

# **Allegany County Library Board of Trustees**

Regular Meeting

March 9, 2021

3:30 p.m.

## **PRESENT:**

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

Guests: Lisa McKenney, Andrea Everett, Ali Cline, Laura Deneen, Ashley Swinford, Nora Drake, Laura Shelton, Maryland Appel, Kathy Murphy, Lisa Mandell, Regina Spiker, and Liz Sell.

**NOTE:** The Board meeting was held using the Zoom video conferencing platform.

The meeting was called to order by Terry Michels at 3:33PM.

At 3:34PM, Tom Finan made a motion to move into Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter. Bill Bingman seconded the motion. Board members, Deb Hendrickson, Stephanie Marchbank, Terry Michels, Sue Rudd voted to approve the motion and convene in a Closed Session on Board members. See the Closing Statement.

At 3:57PM, the Board adjourned the closed session and re-convened the open meeting.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on February 9, 2021 was made by Bill Bingman seconded by Stephanie Marchbank and was approved.

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of February 2021 was made by Tom Finan seconded by Deb Hendrickson and was accepted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Rails to Trails Project and George's Creek Regional Library**

John reported that the library system was contacted by a law firm in regards to possible compensation for library property as Allegany County considers adding a "Rails to Trails" trail from Frostburg to Westernport using existing abandoned rail trails. John expressed support for the trails project and its goals and advocated that we not seek compensation for property we may or may not own. John also indicated that the library has not been contacted by the county or any other project partners about the trails. The Board indicated that it supported the project and agreed to take a wait and see approach before taking any further action.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **ACLS and the COVID 19 (Coronavirus) State of Emergency**

The Library System moved to Phase 4, (limited public access) on Monday March 1, 2021. Laura Deneen reported that things have gone smoothly. She also indicated that volume is down and that is preferred as staff and the public are getting used to being open to the public again. John also indicated that we have had good luck with mask compliance.

### **LaVale Library - Renovation and Expansion Update**

The demo work and the wall penetrations are complete. Excavation has started and the next steps are to begin construction of the one of the two additions.

John reported that In the Maryland State Library's (MSL) conversation with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as part of submitting the budget for the Public Library Capital Grants Program, MSL staff mentioned that our project had insufficient funds as a result of the construction bids coming in higher than anticipated. The head of DBM was interested in assisting us wrap up the entire project in FY2022, consequently he asked his staff to find an additional \$323,000 in state funds to go into the capital grant program for our project. This will require an additional \$36,000 in county funds, and I have alerted county staff. County staff did not appear to be concerned that they would need to contribute additional funds.

These extra FY2022 funds will allow us to reopen in late summer 2022 rather than the fall.

### **Personnel Committee - updates**

Andrea Everett reported that the next meeting is March 12, 2021 and they are working on upgrading the performance evaluation system.

### **Review the proposal from Maryland NonProfits for Leadership Team Consulting Services**

The Board revisited John's request to hire a consultant to work with the Leadership Team. The consultant would be tasked with setting the stage so the Leadership Team would function and make decisions with agreed upon norms and practices to move the library system forward; delineate the separation of duties and responsibilities so there is clarity and accountability in our work; and to serve as a mediator that will allow us to establish new patterns to let go and move forward. John also indicated that funding for this work will be reimbursable from the FY2021 Staff Development grants.

Tom Finan made a motion to hire the consultant from Maryland Nonprofit provided that they took steps to keep all staff (Not just the Leadership Team) up to date on progress, that staff be informed on the scope of their work and the consultant be available to answer staff questions. Bill Bingman seconded the motion and the Board voted to approve the motion.

### **Upgrades to the FY2022 Proposed Budget**

John reported that he learned that the county is allowing for a 2% cola increase for county staff. John also indicated he spoke with County Administrator Jason Bennett, who indicated that it is highly unlikely that we will receive it but he understood the need to ask for it.

John and the Board discussed the pros and cons of increasing our request for county funding in FY2022 to provide a 2% cola for library staff.

Given that the proposed budget has not yet been turned into the County, the Board asked John to revise the budget request to include funds for a 2% increase for library staff. .

Our budget hearing is scheduled for Thursday March 25, 2021 at 1:10PM. Location to be determined.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES**

### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

We are working again with the Western Maryland Food bank on our annual Food for Fines celebration on April 8, 2021

We will also be holding another round of Community Book Discussions featuring the title *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson starting in March, 2021.

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 4PM.