

Allegany County Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting

August 11, 2020

4:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Deb Hendrickson, Tom Finan, Terry Michels, Bill Bingman, Sue Rudd and John Taube.

Guests: Lisa McKenney, Andrea Everett, Ashley Swinford, Laura Shelton, Sarah McGuire, Shane Drake, Nora Drake

The meeting was called to order by Terry Michels.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on June 9, 2020 was made by Tom Finan seconded by Bill Bingman and was approved.

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of June and July 2020 was made by Bill Bingman seconded by Deb Hendrickson and was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

Introducing Sue Rudd

Sue Rudd joined the Board of Trustees for the Allegany County Library System on June 30, 2020.

Updated Policies in response to the Pandemic

John Taube and library staff identified several policies that needed to be updated in response to operating and reopening during a pandemic. Library staff reviewed the policies, and felt that adding the statement, "The Library reserves the right to modify this policy during times of local, statewide, or Federal states of emergency." maintained the clarity in each policy and allowed us the necessary flexibility to carry them out.

- Computer Acceptable Use
- Community Room Use
- Patron Code of Conduct
- Suspension of Privileges for Health and Safety Reasons

Bill Bingman moved to approve the policies with the additional statement included in each one. The motion was seconded by Tom Finan and was approved by the Board.

ACLS Telecommuting Policy

Also due to the Pandemic, Andrea Everett, Director of HR drafted a telecommuting policy and guidelines. We offered the telecommuting option to the directors; since we have more flexibility with our workload. We wanted to have a written agreement in place for the directors stating, when needed, telecommuting is an option since that is the norm within HR. In addition, having a written agreement clearly defines the expectations the library is requiring from our employees while telecommuting; also, it is a way for us to limit exposure and limit gathering if we possibly can.

Tom Finan moved to approve the ACLS Telecommuting Policy, Bill Bingman seconded and it was approved by the Board

Staff Leave Balances

John Taube reported that In order to accommodate the potential loss of vacation hours for current staff due to the Pandemic closures, we are temporarily increasing the vacation time bank to accumulate up to 3 times its annual equivalent until June 30, 2020. The current policy caps an employee's vacation bank at 2 times their annual allotment. It is hoped that extending the date to use the leave until next year will accommodate any staff losses and spread taking the leave over the next year to allow the library to afford the paid time off and maintain operations.

Fall 2020 Events Preview

John Taube provided the backstory that before the pandemic, the planning workgroup had agreed that branch staff would like greater opportunities to participate in and offer library events.

John stated that he thought we have been successful in converting our traditional Summer Reading program into both StoryTimes in the Park and a popular series of online story times. He also stated he believes we have been extraordinarily successful reopening and getting to the Sidewalk Service phase.

John outlined the plans and planning process for Fall 2020 events. In keeping with our "safety first" and "slow but steady" philosophy, we are looking to do a finite number of events and series of events in the fall. For most branch staff, we will continue to use the fall as a time to focus on phase 3, phase 4, and phase 5 of reopening. Staying focused on these goals will keep us more flexible and responsive whatever comes our way. We are looking to initiate branch staff suggested events in the winter of 2021 and we will start asking for their suggestions in late fall 2020.

For the Fall of 2020, these are the ACLS events:

- Online story times
- Story times in the park
- Cold Weather story times
 - Weekly story times on the radio

- Book fire halls and other large public spaces for story time
- Stamped Book discussions (online)
- Lawyer in the Library Programs (online)
- Social Worker in the Library programs (online)
- LaVale Cook book club (Guest chef- online)
- ChromeBooks and Hotspots loaning at South Cumberland Library
- continuing existing online book clubs and yoga

John indicated that we will be flexible and as other things pop up that may be too good to not offer and we will add them as we can.

Review of Maryland Public Library Materials Expenditures as a Percentage of Overall Expenditures

At the June Board meeting, the Board asked John Taube to prepare a report showing public library expenses on materials as a percentage of total expenditures for Maryland Public Libraries.

Attached is data from FY2018 and an early draft of FY2019. They are the most recent data available.

The data show that in FY2018 ACLS spent 9.55% of its budget on materials while the statewide average was 9.73%.

In the draft for FY2019, the statewide average was 9.81% but ACLS's percentage of spending on materials had dropped to 8.87%.

The data also show a decrease of \$18,406 in the number of actual dollars ACLS spent on collections between FY2018 and FY2019. Total expenditures between FY 2018 and FY 2019 also decreased by \$43,462.

John stated that we have always prioritized maintaining our materials budget when budgeting, and reduced the materials budget as a last resort. In the last 2 years of budgeting, we have prioritized staff wage increases (prior to that staff last wage increase was in FY2016).

John went on to say that we can continue to set priorities for each budget, but with limited annual increases, we will most likely be forced to apply those increases to the one priority we can fund each year.

Subcommittee to Review the Board Financial Reports

Given the number of grants, we now apply for and to ensure their accurate reporting to the Board, John asked if Deb Hendrickson and John Persons could join Lisa McKenney and John for a short term committee assignment to consider the methods and format for presenting the monthly financial reports. After considering the options, the committee would make a recommendation for the formats of the monthly Board financial reports.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ACLS and the COVID 19 (Coronavirus) State of Emergency

ACLS is in Phase 3: Sidewalk Service of our reopening plan.. Sidewalk Service is going very well. We started Sidewalk Service on July 15, 2020 after opening the book drops on June 26, 2020 and welcoming staff back into the library facilities. Shelving was moved from LaVale to the meeting rooms for quarantine shelving.

Due to the persistent nature of the pandemic, we have extended the waiver of fines and fees until October 1, 2020.

Lisa McKenney submitted a CARES Act reimbursement request to the county and we were awarded \$5034 for supplies and preparation expenses.

LaVale Library - Renovation and Expansion Update

John Taube met on Thursday August 6, 2020 with Murphy and Dittenhafer and the County to wrap up the design phase and set ground rules of the bidding process. We are currently in the permit application phase and expect that bids will be advertised in early September and hope to begin work in October.

John reported that we are reworking the parking lot on the east end of the building in an effort to save the large trees and simplify the design.

In preparation for the renovation, Lisa McKenney and the materials processing department distributed the entire LaVale collections to other libraries. Furniture and equipment is being moved to storage.

Annual Evaluation of the Executive Director

Discussion on this agenda item was tabled to after the meeting in closed session.

Library Staff Mediator - update

Staff and John Taube's discussions were overtaken by the coronavirus pandemic and no decisions have been made. Deb Hendrickson made a useful suggestion that we consider establishing a Personnel Committee as a means to share information, concerns, and policies on

a quarterly basis with the Board. Deb will send the article where the idea came from. The Library Board and staff will review the idea and article as we consider the future steps.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Next Board Meeting is Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 4PM

The public meeting was adjourned at 4:59PM

At 5:00PM, Sue Rudd moved to enter into closed session for the purposes of discussing the performance evaluation of the Executive Director. The motion was seconded by Deb Hendrickson and was approved by all the members present.