

Allegany County Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting

April 13, 2021

4:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

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

Guests: Lisa McKenney, Andrea Everett, Nora Drake, Maryland Appel, Kathy Murphy, Sherri Uhl, Lisa Mandell, Liz Sell

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

The meeting was called to order by Terry Michels.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on March 9, 2021 was made by Tom Finan, seconded by Bill Bingman, and was approved. (Note: Deb Hendrickson was not yet present for this vote.)

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of March 2021 was made by Bill Bingman, seconded by Sue Rudd, and was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

Upcoming Board Vacancy

John reported that Tom Finan's second term as a Library Board member will end on June 30, 2021. Tom has served two terms and is currently ineligible for another term. John and the Board reviewed the Board member replacement process and set the June meeting as the day to decide which candidates we will submit to the County Commissioners. The Board reviewed its desire for diversity for the Board's composition.

The Board asked John to contact the following individuals to gauge their interest:

- Julie Westendorf of the Allegany Arts Council,
- Ian Robinson of the NAACP,
- Ben Kosewski of the UPMC Schwab Cancer Center,
- Julie McCoy of the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce,
- Michelle Walker of the County United Way,
- Mike Fiscus of REACT,
- Troy Raines of Barton Health Care Management Inc,
- Jeff Metz of Barton Health Care Management Inc, and
- Dave Weimer of Barton Health Care Management Inc.

John will speak to these individuals and report back to the Board at the May meeting.

Proposed Governance Change to Regional Resource Centers (WMRL)

John reports that State Librarian, Irene Padilla, has proposed to change the governance structure of Regional Resource Libraries in Maryland. Currently, in the Maryland Law Section (23§202), the regional libraries are governed by the Board of Trustees of the “strongest” library in the region. The law also dictates that the Regional Advisory Boards provide guidance to the regional library. Regional Advisory Boards are currently composed of representatives of each library in the region.

Ms. Padilla is concerned that Regional Resource Centers do not have sufficient oversight of their actions. Specifically, she is concerned that too often the Regional Advisory Boards draft the budget priorities and then approve the budget, rather than it be approved by the Library Board of the “strongest” library. She proposes that the law is changed so that Regional Resource Centers are governed by a public board of trustees. The Director of the Regional Resource Center would report to that Board. The current Regional Advisory Boards would be reconfigured into Advisory Councils to offer guidance.

The library directors represented by the Western Maryland Regional Library have spoken to Ms. Padilla, and voiced our concerns that the proposal does nothing to enhance collaboration or improve services to the local libraries, and may reduce our ability to direct regional resources to our specific needs.

The other two regional libraries in Maryland are meeting with Ms. Padilla in the coming days, and after those meetings, the library regional directors will meet to discuss our options. Ms. Padilla intends to introduce the bill to change the law during the 2022 General Assembly Session.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ACLS and the COVID 19 (Coronavirus) State of Emergency

John and staff reports that Phase 4 continues to go smoothly and that the Library System is drafting plans to move to Phase 5, (Open with Extra Precautions) on Monday May 3, 2021.

LaVale Library - Renovation and Expansion Update

Work is proceeding on schedule. Ralph Munstermann will replace Bruce Johnson as the project manager from Murphy and Dittenhafer as of May 15, 2021 due to Bruce’s retirement. Ralph will be moving from the Frostburg City Hall project to our project.

At our February 2021 meeting, the Board asked John to recommend a naming opportunity for a potential donor wishing to honor his mother and early LaVale staff member. Rich Johnson is hoping to name a room for a contribution in the amount of between \$10,000 and \$20,000. John requested permission from the Board’s to approach Mr. Johnson with the proposal that the Board approve naming one of the two study rooms for a \$15,000 gift.

Personnel Committee - updates

We are happy and proud to report that Maureen Caupp, Toni Richardson, Misty Humbertson, and Courtney McKay-Jensen graduated from the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) on March 17, 2021. For their capstone projects, they offered a variety of events and program ideas to strengthen our connections to the community. They will receive a cash prize and be promoted to the next Pay Grade in FY2022 for their efforts.

Leadership Team Development Project Update

Megan LaRocque of Maryland Nonprofit and LaRocque Consulting has conducted telephone interviews with several Board members. Megan also attended the Leadership Team meeting on March 31, 2021 to begin work with the team.

At our first meeting, we drafted the initial goals of the project:

- To present a united front to the staff, present that we are on the same page as a leadership team
- To work together with and support the staff; shift the perception FROM “we must be in trouble” TO “they are here to support us”, when leadership is involved / at a branch location; close the hierarchical gap between leadership (management) and staff
- To focus on improving transparent and timely communications among the leadership team and to staff
- To provide clarity on ROLES. While this team wants to continue to support one another, it would be helpful to gain clarity on where a role begins and ends on a day to day basis
- To identify where this team can work together AS A team, vs. where they work independently in their roles with very specific skillsets (group vs. team) : As a team: Shared GOALS, PURPOSE, and OBJECTIVES

Work will continue through June and the notes from our meetings are posted on the staff intranet.

Upgrades to the FY2022 Proposed Budget

Our budget hearing on Thursday March 25, 2021 went well with no indication of the likelihood of funding to offer comparable 2% increases to library staff.

Get Connected Project

We started loaning Chromebooks and WiFi HotSpots to the public on April 5, 2021. Thanks to Ashley and other's work we received good media coverage and did a demonstration with the Mayor and two Cumberland city council members on 4/6/2021.

By loaning Chromebooks and HotSpots, the goal is to make it easier to sign up for vaccines, continue seeing your doctor using video conferencing, fill out online applications for services from local, state and federal agencies, and research and explore your career path as well as apply for those positions. While the school system has done a great job of getting

chromebooks into the hands of students, we wanted to make sure our adults, seniors, and working parents had the same access to technology to improve and enrich their lives.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

ACLS is now offering DVD themed Binge Boxes to borrow. Each Binge Box has a theme, like boxing or horror or Disney princesses.

Connie Wilson, Service Leader at our Frostburg branch and former children's librarian has announced her retirement effective May 31, 2021. Her work and time with the library system has improved the lives of thousands of community members of all ages.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

In addition to our regularly scheduled events, we are hosting another series of Lawyer in the Library events on April 28, 2021. The theme for the event is estate planning.

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 4PM.