

Allegany County Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting

May 14, 2024

4:00 p.m.

LaVale Library

PRESENT:

Deb Hendrickson,-Renee Kniseley, Bill Bingman, Sue Rudd, Gary Leasure, and John Taube.

Library Leadership Team: Lisa McKenney, Andrea Everett, Ashley Swinford, Ali Cline, Shea Morse

The meeting was called to order by Renee Kniseley.

A motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting on April 9, 2024 was made by Sue Rudd, seconded by Bill Bingman and was approved.

A motion to accept both the statistical report and the financial reports of April 2024 was made by Bill Bingman seconded by Deb Hendrickson and was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

Sue Rudd requested that the library present to the Lifetime Learning group in November, 2024. John, Shea, and Ali will propose the date and prepare the presentation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Proposed FY2025 Operating Budget

John started to discuss the status of the FY25 operating budget by saying that the cut will be a step backward for the public and the staff. As you know, the county is cutting our appropriation by 10% or by \$122,000, at the same time health insurance premiums are increasing by 15.34%. This has put us in a very difficult position to continue serving the communities as we have for the last 2 years.

John reviewed the budgeting timeline and the balances at each stage. Currently, he said the budget cuts have created a \$125,000 deficit in our budget plans for FY25.

Taking a queue from Gary Leasure, that the Board's role is to provide the best library service it can with the funds available, John then asked for feedback on the desired frame of reference to respond to the budget cuts.

We considered 2 frames of reference. The first frame of reference was to put library resources where they are most used and reduce services where they are less used. The second frame of reference was to make decisions based on the library's role as community centers for those we serve.

After a useful discussion of the outcomes of these approaches, the Board requested that John and the Leadership Team draft a budget where the reductions are spread across more locations and departments to avoid reductions in services. We will meet again on June 4, 2024 to review the progress on the new budget draft.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Community member Max Green requested that the Washington Street Library be spared from any cuts to operating hours. Ellen Coffee also spoke and stated that the Washington Street Library is well used by walkers and families alike. Both indicated that they thought if the library closes it is unlikely to ever reopen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

Branch Monthly Report for April 2024 is attached.

Joint Board Retreat - The regional library is hosting a Joint Board Retreat on May 16, 2024. The event will be held at the [Country Inn of Berkley Springs](#). We will be meeting at 7:30AM at the LaVale library to carpool to the event.

The completion of the Public Art Canopy over the LaVale Library patio has been delayed until mid June, 2024.

We complied with a Maryland Public Information Act request for information for a list of employees, their positions, and wages. The request went to all Maryland Public Libraries and in response to the passage of the collective bargaining legislation for library employees.

Our annual Food for Fines drive yielded 785 lbs of nonperishable food for the Western Maryland Food Bank.

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2024 at 4PM at the LaVale Library.