

Wicomico Public Libraries
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2020
4-6pm

Start Time: 4:00pm

In Attendance: Maida Finch, Chip Dashiell, George Demko, James Otway, Richard Duvall, Michelle Canopii, Audrey Orr, Scott Duncan, Karen Treber & Richard Keenan

Absent: April Jackson, John Cannon

Staff in Attendance: Ashley Teagle, Cheryl Nardiello

Previous Minutes:

Review of February 18, 2020 meeting minutes. **Motion to Approve:** Aubrey Orr, Seconded by George Demko. All in Favor. **Motion carried.**

Reports:

Consent Agenda

Following Reports were reviewed:

- **Gift Report**

Cheryl Nardiello stated the report reflects for February and March two donations that we received. One was from Edward Jones Foundation, Franklin Cooper. A \$25,000 donation was made from the estate of Diana Klick. No spending on either of those reports. Maida Finch asked if we send letters for donations and Ashley Teagle stated that thank you letters went out for both donations.

- **Statistical Report:**

Ashley Teagle stated that we did a few notable events just before we closed for Covid-19. The first was the February 25th Crazy Horse book and author visit. Salisbury University helped us out with this because it overlapped with trying to wrap up the electrical panel repairs. The library was closed that day, but we still had about 40 people come to the author event.

On March 5th we also got the Maryland Humanities Council Grant to bring Galen Abdur Razzaq, he is a musician that came and did a presentation for us on Jazz and the Civil Rights Movement. This was not as well attended as we would have hoped, about 20 people attended. These were the big programs before we closed and discontinued all programming.

- Michelle Canopii questioned what the hashtag was on page 4 of report. Ashley Teagle stated it was a date formatting error.

- **Donations Report:**

Cheryl Nardiello stated that the donation report reflects the amounts given in the Gift Report the total sum of these was \$153,547.36.

- **Grant Report:**

Ashley stated there was not much to update, after she sent out the packet we found out we did not get one of the ALA grants, the Game On grant which would have allowed us to have purchased gaming materials. That information will be updated for the June meeting. Otherwise we are holding steady with the grants.

The United Way reached out to us because we are a partner agency for Project Read but since the library is now closed the understanding is that they are going to hold those funds while we because we are not able to actively use the money. There would be more information once they hear from other agencies. Maida Finch added that with the United Way many people who pledged donations may or may not be able to contribute due to losing jobs. Ashley stated that she told United Way that we hope we can remain as a partner because she feels the demand will be there for Project Read as people are trying to get back on track after Covid-19.

The Chesapeake Bay Trust - we were supposed to launch the Story Walk at the Green Festival which likely will not happen. Ashley Teagle stated she did not know if we have gotten word that they have cancelled the festival, but we are trying to work out how to store the signs in the meantime.

Friends Committee:

- Audrey Orr stated that financially the Friends are having the same issues due to Covid-19. The bookstore is closed, and the book sale scheduled for early May is not going to happen in early May.
- Light of Literacy also had to be postponed.
- The Friends will have \$8,000 to \$12,000 less in income this fiscal year from these cancellations. There will also be less expenses however as well.
- There is concern about the bookstore. When it can open many of the most dedicated volunteers are retired and part of the most vulnerable populations and there may be some hesitancy with these volunteers being comfortable working in the public environment again.
- The Friends will be able to cover all the programming that they have already committed to.
- Project Read and Homework Help Center should be fine, likewise all the wish list things that the Branch Managers have asked for.

- The Friends will not be able to cover the \$10,000 that was set aside for an innovations fund that allowed staff and Ashley to work on something new and exciting. They no longer have that money and they feel that staff is busy with other things right now.
- Bottom line the Friends will be ok, they just will not be able to do some of the things they had hoped to do.
- The Friends have plans to meet on Thursday and work through what to do about Light of Literacy.
- Audrey Orr asked if she could address Light of Literacy at this point instead of in New Business. Michele Canopii agreed. Audrey Orr proceeded to say that everyone was excited about this years Light of Literacy due to the new format and the performance by Daniel Bowen. The Friends were ready. All the awards were engraved and the videos for the winners had all been completed. Sam had done all the layouts for the programs. Cheryl had gotten in all the citations from local governments and many of the local officials had committed to attend.
- The Friends will discuss on Thursday how to go forward. An idea had been spoken about to have an early morning program in the library presenting the awards and inviting the sponsors in at the same time and doing a low key breakfast, but due to the potential of the Covid-19 virus lingering it is not looking likely.
- If we needed to reschedule at the Civic Center for this event it would have to be October or November which does not make any sense.
- The Civic Center will refund the \$1000 deposit.
- One thought that had been discussed was taking that money and doing some heavy PR. Asking PAC14 to run videos of the winners, perhaps an insert in the local paper where they could highlight the sponsors as well as the nominees and winners.
- Cheryl Nardiello refunded the money for the ticket sales. Some people were kind enough to say keep the money but 80% did get their money back.
- We had about \$12,000 in sponsorship. No one has requested the money back yet.
- Michele Canopii suggested that perhaps WMDT could work with us to showcase the winners. Audrey Orr stated she wants to make sure that all the sponsors, winners and nominees get showcased in some way even if they do not have the breakfast. She would like us to have a commemorative program. Maida Finch felt this would be a good way to promote it for next year.

Nominating Committee:

Nothing to report per Maida Finch.

Directors Report:

- Ashley Teagle reported that she and Maida Finch had submitted specific comments about supporting the library and the Pittsville Branch for the counties budget hearing, unfortunately they were not read into the record. As of that hearing the operating increase was still in the county budget although after going to the Chambers Education Network meeting it is anticipated that we will come in flat or potentially see a reduction.
- According to the hearing plans to put the Pittsville library in the auto body shop are going to proceed.
- The library has been closed since March 17th at all branches.
- The downtown branch electrical panel project is complete. We did close three days at the end of February for the electrical panels.
- Sam has been doing a great job with the libraries social media while we are closed. He has been highlighting different resources and sharing other partnering organizations posts to help customers get information.
- No word from the Centre Branch Manager on whether she has heard when we can expect malls to reopen. If we can open with some sort of social distancing perhaps Centre Branch staff can be rolled into the downtown branch and we figure out how to control social distancing through scheduling when the time comes.
- Mr. Kevin Bailey has reached out to the library several times interested in selling his land to us or the county for the new Pittsville Branch. His property is about 4 acres total and he is willing to sell a smaller parcel. It is clear land. Ashley Teagle met with him on February 21st to look. The only thing to consider is that there is currently a ditch in the front of the property. We would have to have experts look at this to tell us what the cost would be to fill it in and to pave over the property to create a parking lot.
- On March 16th Ashley Teagle and Cheryl Nardiello took a tour of the proposed Pittsville Library at the auto body shop.
- Ashley Teagle gave a presentation based on a course she is taking. The presentation showcased the current Pittsville Library with photos of major structural issues that would need to be addressed soon. She also gave an overview of the proposed site at John's Auto Body Shop and pointed out the pros and cons of this location. Trustees asked questions and expressed concerns. Pate Mathews of the County asked for a list of what we need from the new building. Ashley Teagle suggested the possibility of a consultant to help us determine which direction to go.

- Maida Finch stated she was not sure that a consultant would be helpful.
- Karen Treber suggested a feasibility study. Ashley Teagle said she could check with the state to see if a feasibility study could be used with the grant.
- George Demko asked if we can get a quote of what Mr. Bailey wants for his land.
- Scott Duncan suggested that we get a jump of the process. And George Demko suggested drafting a letter of concerns to send to the county.
- Jim Otway and Richard Duvall suggested starting a Building Committee to get on top of the project and not fall behind it. George Demko was named chair of the building committee. Richard Duvall volunteered to be on the committee as did Audrey Orr and James Otway.
- Ashley Teagle mentioned she would be including information on the Strategic Plan progress on her notes going forward.
- Audrey Orr brought up the library survey she received and thought it was great.

Head Administrator Report:

- Cheryl Nardiello stated she has taken all the open positions off the website due to getting inundated with applicants because of COVID-19. We are not able to respond to them now anyway.
- Completion of the electrical panels went very well.
- Mr. Al our Custodian has been doing deep cleaning throughout the library. He has also been coming in frequently to check on the library. Lee Edwards went to Centre Branch and disinfected there. Kerry and one of her staff did a deep cleaning.
- We did get a couple of quotes on professional cleaning. The quotes ranged from \$6000 to \$16000. It can be an option if we need it in the future.
- The Book Mobile and two vehicles were also cleaned.
- For the budget for 2021 Cheryl Nardiello stated she had many different scenarios depending on how it comes out. When the county votes on it they will pick an option and go to the board.

Budget Report – March

- We were down half a month on income and expenses.
- Our income at the end of March was up 2.96% which was very good for not getting any fines or fees in. Cheryl is incredibly pleased with income so far.
- Cheryl Nardiello has been going into the branch and doing deposits and paying bills.
- For expenses right now we are at 75% of our expenses. Our disability is up but we do bill Eastern Shore Regional Library back for that and we will bill them again in June. All the other expenses are in line except for telephone. We are going to go over on telephone because during the year we did buy a couple more telephones for our staff and we did some more MiFis and expenses on telephones went up overall. We are supposed to be at 75% and we are at 84.68%. We will go over on this expense.
- Mileage for non-training - we have had a lot of staff going round to different branches and doing meetings. Now we are using Zoom to cut that down. Overall, our expenses are down 7.79% through March 31st.

Motion to Accept: Michelle Canopii. Seconded by George Demko. All in Favor. **Motion Accepted.**

County & City:

- April Jackson will be our city representative.
- Neither Ms. Jackson nor John Cannon made it to today's meeting.
- Maida Finch mentioned she was a little concerned that we have not had our council liaisons at the meetings lately. Ashley stated that she believed there may be schedule conflicts. Michele Canopii said she would reach out to both Ms. Jackson and Mr. Cannon to remind them.

Old Business:

- Ashley updated the Children's Use of the Library policy so that ages would match the ban policy.
- Children under the age of 8 and 17 can be in library unsupervised, children under 8 can have a guardian that is at least 13 years old. The old policy stated 16. According to law the guardian can be 13.
- The library removed the section on passive supervision from the policy.

- We also took out the line about parents using the computers near their children in children's area. This was to help it match the other policy in age ranges.

Motion to Accept: George Demko, Aubrey Orr seconded. All in Favor. **Motion Accepted**

Donations:

- Ashley Teagle stated this was a technicality because the policy on the website states we need board approval to accept donations.
- We received a couple of larger donations in the amount of \$25,000 and \$127,481.06
- We received state bond bill for Book Mobile, but we will have a shortfall. We need approval to put some of this donation money towards new Book Mobile.

Motion to Approve: James Otway, Seconded by Richard Duvall. All in Favor. **Motion Approved.**

- Due to increase in digital resources we would like to contribute \$10,00 to digital collections. ESRL pays for this but Wicomico makes up big portion of digital content use. Since we are not in the branches to order print materials, we would like to supplement the digital collection.
- After Board discussion approval was given for \$10,000 which is contingent on the library remaining closed beyond April 27th

Motion to Approve: Michelle Canopii, Seconded by Chip Dashiell. All in Favor. **Motion Approved.**

Pride Month Programs

- Salisbury Pride parade has been rescheduled until October 24th.
- All the libraries pride month programming was up in the air before we had to close for COVID-19.

We came up with some back up programs based on when Pride will take place. They are as follows:

- Rainbow Story Time which would feature different types of diverse families.
- Teen book discussion on Summer Reading Program theme of Imagine Your Story with LGBTQ characters.
- LGBTQ Adult film series. There is an issue with the License we have for films, it does not cover most of the documentaries we were interested in showing. In order to show

them we would have to select a date and suggest an audience. Licenses run \$100 to \$500 for license.

- Ashley Teagle did a quick presentation on intellectual freedom from a library's perspective. The presentation covered the Bill of Rights, ALA's Library Bill of Rights and What is a Drag Queen. She also made suggestions about what to think about going forward for programming. How should we be handling things when people come with a specific event request?
- Ashley assured the Board that she is hearing both sides. The bigger issue she feels is today it is Drag Queen Story Time, but there are many things that can be considered offensive and where do we draw the line?
- Ashley stated her concerns are on compromising on what information we are providing to people. Public libraries are being forced into a position to be very political.
- Ashley stated that currently this program (Drag Queen Story Time) is not happening. Most likely it will be a new budget year before we could revisit it.
- People have a right to request programs and services and have them taken seriously.
- As a library there was a lot we could have done better in regards to Drag Queen Story Time program.
- The program idea turned into a bullying session.
- She was appalled at community's response and their actions.
- Michele Canopii felt that the Board was blindsided, she stated that they learned of it due to the response of the community. Pratt library did a Drag Queen Story Time with the support of the mayor's office. She felt we should have done the same. Michele Canopii stated this was not specifically about Drag Queen Storytime, rather it was about anything that has the potential to be controversial.
- Board Members felt that due to funding being addressed in conjunction with controversial programming that a meeting should be scheduled in May in which the liaisons from the County and City are present for questioning. No meeting was scheduled as of this recording.
- Ashley shared some feedback from customers regarding Drag Queen Story Time and Pride Programming.

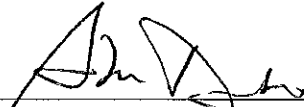
In interest of time Michele Canopii suggested that they forgo with other new business for this session.

Motion to Adjourn made by Richard Duvall, Seconded by Maida Finch. **Motion carried.**

Meeting Adjourned: 7:00pm

Next meeting will be Tuesday, June 16th at 4:00pm

Respectfully Submitted



Dr. George Demko, Secretary