

Carroll County Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting - Virtual
May 26, 2021
Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis the Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) Board of Trustees met virtually on May 26, 2021.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Ms. Griffith called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and declared there was quorum.

Present:

Leza Griffith	Virginia Harrison	Kendra Hart	Joyce Muller
David Peloquin (except closed session)	Cindy Piazza	Karen Soisson	

Staff Present:

Suzanne Arcuri	Andrea Berstler	Tony Eckard	Bob Kuntz
Lisa Picker	Muffie Smith	Dorothy Stoltz	Patty Sundberg
Stephanie Szymanski	Joe Thompson		

Also present for part of the meeting: Sharon Hafner Yingling, Chair of the EC Fundraising Committee

2. Close Meeting to Discuss Personnel Matter

Ms. Muller moved to close the meeting to discuss a personnel matter. Ms. Harrison seconded. The meeting closed at 6:02 pm. The Board met to review applications for the Mt. Airy Trustee position.

3. Reopen Meeting

The Board voted to reopen the meeting at 7:00 pm.

4. History Day Local Award Winner

The History Day local winner was unable to attend the meeting, the presentation will be re-scheduled.

5a. Exploration Commons Fundraising Update

Exploration Commons Fundraising Chair, Sharon Hafner Yingling gave an update on fundraising efforts. It's been 3 years since the fundraising effort started. The staff working on the project including Bob Kuntz, Jen Bishop and Andrea Berstler have planned out everything with great effort. In 2018 the estimated cost of the project was \$4.2 million with half the funding provided by the State, some local funds and \$2 million to be raised. Keeping in mind that the library had never done any fundraising before, the committee made a good start but it was not easy because people who have money were not as wired into technology as others. It was not as simple as asking for help with a new emergency room or food for hungry people. Then the pandemic hit in 2020 and efforts came to a halt. During the pandemic costs for construction, equipment and furniture went up and the revised projection costs are now \$4.9 million. Due to the efforts of Ms. Berstler and Mr. Eckard, the good news is that the County

Commissioners have increased their support from \$600,000 to a total of \$1,666,000. In the past month \$60,000 has been raised and there is \$220,000 to go. Ms. Yingling gave a shout out to the CCPL Friends for sending a letter to their members, \$4,500 in donations have been received. People are now talking about the project and understand what it can bring to the community. Ms. Muller commended Ms. Yingling for being a wonderful representative of the project, for her and her husband's financial support, her hard work and perseverance. Ms. Soisson asked if there are tours set up. There is one planned with Penguin Random House on May 25. Ms. Berstler reported that she and Dr. Joan Coley met with Carroll Hospital staff and secured a major donation from them. We are also hoping to take the new McDaniel College president on a tour. Ms. Griffith and the Board thanked Ms. Yingling for the report and all her efforts on behalf of CCPL and the project.

5b. Mt. Airy Branch Report

Branch Manager Patty Sundberg presented the Mt. Airy Branch report. At last year's presentation CCPL was just getting ready to have staff return to the branch. Staff pivoted programs to the virtual space and in the slideshow was the picture from last year's presentation of a child watching a library program at home. Library Associate (LA) Adult Meg Griffin is the local Mt. Airy historian and did programs on the history of the Mt. Airy carnival, local Sears catalog houses, the local parade, and a walking tour of the town with her dog. Circulation clerk Amber George created programs on meditation and yoga and journaling which tied in with programs for seniors on memory writing. Staff made 125 kits for the participants of the teen/adult program on bath bombs. LA 2 Sara Arnold created different programs on resources in the library: how to use databases efficiently, information about online services including Medline Plus, teacher resources, job tools, and a program on bicycle maintenance. An example of the staff working with the community: in the middle of the 2020 summer staff received calls from the senior center book club participants who asked if they could meet via Zoom. The group has been meeting for over 10 years, they were really isolated and had been calling to get express pick up of items. They are very close knit and active and it was nice to get the group together. The Mt. Airy Garden Club has been working to keep the garden beautiful, they come in seasonally to care for the area. Ms. Sundberg asked staff what they have learned this year and the staff talked about using Zoom and Facebook and that by doing online programs people from all over the world can access their programs. Someone from Great Britain complimented the bicycle maintenance program. Everyone is more resilient and remember most how quickly things changed over and over again. There is more compassion, and everyone has made it through even though they have been fearful of changes in technology. Staff have become excited about teaching customers about devices, Zoom, and other technology. They also have a better understanding of customers' emotional connection with the library. Many people came in and thanked the staff when the branch opened back up because they had been so isolated. Staff members have said they have learned to smile with their eyes, they are happy to be at the library and are looking forward to seeing what the future holds.

6. Minutes of April 28, 2021

Ms. Soisson moved to accept the Minutes of April 28, 2021. Ms. Muller seconded. Approval was unanimous.

7. Financial Statement

Mr. Eckard reported on the Financial Statement that ended on April 30, 2021 which is ten months into the fiscal year. Total cash balances are \$3,447,020 this is \$143,652 more than this time last year. Cash balances are a little challenging at this time because invoices are moving in and out for the Exploration Commons contractors, with subsequent reimbursement from the state. There was a first draw on the

loan from the County for EC of \$500,000. The major revenues from the County and State are at budget. Overall, we are \$77,194 behind budget. The unspent Prior Year Budget of \$250,777 was recognized in November and excluding the Unspent Prior Year Budget we are \$152,971 behind budget. There was over \$500,000 in salary savings mainly in hourly positions. Security for Taneytown and Westminster is underspent by \$40,000. Some supplies have qualified for CARES act funding, such as hand sanitizers, bleach, and bags for express pickup. Building supplies, library supplies, processing supplies, and programming supplies are all underspent and will probably stay that way; the materials budget is also underspent. The Commissioners agreed to apply some of the County's one-time savings to Exploration Commons. There should be an unspent amount at the end of the fiscal year but we won't know what that will be until the audit process is complete, then we may be able to apply some savings as well to the project. Fundraising for Exploration Commons had improved by \$33,000 due to a major gift from Bonnie and Dick Clendaniel; the mailing to the Friends has also been successful. Sharon and John Yingling also donated additional funds over and above their original gift. Mr. Pelquoin congratulated and thanked Mr. Eckard for great work.

8. Correspondence and Announcements

There was no new correspondence. The Board welcomed Mt. Airy circulation clerk Suzanne Arcuri to the meeting. Ms. Arcuri thanked the Board for the invitation to attend on behalf of the Staff Association.

9. Citizen's Time

There were no citizens present.

10. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Berstler reported that we are still on target to go into Stage 3 on Monday, June 14 which will expand open hours to Monday – Thursday, 9 am – 8 pm and Friday & Saturday, 9 am – 5 pm. It brings back hours just as school is ending and summer reading is ramping up. Notary service will return and plans are being made to roll out passport service. There are no plans to bring back in-person programming except for some outdoors this summer. Joe Thompson and Lisa Picker are working on ideas, guidelines and plans for in-person programs that will help customers feel safe. We understand the County is planning to step back from the State of Emergency around June 15; at that point staff will ask the Board to step out of CCPL's State of Emergency. Ms. Harrison and Ms. Hart will be attending the Board orientation to be held on June 9 at HQ; let staff know if you would like to attend.

Ms. Berstler and Dr. Joan Coley met with the president of Carroll Hospital, they agreed to donate \$10,000 to Exploration Commons. Lewis Contractors has also agreed to donate \$10,000 to the project. Finksburg area residents and master gardeners Laura and Dave O'Callaghan approached staff with an idea to provide a \$10,000 grant to expand activities at the Finksburg garden to include native plants and encourage the use of the garden as library space, the grant will also pay for half of an art installation. They challenged us to raise the other half of the \$4,900 cost of the sculpture. We will make it a public fundraising effort. There was discussion about what it will mean to lift the CCPL State of Emergency. This will put back in place key policy changes that normally go to the board first. During COVID, senior management was able to make quick policy changes regarding library closures and bringing back services based on changes from the Governor. We will be returning to the normal process.

11a. EC Update

Mr. Kuntz presented an update on the Exploration Commons project. The timeline has shifted and we are now looking at a September or October opening. Steel is part of the problem and shifting gears on installation of HVAC. The original plan would be disruptive to the branch. Work was done to determine a best place to put steel that would not impact branch operations. We are now looking at building an awning at the back/parking lot entrance which would keep from closing the branch for a significant amount of time, allow the HVAC to be installed in the awning, and would not require steel that has become difficult to find for purchase. There is also other work to be done in the branch: replacement of lights, closing up of the ceilings and finishing of partition work, which could take 2 to 4 days. We are waiting to get the drawings back from the engineer for approval. Lewis Contractors say October is the worst-case scenario. Things are moving along in the lower level, some rooms are 99% done, the carpet is down, walls and trim are complete, and painting is done. Some networking and monitors need to be installed. The makerspace is almost done, the large meeting room will probably be the last to be completed. Work is being done on the induction cooktop in the kitchen. The equipment in the kitchen can't be used until the HVAC is complete because of the amount of air the hoods draw. The glass is going up on the elevator tower, when that is complete the elevator will be brought in and installed; there will then be a series of elevator inspections. We expect to get staff into the space around July 12 and then they will have the rest of the summer to work in the space, set up, practice, and train on the building systems. Mr. Peloquin asked about financial impact on the budget. Mr. Kuntz said it will be more because the contractor will have to be on site longer, the budgeted contingency of \$250,000 is mostly intact and can be used towards the overages. Ms. Hart asked if there will be lighting in the awning and Mr. Kuntz said there will be. Ms. Berstler said there is discussion about asking the architect to help cover some of the additional costs.

11b. FY 22 Operating Budget

Mr. Eckard presented the FY 22 Operating Budget for approval. The Commissioners' approved the County's FY 22 budget on Tuesday, May 25, 2021. There are lots of positives when you note that they included the additional \$1,066,000 towards Exploration Commons in addition to the \$600,000 that was approved in FY 18. The Capital budget includes \$100,000 towards technology replacement. Revenue changes to the proposed Operating Budget that are different from the budget request that the Board approved in December include an increase of over \$560,000 that came from negotiations with the county to provide a comparable salary increase for CCPL staff as is planned for County employees, one reason for this is that CCPL was flat funded in FY 21; State Aid will come in \$19,000 less than predicted; user fees for programming supplies is estimated to help recoup costs for activities, programs and supplies for Exploration Commons. Expenditures reflects these changes: increase to salaries and associated expenses to provide a 5% COLA for staff; supplies for Exploration Commons, and higher costs for library materials. Mr. Eckard and Ms. Berstler gave detail on how the salary increase came about, it included library finance staff searching the budget for savings that could be sustained. Also, when we were first told to plan on flat funding which meant no salary increases, we were directly told not to ask for any additional money only for expenses we were not in control of. In the course of the budget process when we became aware of the proposed 3% for county staff, we asked for 3%, the county looked at it on their side and said with minimum wage increasing, they raised it to 3.5% and asked if we wanted to ask for that in addition to what they were planning. Further discussion led to where county HR put in an additional 2% for compression issues due to minimum wage impact, that came late with some miscommunication and we were not included but the commissioners did consider us in their final budget talks. Their thinking was if we wanted to include the additional, we should look for it, so there was some win and lose there, we have \$346,186 to address part of the salary increase. With budget savings, this will keep CCPL from falling behind the county in comparative positions. In fiscal years 17,

18, and 19 staff received 3% and a small one-time bonus. The increase of \$31,000 for materials will be allocated to books, periodicals and electronic resources. To make the budget balance, \$30,000 of the \$40,000 e-rate funds will be put towards Exploration Point. Dr. Hart asked if the salary increase is sustainable if some funds aren't given by the County. Mr. Eckard said the County has committed the monies in their 5-year plan. Ms. Berstler thanked Mr. Eckard for all of the efforts to make this happen. Dr. Hart asked about minimum wage and compression. Mr. Eckard noted that minimum wage only affects the page staff at this time but in long range plans minimum wage will grow beyond those classifications. Over the past few years, the 3% increases helped soften the impact, the 5% gives a leap up in numbers so the impact of compression is pushed down the road. Ms. Berstler noted that staff are working on adjusting the salary scale to gain some space within the scales.

Ms. Muller moved to accept the FY 22 Operating Budget. Ms. Piazza seconded. Approval was unanimous.

11c. Strategic Plan

Patty Sundberg, Strategic Plan Committee Chair gave an overview of the proposed plan that included the goals and objections and how the committee got to this point. The team has been busy for a year and half. Every branch, IT, communications, materials, and ELT had part in the committee. The proposed plan includes the following: Vision: Cultivating community success through inclusion and engagement. Mission: Join us to experience lifelong learning through impactful programs, resources, and services. Goal 1: CCPL is recognized as a place where barriers are removed and people are invited into spaces. Goal 2: CCPL cultivates creative, engaging, and enriching programming through partnerships with the community. Every Carroll County Public Library customer experiences a connection with people of diverse stories. Goal 3: Carroll County's communities are empowered by easy and reliable access to resources that delight, inspire, and stimulate lifelong learning. Goal 4: CCPL provides services that meet the current and future needs of our customers. The first objective under each goal is staff focused with the remaining objectives focused outward toward the community. Each goal has strategies that will be shared with the branches and teams. All staff are encouraged to be part of the plan and find their role to help fulfill its objectives. Goal 2 will also include an objective that relates to the culinary aspect of Exploration Commons. Ms. Muller noted that the staff did a great job, it is easy to read, compelling to customers and everyone in the organization can understand and see their role. Ms. Sundberg said the team worked really hard and worked very well together.

Ms. Harrison moved to adopt the new Strategic Plan. Ms. Muller seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Ms. Griffith thanked everyone for a great job and Ms. Berstler congratulated Ms. Sundberg for the great work.

Ms. Berstler asked the Board to give thought to upcoming meetings. The next meeting is June 23; and the July meeting is scheduled for July 28 however many times that meeting is cancelled and there is not a meeting planned for August. The September 22 meeting is planned for the audit presentation that is traditionally held at the North Carroll branch. There was discussion on where to hold the June meeting with suggestions of Westminster and Finksburg. Staff will investigate and get back to board members to see what location might work for June. Ms. Griffith suggested that future meetings could be streamed.

Ms. Berstler reminded everyone if they want to attend the June 9 orientation to let staff know.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Peloquin moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Piazza seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Leza Griffith
Chair