

**Wicomico Public Libraries  
Board of Trustees Board Meeting  
Tuesday, April 20, 2021  
4:00 pm to 5:35 pm**

**In Attendance via Zoom:** Karen Treber, James Otway, Michele Schlehofer

**In Attendance in Person:** Michele Canopii, Audrey Orr, Chip Dashiell, Richard Keenan, Scott Duncan, Maida Finch, John Cannon (County Council Representative)

**Staff in Attendance:** Cheryl Nardiello, Bobbi Schreiber, Jose Diaz

**Absent:** George Demko, Richard Duvall, Angela Blake (City Council Representative)

Dr. Finch presented an award on behalf of the County Council and County Executive to the Library and certificates to Alton White and Cheryl Nardiello for their hard work in keeping the library going during COVID.

Cheryl introduced the newest employees of the Library, Bobbi Schreiber and Jose Diaz, to the Board and they each said a few words of introduction. DeMyra Harvey was also mentioned as she is a new employee who was unable to attend due to illness. She will be invited to attend the next Board Meeting in June.

**Previous Minutes:**

**Motion to Approve:** Chip Dashiell

**Seconded by:** Michele Canopii

**Motion Approved**

Later in the meeting, Dr. Finch asked that the previous meeting's minutes be approved with the stipulation that the Nominating Committee notes reflect that the Library reached out to the three candidates, Eli Modland, Donnie Waters, and Dr. Lad Colston, mentioned as being contacted. They did not contact us as it states in the minutes of the previous meeting.

**Reports:** The following reports were reviewed by Cheryl Nardiello

- Gift and Memorial Report
- Donations Report
- Statistic Report
- Grant Report

Cheryl reported that gifts and donations for February were \$2500 and for March were \$3800. It was asked how this money was obtained and reported that Cheryl Sidwell had sent letters to various agencies asking for donations. Most of this money went towards the Summer Reading Program.

The Statistics Report shows how popular the Books To Go program is; therefore it is expected to continue well into the future and probably beyond COVID.

The Grant Report shows all the details around all of our Grants. We have been able to find uses for all the money throughout COVID. We have a new Grant writer starting on April 26, 2021. His name is Aurelio Giannitti and he will be working full time with his focus only on Grants. This position previously included Programs but that has been changed.

**Friends Committee:** Richard Keenan

Mr. Keenan reported on the Friends Committee Meeting which occurred on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021. He reported that Light of Literacy was brought up as a fundraiser but was decided against due to

COVID restrictions. Valerie Murphy will contact the volunteers to discuss the possibility of reopening The Bookshelf (the Library bookstore). The consensus is that the volunteers are willing to come back. Cheryl will give guidance as to how many people will be allowed in the store at a time.

There was a lot of discussion about having an outdoor book sale. It was brought up that the annual Fall Festival might be a good time for that but then discovered that there will not be one this year. Most members felt that this would still be a good fund-raising idea and would like to seriously consider it as an option.

### **Executive Director Hiring Committee:**

It was decided that the discussion of the Executive Director Hiring Committee would be in a closed session after the completion of the regular meeting.

### **Building Committee:** George Demko(absent) Scott Duncan and Cheryl Nardiello

Dr. Duncan reported that there are exhibits included in meeting packet of several possible sites for the new library in Pittsville. There will be a feasibility study needed for the construction of the library. The company that did the feasibility study for ESRL submitted an elaborate proposal through Zoom to the Building Committee and wanted to meet with the full board. Dr. Duncan felt that meeting would be premature. John Venditta is going to ask the State to pay for the study. The feasibility study would show the library needs of the area. The State would pay for the study for all area libraries. John seemed confident that it could happen this way. We cannot move forward until we have a new director, and the next step following the appointment will be the feasibility study.

Cheryl reported that one of the properties is owned by the county and two are owned by the town of Pittsville. The county-owned property has two small buildings that would need to be moved. John Psota believes that the town would be unlikely to give up the properties they own. There was discussion about the importance of the library to the town and that might encourage them to give up the property. There was also discussion of a meeting room or maybe even an auditorium being included in the library and that this would prove useful for town meetings, etc. Mr. Cannon contributed that their Town Hall right now is very small and something larger is needed.

Cheryl will prepare a report explaining how much square footage of property is necessary for the library and parking. The building should be a minimum of 6,000 square feet. She has a book that explains these concepts in great detail that can be used to prepare a useful report.

**Nominating Committee:** Maida Finch

Dr. Finch reported that they are still in the process of finding candidates for the available positions on the Board. Eli Modland, one of the three candidates that were recently contacted, politely declined the offer of the position. There are several other potential candidates that the Committee will be reaching out to in the coming weeks. Those candidates are Brian Bergen-Aurand, Farrah Yahya and Ryan Bass.

**Interim Director Report:** Scott Duncan

Dr. Duncan joined Cheryl in a managers' meeting and found it enlightening. Karen Treber sent Dr. Duncan a video of a seminar discussing the changes that have come about in libraries due to COVID. Many of these things might be useful to continue into the future, such as curbside delivery or pickup of books and other materials. Also, people have become accustomed to having more space around themselves and are enjoying it.

Cheryl brought up that we have distributed surveys to our patrons and found that they are very pleased with the Books To Go program. The staff has worked together to make it as quick and efficient as possible with little or no waiting time due to the use of cameras in the garage areas. There was some discussion of the possibility of having a "drive through" at the library in the future and whether this is feasible. The video Dr. Duncan saw reported that there are some libraries out west that have existing drive thru.

### **Head Administrator Report:** Cheryl Nardiello

We have signed a new contract with Wilscot, the company that we rent the buildings for our Pittsville branch from, that will take us to April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 . At that time, we will have a clearer view of the plan forward in Pittsville. Also, we will avoid paying a higher price every year as their price has gone up an average of 23% per year in the recent past.

The Centre at Salisbury has new owners and we did get a lease with them. Cheryl has not seen it yet but normally we only pay utilities.

The library is hoping to keep our current Bookmobile and turn it into a grant funded mobile learning lab. This summer the Bookmobile will be going out in the mornings to various sites with its large, new tent to promote the Summer Reading Program.

Cheryl spoke to Pam Oland, Finance Director for the County, about our budget and inquired as to why we were not called in for a Budget Conference. Pam stated that because she is new she did not realize the library was to be included in the budget talks. Cheryl had asked for our budget to be increased by \$58,753.00, which Pam said is included and it would be going to the County Council today.

The minimum wage will be raised to \$15 an hour by 2025 so we have updated our salaries and grade sheet to accommodate this increase.

We have large surplus in some of our accounts that Cheryl would like to transfer to other accounts to make sure we utilize all the money we have available. There is a detailed description in a spreadsheet included in the meeting packet which Dr. Duncan and Cheryl have discussed. Dr. Duncan supports these transfers. Ms. Orr made a motion to approve these transfers, and Mr. Keenan seconded the motion. All agreed.

**Budget Report, February and March:** Cheryl Nardiello

Cheryl presented the budget reports, skipping the first one which is February and coming to the month end totals in March. The financing of the LED lighting will be carried over a twenty year time period. Grants are up a small amount and the expenses will even out by the end of the fiscal year.

**County Council Report:** John Cannon

John Cannon reported on the most recent County Council Meeting and informed the Board that the Council has approved the renaming of the downtown branch. The CIP for the Pittsville Branch was discussed. The process includes an engineering study in 2023 and there is \$700,000. in the budget for that. In 2024 there is \$6.5 million budgeted for the building itself. There was discussion of the recent increases in the cost of building materials and the need to possibly adjust the budget due to those increases.

Dr. Canopii asked Mr. Cannon if there is anything that she can do to expedite the County Council's approval of the Board Members. Mr. Cannon said he would look into it and see when it will be on the Council's agenda.

**New Business:** Cheryl Nardiello

Cheryl stated that there is a new bill that is effective as of March 8<sup>th</sup> that will require that libraries no longer charge fines for overdue materials to children's accounts. She has made accommodations in the budget to offset this change. Ms. Orr wondered if it was worth it to even charge fines, feeling that it might be more costly to try differentiating the types of accounts. Cheryl explained that it is not difficult to do and we should still charge fines to adult accounts.

Cheryl described the changes coming on May 11<sup>th</sup> for the start of Phase 5 of the library's reopening. Quarantine for returned books will be cut back from five days to forty-eight hours. We will be discontinuing our partnership with the Health Dept. on Mondays. They have not been as busy recently.

There is a short list of things that need to be monitored and reevaluated before May 11, 2021 and possibly periodically afterward. Such as:

- Should temperature checks continue?
- The status of COVID in the area, we will follow County regulations.
- Hours-should we be open later possibly till seven one day of the week?
- Should customers be able to sit?
- Should we allow volunteers to return?
- Should we reopen the Bookshelf?

The Board discussed opening the meeting rooms at 25% capacity and possibly having them sign a waiver before using.

**Old Business:** Michele Canopii

Dr. Canopii spoke on the renaming of the library. It will still be called Wicomico Public Library but it will be "The Paul S. Sarbanes Branch" instead of the downtown branch. The Sarbanes and Pappas families have agreed to pay for the cost of new signage relating to the new branch name. Kate Yelland will work with the families to create signage and possibly a small memorial inside the library giving a short history of Senator Sarbanes and his relationship with the library.

Cheryl reported that the new Bookmobile will be delivered in November and it will already have the wrap when it arrives.

Mr. Dashiell wanted to thank Cheryl for the luncheon that we had for the staff and the Board Members were invited. He thinks it's important for the Board Members to have an opportunity to meet the people who do the work.

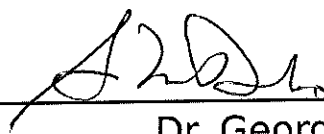
Ms. Orr suggested that the Board Members' pictures be included on StaffWeb. Cheryl agreed and offered to have the pictures taken prior to the Board meeting in June.

**Motion** to adjourn regular meeting made by: Richard Keenan; seconded by: Michele Canopii Motion carried.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 5:35 pm

**Next Meeting will be Tuesday June 15, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted:** \_\_\_\_\_



Dr. George Demko,

Secretary