

Allegany County Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting

January 10, 2023

4:00 p.m.

LaVale Library

PRESENT:

Deb Hendrickson, Renee Kniseley, Juli McCoy, Terry Michels, Bill Bingman, Sue Rudd, Gary Leasure, and John Taube.

Library Leadership Team: Lisa McKenney, Andrea Everett, Ashley Swinford, Ali Cline. We were also joined by Jess Shipley attending as part of LATI.

The meeting was called to order by Terry Michels.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on November 15, 2022 was made by Renee Kniseley seconded by Bill Bingman and was approved.

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of November and December 2022 was made by Sue Rudd seconded by Bill Bingman and was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

Upgrades and New Library Policies

In order to get ahead of any initiatives in the upcoming General Assembly, we have reviewed several policies and drafted other new policies to strengthen our position in regards to book challenges, or censorship of library events, displays, or material.

Review and adoption of updated ACLS Collection Development policy

This policy was last upgraded in 2019 and has been reviewed to clarify our policies and processes. After reviewing the changes to the policy, Bill Bingman moved to approve the policy, the motion was seconded by Renee Knisely and approved by the Board.

Review and adoption of the Events policy

This is a new policy with the purpose of setting guidelines for the types of events and programs that are presented at the library and at community events. After reviewing the policy, Juli McCoy moved to approve the policy, the motion was seconded by Deb Hendrickson and approved by the Board.

Review and adoption of the updated Code of Conduct

This policy was last upgraded in 2020 and is revised to support a safe and respectful environment for all those who use and work at the library. After reviewing the changes

to the policy, Gary Leasure moved to approve the policy, the motion was seconded by Bill Bingman and approved by the Board.

Review and endorse the ACLS Freedom to Read and View statement

This is a new policy to communicate our position that our community should have the freedom to consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single individual, publisher, government or church. We believe that it is every person's responsibility to select materials and events and programs they wish **to** read or view as well as select what **not** to read or view. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for their children's use of library materials and for selecting which events to attend. After reviewing the statement, Sue Rudd moved to endorse the statement, the motion was seconded by Renee Knisely and approved by the Board.

Review and adoption of the updated Telework policy

At the November Board meeting, the Board asked John and the Leadership Team to draft a revision to the current Telecommuting policies and procedures to address potential inconsistencies and processes. Andrea drafted the attached upgraded policy and the policy was discussed at the 12/21/2022, and 1/4/2023 Leadership Team meetings prior to sending it to the Board for adoption. After reviewing the changes to the policy, Bill Bingman moved to approve the policy, the motion was seconded by Juli McCoy and approved by the Board.

Sharing the most recent statewide public library statistics

In order to help better understand the Allegany County Library System in the context of other public libraries in Maryland, John shared the latest statewide statistical report, FY2021. The report is not comprehensive but may raise some interesting questions and observations for us to consider. John suggested that we look it over and revisit the report with any questions at the February meeting.

Discussion of Board of Trustees continuing education

Terry reported on valuable training she attended as part of another Board and suggested we look at www.boardbuild.org as a tool to enhance our capacity as a board. Board members expressed interest in additional tools to be an effective board. John indicated he would consult with the regional library to incorporate this into our scheduled joint board retreat.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Leadership Team Updates

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

Leadership Team members each added a highlight from their monthly reports.

WSL Windows and Sidewalk grant update

John reported that scope of work has expanded to include repointing the stone walls and enhancing the stone caps to add additional integrity and duration to the walls

Allegany Arts Council Grant Partnership

The deadline for proposals was December 30, 2022. A selection committee of 10 community representatives will meet on 1/14/2023 to review the proposals for selection to the next round of project development. Selection committee members include library staff, the president of the LaVale Friends group, County staff, Arts Council members, and past Maryland State Arts Council representatives. In the next round, three (3) proposals will be selected for further development and will be due on 3/1/2023.

Library matters in front of the General Assembly

John reminded the Board that public libraries in Maryland have two (2) pieces of proposed legislation in the 2023 General Assembly.

- Enabling Legislation for Collective Bargaining in Maryland Public Libraries.
- Regional Resource Center Reorganization Bill

Proposed Western Maryland Libraries Joint Board Summit

Tentatively we are looking at May 3, and 4, 2023. We are looking at using this time for Board education and library advocacy work.

FY24 Budget Projections

At the November Board meeting, the Board adopted a strategy to advocate that library wages start at \$15 per hour starting in FY2024. The Board also requested that we consider increasing the number of branch staff by two (2) Service Specialists, and increase the number of Programming Specialists with two (2) additional staff in our FY2024 County Budget request.

John reported on some preliminary calculations and with no other budget changes:

- It will cost roughly \$117,335 for ACLS wages to start at \$15 per hour,
- It will cost roughly \$31,000 per Service Specialist,
- It will cost roughly \$33,500 per Program Specialist, and
- We will have to budget \$10,000 per new employee for health Insurance.

John presented a table outlining the associated costs for several options.

John recommended that we draft our request to the county with the goals described at Plan F on the attached FY24 Budget Proposals Summary. Plan F ensures that LaVale is staffed at a level that allows them to meet our goals, it provides sufficient staff at all branches to cover absences, and elevates our starting pay to levels consistent with the local job market.

Ashley and John are leading discussions to determine the best strategy to advocate for our needs in this budget cycle. The next step in the budget drafting cycle is to present a draft budget at the Boards February meeting for consideration.

Quality of Worklife Survey - Interim report of results

Gail Griffith conducted six (6) mixed staff group meetings the week of December 5, 2022 to discuss the survey results and gather more insights regarding the findings. Gail met with the Leadership Team on December 8, 2022 to share her preliminary findings. After reviewing the findings, Gail led the Leadership Team in creating a "Charter" for the team and organized a shared "todo list" for Leadership Team members to immediately start to address several of the staff's concerns.

At the Board meeting, Gail presented the preliminary findings, provided a roadmap of next actions, and answered questions from the Board. The proposed path forward relies on the Leadership Team to work together to repair, build and model actions for the system and the rest of the staff. The Leadership Team has the power, knowledge, skills, position, and abilities to make the most positive change to the library system.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

ACLS Monthly Reports for November and December 2022 were sent via email.

Starting in January 2023, Leadership Team members will also be presenting monthly highlights of activities, accomplishments, and challenges report for the Board. These will join the monthly branch highlights and also be shared with staff as another opportunity to communicate all the things we are doing.

John and Shea Morse (Frostburg Service Leader) have held several meetings with the treasurer and president of the Frostburg Friends. Using data compiled by Lisa McKenney, we were able to show how their reimbursements for the photocopier allow us to afford a color copier/printer at the Frostburg Library. We also clarified the origin and use of the Kruson and AAUW estate gifts.

We are happy to report that the County has agreed to plow snow from the parking lot at the LaVale Library.

The LaVale Lions Club donation for the LaVale Library is still working its way through Club procedures.

Special thanks go to Jason Armstrong who monitored the HVAC system at LaVale over the holiday weekend to make sure it continued to operate during the colder than typical weather.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 4PM at the George's Creek Regional Library.

The meeting was adjourned.

At 6:35PM, Bill Bingman moved that the Board enter a closed session to discuss a personnel matter. The motion was seconded by Renee Knisely and approved unanimously by the remaining board members.

The closed session of the meeting was adjourned at 6:55PM.