeting. Former Board member Bill Bates has worked diligently on them in the past. It was suggested that Mr. Bates could possibly serve on the Committee if the Board would see fit. Ms. Ostendorf reported on lawsuits surrounding retirement plans. The review which takes place annually demonstrates the Library's due diligence in providing a retirement plan for participants.

3. Minutes of December 16, 2020

***Ms. Muller moved to approve the Minutes of December 16, 2020. Ms. Piazza seconded.
Approval was unanimous.***

4. Financial Statement

Mr. Eckard presented the Financial Statement ended December 2020. Total cash balances as of 12/31/20 are \$1,760,770, this is \$231,133 more than 12/31/19.

A number of large invoices to Lewis Contractors for Exploration Commons' construction have been paid but we have yet to tap the loan from the County that is available to us, but that will happen. Major revenues from the County and State are at budget. Overall, we are \$2,286 behind budget. Unspent Prior Year Budget of \$250,777 was recognized in November. Excluding the Unspent Prior Year Budget, we are \$78,063 behind budget. There is \$13,000 in reimbursable revenue from the FFCRA – Coronavirus Family Relief Act towards qualifying reasons for emergency leave. Salaries are underspent by \$350,000 mostly in page and substitute budgets. Fringe benefits reflects the State Retirement System invoice of \$93,000, this reflects 12.4% increase over last year's invoice, for retirement for staff who do not qualify for the Teacher's Retirement System. There was a flurry of activity in December with State Tax Credits to support Exploration Commons with \$18,000. We may receive more tax credits but we are not sure at this time. Costs to run the makerspace in the former Ting office were noted. Dr. Hart asked about computer maintenance being overspent and Mr. Eckard explained that this expense is mostly for annual software contracts that our operation is heavily dependent on, these are paid at the beginning of the fiscal year; budget will catch up.

5. Correspondence and Announcements

The Kiwanis of Westminster gave \$2000 towards Battle of the Books. It was noted that Battle of the Books receives donations from all of Carroll County's local Kiwanis clubs towards the Battle of the Books program.

Ms. Berstler thanked the Board for allowing the additional days off during the holidays that was very appreciated by all staff.

6. Citizen's Time

There were no citizens present. Emily Ogg, new president of Staff Association and Finance staff member Mary Wells were present.

7. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Berstler reviewed fundraising efforts for Exploration Commons (EC). CCPL and its fundraising partners have raised \$714,000 privately. In addition LSTA grant funding has provided \$95,000; and State capital grand funding is at \$1.8 million this all equals \$2.9 million which is very successful especially in the climate we are in to raise money. This is outside the \$600,000 provided by the County. The County has also offered us a low interest loan to cover the last stretch, we will continue to work on fundraising over the next couple of months. Once construction is complete and EC is open, it will become harder to fundraise. Ms. Berstler gave kudos to Sharon Hafner Yingling, library staff, members of the Board and others who have helped us make connections to support the project.

We are in the midst of the virtual legislative session. Today, January 27, a conversation with legislators was held and featured 4 key legislators who spoke with the library community, there were 108 in attendance. CCPL staff also met with Carroll's delegation to discuss upcoming legislation and received a lot of feedback from them.

The Executive Director's Report features one page reports from the branches and Outreach and Ms. Berstler encouraged everyone to read the reports that highlight the great activities our staff are creating for our customers. Also noted is the social media snapshot that is put together by Ms. Picker. The communications staff has learned new software that works swimmingly to bring programs to the public.

Ms. Soisson asked about how things have gone with COVID exposures. Ms. Berstler said 6 staff members since last March 13, 2020 have tested positive and not one was traced to an exposure inside a branch. Staff responded quickly by getting tested, Mr. Thompson helped with book drops, and Mr. Kuntz helped with cleaning the spaces. Ms. Piazza said that the Community College uses the approach of locking down any spaces where there have been affected people for 24 hours and asked if it essential to clean. Ms. Berstler responded that our staff is highly appreciative of the efforts to clean the spaces.

Ms. Muller noted the Maryland Library Awards that were presented to CCPL staff including: Stephanie Szymanski for the Paraprofessional Award and Lisa Picker and local author Marcia Leiter who received the Marketing Award for their work on the Day by Day literacy calendars.

The EDI Taskforce continues its work and hopes to report to the Board in April. There has been a lot of thinking, considering, and processing to make CCPL a better organization.

8a. EC50E Update

Mr. Kuntz shared photos of the EC@50E project. Work inside since December is mostly cosmetic, except the kitchen. The kitchen is mostly closed up, plumbing and electrical are being finished, the exhaust hoods will go up soon. The AV vendor is installing cabling. Parking reopened in the back of the branch. There is new water service into the branch from the water main on the other side of Main Street. Painting has started specifically the yellow and gray walls. Clouds for lights, speakers, and mics are being installed in the large meeting room. The project is mostly on time, but 15 weather days will need to be made up, construction may finish at the end of March, or beginning of April. This should not affect opening. Network cabling is being installed. The new HVAC equipment installation plan will be implemented in the next 3 to 4 weeks, including a roof support or dunnage system with steel reinforcement designed to hold the weight of and elevate the HVAC equipment. It will sit above snow accumulation and allow for water to drain away from the units and not sit in standing water.

8b. Workplan Review

Ms. Berstler reviewed the FY 21 Workplan that represents projects that members of the Executive Leadership Team are assigned. We are currently half way through the fiscal year. Notes are added to the document by staff to show where they are on current projects. Due to COVID some projects were tabled.

9a. Bylaws Review

Ms. Berstler reported that a group of staff from the Executive Leadership Team took a first pass at possible updates to the Board's Bylaws. Some suggested edits include standardizing language such as use of Trustee instead of Board member, removing quotes and sections from the law, and some items that are procedural like holding meetings at each branch, which due to COVID is not happening right now. Ms. Griffith reviewed the document and made some suggestions, Ms. Muller also added some suggestions for clarity and consistency. Ms. Griffith noted that we will always comply with the Open Meetings Act and any subsequent changes to it. There was discussion around the topics of creating a different officer role of Secretary/Treasurer (this is recommended by staff because some documents ask for the signature of a secretary), and a change of officer titles to Chair and Vice Chair as noted in the law from President and Vice President. Mr. Peloquin suggested the Board continue to operate with officer titles as in the past and recognize founding documents. It was suggested that those founding document details be included in the new Bylaws document. Ms. Griffith noted that the Bylaws can only be changed with a unanimous vote of the Board.

There was a discussion of current officer terms that except for the Treasurer position, has been followed. It was noted that the Treasurer position has been held by a person with expertise in the field, even though it that is not required by law. Mr. Eckard noted that the auditors have never required expertise in the position but it is helpful for their work to have someone in the position with that type of special knowledge. Also noted: Concerns for long-term service in the treasurer position, CCPL's Board size is small - as directed in the State Law, not wanting to hamstring flexibility in the document, and trustees taking leaves of absence. As part of the discussion around officer terms it was noted that officers for each calendar year are voted on at the annual meeting. Dr. Hart asked about information on the job descriptions of the officer positions that is noted in the document, staff will research this and get back to the Board. Other items that were discussed included adding that the item sequence of a meeting can be changed, be sure that public notice of upcoming meetings is made 48 hours in advance, change language to reflect that attendance at a meeting by audio or video is counted as being part of the quorum, leave of absence from the Board, selection of a Trustee by geographic or library branch area. Ms. Griffith suggested language about representation of diversity on the Board be added to the section about character. Ms. Berstler asked everyone to send notes and suggestions to the Bylaws revision to Ms. Szymanski prior to the February meeting. Staff will compile suggestions to bring a full updated Bylaws draft to the Board to review at that meeting.

Ms. Berstler noted that this is Dr. Kendra Hart's first Board meeting, she thanked Dr. Hart for being willing to serve and welcomed her to the Board.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Muller moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Piazza seconded. Approval was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm

Leza Griffith
President