

Carroll County Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting - Virtual  
November 18, 2020  
Minutes

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis the Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) Board of Trustees met virtually on November 18, 2020. CCPL had been closed to the public since March 14, 2020; branches re-opened on a limited basis on September 21, 2020.*

**1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum**

Ms. Muller called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and declared there was quorum.

Present:

Bill Bates	Leza Griffith	Virginia Harrison	Joyce Muller
David Peloquin	Cindy Piazza	Karen Soisson	

**2. Close Meeting to Discuss a Personnel Matter**

***Mr. Peloquin moved to close the meeting. Ms. Piazza seconded. Approval was unanimous. The meeting closed at 7:05 pm.***

**Ms. Muller re-opened the meeting at 7:52 pm.**

Staff Present during Open Meeting:

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

**3. Minutes of October 28, 2020**

***Mr. Bates moved to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2020. Ms. Piazza seconded. Approval was unanimous.***

Ms. Muller read this statement: On October 28, 2020 the Board voted to close the meeting per the Maryland Open Meetings Law Section 508-10a to discuss a personnel matter. Approval was unanimous, the meeting closed at 6:04 p.m.

**4. Financial Statement**

Mr. Eckard presented the most recent financial statement that ended on October 31, 2020. Two large bills for Exploration Commons have been paid and another has been submitted for payment. Staff anticipate dipping into the County loan in the very near future to continue payment of invoices. The FFCRA (Families First Coronavirus Relief Act), a law that requires certain employers like CCPL to provide employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19 provides that when we pay employees for the leave (under qualifying reasons), CCPL receives a credit against our payroll taxes as provided under the law, we have applied for \$5,000, so far. Revenues are \$55,000 behind budget due to limited service in the branches, the longer the limited service lasts the more smaller revenues will fall behind. Salary savings is at \$260,000 due to a large unspent amount for hourly staff, we are using these staff members but at a reduced pace.

Computer maintenance and copiers are overspent due to the posting of pre-paid contract invoices, budget will catch up. Exploration Commons fundraising increased thanks to Bill and Janeen Bates. Many thanks for their donation. The Exploration Commons capital grant for the construction phase reflects payment for contractual services. The County CARES act grant reflects a \$9000 award that the County applied for and shared some with CCPL.

Mr. Peloquin asked about funding from the County and State; from Mr. Eckard's years of experience, if he could layout a worst case scenario due to the pandemic. Mr. Eckard noted that CCPL takes a toll when we are flat or minimally funded because we absorb increases in many expenses. Relief for this would have to come from the County and their situation is very uncertain especially with income tax revenue. The Board thanked Mr. Eckard for the report.

## **5. Correspondence and Announcements**

The Enoch Pratt Author Breakfast will feature authors Joy Reid and Sunny Hostin and will be held on February 6, 2021. Let staff know if you would like to be registered for this event.

## **6. Citizens Time**

Taneytown library associate, Lori Holecheck was in attendance as the Staff Association rep and finance staff member Mary Wells was also in attendance.

## **7. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Berstler noted that Board packets have a copy of the FY 20 Annual Report: CCPL in the Time of Covid. Ms. Smith and Mr. Thompson are doing climate survey follow up meetings with staff. Ms. Berstler will also meet with staff regarding climate survey results. So far, they are getting additional information to assist in creating a climate for staff that is welcoming and professional. The strategic plan work is going well, the group just met and are beginning to grasp a vision of where the library needs to move in the next 3 -5 years. More will be brought to the Board in the spring.

## **8a. EC@50E Update**

Mr. Kuntz reported on the Exploration Commons project. Walls are up except for the glass ones. Most of the plumbing and electrical is in the walls and some walls are being closed up. A meeting on the kitchen to finalize the equipment, locations, and what is needed for the trades to install the equipment, was held. The block work on the elevator tower is going up and is now above the fence line. Excavating for the back emergency exits is going on now. There will be work to be done out front to hookup to the new water line. We are hoping to do some of that during the November 30 – December closure. The closure will enable BGE electrical work which involves a full outage in the building. Work upstairs is complete, holes for the vents have been cut to go to the roof. The Ting/EC Makerspace has been busy with 3D print requests and customers using the laser cutter and 3D printer. A Rotary Club grant is funding two 3D printers to be built for EC50E, one that the ARC is putting together and one that will be built by the Boys and Girls Club of Westminster. The Board thanked Mr. Kuntz for the update.

## **8b. Prospective Trustee Interview Date**

Ms. Muller reached out to two prospective Trustee candidates in the Mt. Airy area who declined the invitation at this time because they are engaged in other community service projects. Please send suggestions to Ms. Muller or Ms. Berstler for this position. Ms. Muller and Ms. Berstler met with a prospective trustee from the Westminster area.

Ms. Muller said she hopes to send out a date after Thanksgiving for the entire board to interview this candidate, it will be at 7 pm. The list of questions and bio will be sent to the board.

#### **9a. Preliminary FY 2022 Operating Budget**

Mr. Eckard presented information on the preliminary FY 22 operating budget. When we received direction from the County budget office for FY 22, we interpreted the message that our starting point would probably be flat funding, however they did say to include mandated or contracted expenses that will go up in the next year. Staff look to communicate that to the County and have identified \$170,000 of increased costs that meet that criteria and believe that before the December board meeting more will be identified. The risk of a flat-funded budget is losing ground in many budget lines and we have to consider that we are flat funded in this fiscal year. Minimum wage will go up in January 2022 and we didn't receive help for the increase in 2020. We want to communicate there are lots of costs outside our control that we are facing. \$170,000 is about 1.8% over our current appropriation and would not get CCPL anything above what we are able to do now. In revenues we project an increase of \$24,000 to State Aid, this will be dependent on the legislative session in 2021. The carryover is budgeted at \$175,000 because of salary savings, however we do have to absorb the minimum wage increase and bringing on Exploration Commons staff. We have gone fine free and since dealing with the pandemic we have cut back our other smaller revenues by 25%, for FY 22 we expect to maintain those budgets at their reduced levels. Smaller revenues include passport service fees, meeting room fees, vending machine use, county collections, and fax fees. Staff feel that revenues are not going to return to normal levels even if things return to normal. The total revenue for FY 22 will be increased by 1% over FY 21. We will also need to be prepared for flat funding, even if the Commissioners are sympathetic, they may only be able to afford flat funding. We are very lucky here in Carroll because County government is well managed, we are insulated from the severity of other places either due to the pandemic or other economic turbulence. It was noted that although we want to offer an annual 3% salary raise to staff in this environment it goes off the table with flat funding. Mr. Peloquin asked about compression in salary classes where minimum wage will increase. Mr. Eckard said our unfunded request for minimum wage relief to the County in the current year was \$55,000 and included extra to keep the spread that is in place. There was some further discussion about compression in the rest of the salary classes, CCPL tries to stay in step with the way County staff are treated but there are exceptions made, we have applied any increases to the current scale so everyone stays in the same place, and there has been some discontent over the way this is handled, however it will take money to fix this problem. In expenditures Mr. Eckard highlighted: CCPL's retirement contribution on behalf of employees who do not qualify for the teacher's pension system has been raised to \$108,000; auditing and bookkeeping to keep with the contract signed by the auditor will go up in FY 22, and our Integrated Library System (ILS) maintenance contract costs will increase by 3.5%. All three of these items are integral to our operation. Mr. Eckard asked Board members to let him know of their thoughts and advice on this budget. The FY 22 operating budget request will be brought to the December meeting for approval and then be sent the next day to the County budget office. The Board thanked Mr. Eckard for the staff's due diligence and competence.

#### **9b. Board Resolution**

CCPL can apply for additional tax credits for the Exploration Commons project. These credits would be a new project in the eyes of the Department of Housing and Community Development to support purchase of equipment that is not eligible for the state capital grant. The credits help encourage donations. There is no guarantee we will get them, the resolution authorizes application and acceptance from the MD Dept. of Housing and Community Development.

***Mr. Peloquin moved to adopt the Board Resolution as presented. Mr. Bates seconded.  
Approval was unanimous.***

**9c. Approve Vice President**

Ms. Muller asked the Board to approve Virginia Harrison to serve as Vice President in 2021.

***Mr. Bates moved to approve Ms. Harrison as Vice President. Ms. Soisson seconded. Approval was unanimous.***

Ms. Muller thanked Mr. Bates for serving as a liaison to the Friends Board this past year. The annual Friends meeting will be held on December 3, a great event that will be virtual this year. Ms. Soisson has agreed to take on the Friends liaison role in 2021.

**10. Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Joyce Muller  
President