

Carroll County Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
Virtual
April 22, 2020
Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis the Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) Board of Trustees met virtually on April 22, 2020. CCPL has been closed to the public since March 14, 2020 due to the crisis.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Ms. Muller called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm and declared there was quorum.

Present:

Bill Bates	Virginia Harrison	Joyce Muller	David Peloquin
Karen Soisson			

Staff Present:

Andrea Berstler	Jillian Dittrich	Tony Eckard	Buff Kahn
Kayla King	Bob Kuntz	Ed Leiter	Lisa Picker
Rita O'Brien	Nadine Rosendale	Beverly Smith	Muffie Smith
Dorothy Stoltz	Stephanie Szymanski	Joe Thompson	

2. Staff Report – Taneytown Branch

Branch manager, Jillian Dittrich reported on activities from this past year at the Taneytown branch with a PowerPoint. She noted how our lives have changed during the COVID-19 crisis but shared the last 10 months of normal activity with the Board by focusing on three areas: the space, the programs, and the staff. Changes to the space include: the computer area was reconfigured, it has helped staff by cutting down on behavioral issues and helped customers of all ages. The branch has a very active after school population and the teens like the new set up and for adults it allows for more privacy. The teen and adult areas were flipped so senior customers do not have to walk to the back of the building. New toys were brought in for the children's play and learn area. All staff helped make the changes. A wide range of programs have been enjoyed by customers and include one by Kayla King, who was attending the meeting representing the Staff Association, called a Whale of a Tale for 32 preschoolers; Lori Holechek creates preschool science programs including one on weather that hosted many in-home preschool providers and grandparents who brought kids to the program. Amy Schildwachter is well known in the community and she works to build partnerships, she worked with Kennie's to donate large boxes for a program called Blast Off to the Movies. Last summer, Renee Brown worked with the food service staff at CCPS who brought lunches to the library for children from birth to 18 whether they were enrolled in school or not, 1,676 lunches were served during the 10 week period. Staff hope to continue the program this year and with financial assistance from a local church to provide food for adults also. Mark Foley creates great partnerships and he did a program at Brewery Fire, a local brew pub on making beer, the program was full of people we don't usually see. He is planning to start a book club called Books and Brews. Dolores Schuyler has been working with the local Taneytown government, police, and businesses to hold an annual Trunk or Treat program, this successful program has been going on for 3 years. As a

recent graduate of the Library Associate Training Institute, Pam Kraemer asked Ms. Dittrich to thank the Board for her ability to attend this training; Ms. Kraemer does a lot of outreach for the branch by attending festivals, the National Night Out and provides many programs. Before closing Ms. Dittrich held two virtual reality programs for teens who loved it. She also took it to the local senior community Carroll Vista and had 38 attendees. She said we have the best staff in the world, when they got the call on March 13 to close for the COVID crisis, we didn't think we would still be working from home six weeks later. The staff have been working from home, getting used to new coworkers and office space, balancing homeschooling, senior care, and many other scenarios. They are still learning the best ways to connect with each other and customers. Using Microsoft Teams and Zoom, staff at Taneytown have taken over 65 trainings and staff have created online programs like an escape room, storytimes, and booktalks. With thanks to the Communications department, the staff have been letting customers know that they are missed. Ms. Muller thanked Ms. Dittrich and her team for their work with new and difficult things. Ms. Harrison noted they have been very busy, it is quite an accomplishment and was complimentary about the staff working on creating face masks. Ms. Berstler noted that all branch managers are working to keep their communities up to date by using social media. Ms. Muller thanked Ms. King for attending on behalf of the Staff Association and the branch programs she provides.

2b. 403b Report

Mr. Bates and Mr. Peloquin reported on the 403b Committee meeting held on March 17, 2020. The purpose of this meeting was to review the 12 Target Date funds that were added to CCPL's 403b plan with TIAA in 2019. Normally these would have been reviewed at the annual meeting in December 2019 but were not reviewed because they were new. The review prepared by Al Morrison of Asset Strategy Consultants showed that these funds are all reasonable and prudent additions to CCPL's plan. The committee hopes these funds will become more well-known with plan participants because these funds are for people who are not investment experts, it is more of a one stop shop. In analyzing the Target Date funds the performance relative to benchmarks is very good. Marika Ostendorf of the Baldwin Law Group gave information on updating the plan that includes in-service distributions, adds withdrawals for reasons affiliated with FEMA declared disasters, postponement of distribution dates for workers who have retired from age 70 ½ until 72, and tightens up allowable distribution periods for beneficiaries who are not spouses which is required by the federal government. There have also been some plans with deep pockets (CCPL's plan is not a large fund) being challenged because of not reviewing fees and the fund offerings. Due to holding these reviews CCPL is showing that it is engaged with a fund expert and an attorney and is doing the job of reviewing the fund. Ms. Ostendorf also placed the CCPL plan into an IRS approved document. That work is finished and the plan is now with TIAA as required.

3. Minutes of February 19, 2020

Ms. Muller asked for approval of the Minutes of February 19, 2020. Approval was unanimous.

4. Financial Statement

Mr. Eckard noted that we have three quarters of this fiscal year behind us with the most interesting one to go. He shared the financials that ended on March 31, 2020. Cash balances are at \$1.5 million, \$336,959 more than last year, which may be a function of the closing. Since

being closed, the Finance department is paying bills and running payroll. Not all payments are through the system yet and there may be some commitments against the \$336,000. The revenue picture as of March 31, 2020 looks good, however revenue is \$69,000 lower due to not having as much carryover from last year. The impact of the closing on revenues is not yet apparent and at this point staff is estimating it could be as much as a \$220,000 impact to revenues due to loss of fines and passport fees. County and State fees are on budget, we have collected everything from the County in this fiscal year. One installment from the State remains to be received. There is some concern that this could be withheld, but we won't know until May or June, the amount is \$178,000. That has never happened in the past and it was only noted in an overabundance of caution. In expenses, salary savings are at \$188,000 with additional payroll tax savings of \$29,000, this could possibly cover the expected revenue loss. The April financials will be telling in how much expense savings we have. Staff are still adding online materials and doing programs. The Exploration Commons campaign budget was reviewed, some donations have been made and pledges have been collected, another reason why there is a higher cash balance. The Exploration Commons Design Phase 1 grant still has a few dollars to spend; Phase 2 is just showing the state side of revenues which will have a local match. Once construction starts, this statement will develop with funding that is borrowed from the County, staff plan to draw on the loan as far into the future as possible. The Exploration Commons LSTA grant will help outfit the space. Some grants now have submission dates extended; one of those is the Staff Development grant, because many conferences have been cancelled we have been given extra time to use the funds. It was noted that the Exploration Commons project is moving forward but fundraising has slowed. There is optimism for this project because it is a technology based project. A newspaper article about the County's FY 21 budget was noted; and Mr. Eckard explained that at this point the Commissioners have approved a proposed FY 21 operating budget that will give CCPL flat funding, the same as FY 20. This would not include an additional 3% or the requested additional funds to cover minimum wage. The Commissioners are looking to revisit the FY 21 operating budget in the fall. Ms. Muller noted this is early times and that everyone trusts the staff and their expertise.

5. Correspondence and Announcements

1. Newspaper articles about CCPL in the Baltimore Sun and Carroll County Times were noted. The Board congratulated staff for being resourceful and committed to our communities and thanked Ms. Picker for her work in getting this information out to the community.

6. Citizens Time

There were no citizens present.

7. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Berstler said everything has changed in the last 6 weeks. Although there aren't physical things to attend to staff is watching the budget carefully and encouraging staff with program planning. The Strategic Plan team has started working again. Ms. Berstler thanked Concetta Pisano and the Materials department for purchasing digital materials to address the desires of our community to keep reading. They are looking at a second move of funds to continue to supply the demand in digital materials. Expanded resources include Kanopy a great source of indie movies and classics. Staff were watching the last months of the fine free for minors legislation, which did not get through to a final vote and looks like it won't be signed at all. There will not

be a special legislative session in May. There was also additional funding for the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) and capital funding included in the bill, it looks like those items will receive the same funding levels as in FY 20. Staff want to leave the fine free subject on the back burner for now since we have been living without fine revenue for 6 weeks and it probably won't be until June 1 when revenue loss can be evaluated. Highlights from the branches and Outreach were noted. Mr. Thompson pulled this together and from now on he will also be bringing an activity report to the Board. The parking agreement for Exploration Commons between the City and County has been fully executed. Ms. Berstler has been holding weekly Town Hall meetings for staff, the latest had 111 staff members attend. There are lots of questions including ones about what it is going to look like when we reopen. Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has started working on a schedule for when we are allowed to open. Ms. Smith noted that staff are giving her very positive feedback about holding the Town Hall meetings. Ms. Berstler invited Board members to attend the meetings.

Ms. Berstler announced an opportunity for CCPL. Every year the county's Economic Development office hosts Baltimore-based economist Anirban Basu at a breakfast where he gives an overview of upcoming economic expectations. The breakfast is not being held. Mike McMullin at the Chamber of Commerce reached out to Mr. Basu and asked if he would like to do a webinar in place of the breakfast. Mr. Basu has agreed and the Chamber asked CCPL if Exploration Commons would be a good sponsor for the webinar. Staff feel this is a good fit to reach out to the business community with information about the technology based project. It is planned for May 13. Everyone agreed it is a good idea.

Mr. Peloquin asked about the change in auditing firms. Mr. Eckard said that we are going to work with Cohn Reznick, they do the County's annual audit. It was a good process, the committee examined the different proposals and in the end it came down to two firms, the incumbent and Cohn Reznick. Cohn Reznick is a little less expensive but they also are the new standard in Maryland for library auditing firms. Many other library systems use them and they have expertise in the State Retirement system, OPEB, and government audit standards. Mr. Eckard said for the 19 years he has been at CCPL, CliftonLarson (and their predecessors) have been our auditor, it seems to be a prudent time to make a change. The committee was unanimous in the choice of Cohn Reznick. Changing auditors will be a lot of hard work for the finance department especially with the latest budget news and a new county budget analyst.

Ms. Berstler commended the staff in general and ELT for their yeoman's work in keeping everything running and not under ideal circumstances, they have worked as a very strong team. Ms. Harrison said the email message that went out on Monday was very informative.

8a. Exploration Commons Update

Mr. Kuntz gave an update about the Exploration Commons project. The project went out to bid, 14 statements of qualification from prospective contractors were received. Those have been scored. CCPL staff met with the County this Monday and came up with a top 4. The County did a safety qualifications check which include insurance and employment management rating, based on the number of reported accidents on 3 years of ratings. There is an upcoming meeting to score the top 4. We will have a contractor by the end of June, possibly early to mid-June. The firms will give presentations and the County will perform negotiations. At this time, there's no idea of how the bids will come in, prices on some things are coming down, some things are going up. Hoping to have a good group of bids all within the budget range.

9a. Behavior Policy Updates

Ms. Muller asked the Board to approve changes to the Behavior Policy as presented by staff.

Ms. Harrison moved to approve the changes to the Behavior Policy. Mr. Bates seconded. Approval was unanimous.

9b. Strategic Plan Extension

Ms. Muller asked the Board to extend the life of the current Strategic Plan from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021. There were several reasons including the current COVID 19 crisis that is keeping staff from being able to meet as often as needed on the project and also to align the Strategic Plan with the fiscal year instead of the calendar year.

Ms. Harrison moved to change the end date for the current Strategic Plan from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Ms. Soisson seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Ms. Soisson received questions about wifi access from members of the public and she asked Mr. Kuntz about wifi at the branches and its use outside of the buildings. Mr. Kuntz said the wifi covers the parking lots and the park in the front of the Westminster branch. CCPL has been providing wifi 24/7 for 7 or 8 years. There are regulars who sit in the parking lots using the wifi, it is getting a lot more use now. It was noted all library branches and headquarters have the same system and the signal is as strong outside as it is inside. Ms. Berstler said we know that some of our branches have a population that count on this connection.

Ms. Muller thanked everyone for their hard work and asked everyone to take care during this crisis.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Peloquin moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Soisson seconded. Approval was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

Joyce Muller
President