

Allegany County Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting

February 8, 2022

4:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Deb Hendrickson, Stephanie Marchbank, Renee Kniseley, John Persons, Terry Michels, Bill Bingman, Sue Rudd and John Taube.

Library Leadership Team: Andrea Everett, Ashley Swinford, Ali Cline, Laura Deneen

Location: The Board meeting was held at the South Cumberland Library. (Note: a Zoom link was also provided to the public and staff)

The meeting was called to order by Terry Michels.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on January 11, 2022 was made by Bill Bingman seconded by Sue Rudd and was approved. (Note: Stephanie Marchbank was not yet present for this vote)

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of January 2022 was made by Sue Rudd seconded by Deb Hendrickson and was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

ACLS Social Media Policy Update

Ashley Swinford, Director of Marketing and Outreach presented the updated ACLS Social Media policy and highlighted how our process works. Deb Hendrickson moved to approve the updated policy, the motion was seconded by Renee Kniseley and approved by Board vote.

Approval of the proposed ACLS FY2023 Operating Budget

John Taube started with a review of the budget drafting process. He outlined that

- We started with the Budget goals set by the Board at the November 2021 meeting.
- We reviewed the goals of the Lavale library and the desired LaVale schedule
- We reviewed the staff needed to achieve that LaVale Schedule
- We noted that system wide, our schedule is driven by the number of staff
- And then we noted that the number of staff is driven by the budget
- We noted that 49% of our budget comes from county government
- We noted that 42% of our budget comes from state government
- We reviewed our plans and assumptions that we made in preparing the FY22 budget.

- We acknowledged the need to incorporate mandatory minimum wage increase on January 1, 2023 and its ripple effect across all wages.

John stated “we set out to maintain the current hours and add Lavale hours and staffing.” We created numerous scenarios: We looked at how we could do that if we:

- We examined a straight 2% increase across the board starting July 1, 2022
- We examined applying the mandatory minimum wage adjustments on 7/1/2022.
- We examined giving no wage adjustments until mandatory minimum wage adjustments became the law on 1/1/2023
- We examined giving a 2% increase on July 1, 2022 and the mandatory minimum wage increase on January 1, 2023.

We were unable to maintain the current schedule and achieve the desired LaVale schedule. So we then sought help from staff who have scheduled staff in the past to see if we missed anything.

Using their feedback and additional adjustments, we presented a draft budget to the Board on January 11, 2022 for comment and review. As the budget draft was now a public document, we began to receive additional comments from the staff regarding the proposal.

Staff expressed concerns about how the George’s Creek, Westernport, and Washington Street libraries going to a 3 day per week schedule would harm their communities and remove access to needed services.

John described the events of the previous week “Last week, the Leadership Team received the preliminary estimate of State funding for the library system. This is the first year that the state will use the 2020 Census population figures. As you recall, Allegany county led the state in population loss from 2010 with a 9.3% drop or a loss of 6981 people. The State allocates its funding based on a mandated per capita amount multiplied by the county population. Due to our population loss, our state allocation is \$18,500 less than the current amount. Because we anticipated an increase in state funding as part of the fine free for minors bill, our income was reduced by roughly \$42,000 from the budget shared on January 1, 2022. “

Taking all this in, the Leadership Team went back to review what could be done to add a 4th day of service at these library branches while keeping our funding request from the county within reason. We decided to slow down and focus on making the LaVale Library the flagship branch and a community hub and delay evening hours at South and Frostburg for another year.

The budget we recommend for approval today includes these items:

- LaVale will be open Monday -Thursday from 10-8PM, Friday and Saturday from 10-5PM.
- South and Frostburg will be open Monday-Saturday from 10AM -5PM.
- Georges’ Creek, Washington Street, and Westernport will be open Monday-Thursday from 10AM-5PM.
- We are seeking funding to hire 1 additional full-time employee.

- We are seeking funding to hire 1 additional part-time employee.
- We are requesting an additional \$95,000 in Allegany County funding.
- We are seeking funding for a 2% wage increase for staff effective July 1, 2022.
- We are seeking funding to fund the mandatory minimum wage taking effect on January 1, 2023
- Wages of those staff earning less than the mandated minimum wage on January 1, 2023, will be increased.
- Wages for any staff member who will be making less than the starting wage for their grade due to minimum wage adjustments will also be increased to the minimum wage.
- The library wage scale will be adjusted so that the difference between the starting wage of each grade is reduced from 8% to 6%. With the 2% wage adjustment in July 2022, the majority of staff wages will be above the starting wage for their grade. This change will result in the library being a less attractive employer for new hires as we will be offering below market wages.
- We are seeking funding to provide for one time bonuses for library staff
- We are seeking funding to maintain the South Cumberland Security Guard
- We are seeking funding to add LaVale Library to the Perfect Reflections facilities maintenance contract.
- We are seeking funding to provide funds for a staff photocopier at LaVale
- We are seeking funding to add LaVale Library to our cleaning contract.
- We are seeking funding for the increased costs of utilities at LaVale
- We are seeking funding for the cost of snow removal at LaVale
- We are seeking funding to provide funding for cleaning, and office supplies at LaVale
- We are seeking funding for the expected increase in cost of natural gas as of October 2022
- We are seeking funding to restart the replacement cycle of networking equipment
- We are seeking funding for fuel costs for new Events and Outreach Van
- We budgeted for increased income from fines, copier, and printing at LaVale

John Person moved to approve the forwarding of the proposed budget and the request for \$95,000 additional county dollars to the County for consideration. Bill Blngman seconded the motion.

Terry Michels opened the floor to comments from the audience. The Board heard comments from five (5) of the six (6) attendees and three (3) of the eighteen (18) Zoom attendees. All of the speakers emphasized the importance of offering as many hours of library service as possible in the George's Creek and Westernport communities. They mentioned that those communities were underserved by county and state governments. They also advocated offering evening and Saturday hours at the George's Creek and Westernport Libraries. Mrs. Carole Kenney of

Westernport presented the Board with eighteen (18) letters from community members documenting their requests.

After listening to the public comments, Terry Michels called for the Board vote on the motion. The motion to approve the forwarding of the proposed budget and the request for \$95,000 additional county dollars to the County was approved.

Terry Michels and other Board members asked the leadership team to reexamine the schedule to explore if evening or Saturday hours would be possible.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Leadership Team Updates

- Executive Director
- Director of Administrative Services
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Outreach and Marketing
- Coordinator of Events and Programs
- Coordinator of Branch Services

ACLS and COVID 19 (Coronavirus)

All locations of the Allegany County Library System remain vital distribution points for Rapid Test Kits and KN95 masks made available by Health Departments. .

LaVale Library - Renovation and Expansion Update

John Taube reported that his running tally of costs puts the project at roughly \$15,000 over budget at this time. The contractor and county are confident that this overage will be made up by cost savings in the remaining months of the project.

The contractor reports completion of these items as of 1/23/2022:

- continue drywall in existing building
- Installed a few window frames and Glass in front addition
- Drop ceiling Grid
- installed some light fixtures
- HVAC grilles in Ceiling grid
- HVAC ductwork in Reading Room
- Framed interior of Reading room
- Installed cabinets and tops
- Installed insulation in walls and Attic
- Constructed Stormwater pond and Rock Garden pond

Daystart forecasts these items of work for the next 2 weeks:

- Continue Drywall

- Painting
- Ceramic tile
- steel doors
- Storefront glass
- Light fixtures
- continue fire suppression

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

Branch Monthly Reports for January 2022 were emailed earlier.

Ali Cline, Coordinator of Events and Programs is leading the launch of a new Tech Hour program series to assist the public using their devices.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 4PM at the Westernport Library.