



Central Rappahannock Regional  
**Library**

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Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

## **LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES**

**June 14, 2021**

**Fredericksburg Branch**

### **ATTENDEES**

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Kimberly Young (Chair), Xavier Richardson (Vice Chair), Martha Hutzell (Secretary-Treasurer), Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine (left at 5:15P.M.), Diana Risavi

**ABSENT:** Cheryl Miller, David Ross

**LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION:** Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Kathy Roberts

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Kimberly Young called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M.

Kimberly Young reminded the Board that at the March 8 meeting, the board unanimously supported the implementation of a Consent Agenda. She explained that under new business, members will consider the proposed update to the bylaws to allow restructuring the Order of Business to include the Consent Agenda. She informed the members that approval of the previous meeting's minutes and the quarterly statistical and financial reports, previously taken up during this point in the agenda, would be held to be included in the Consent Agenda taken up later in the meeting.

In light of one board member needing to leave the meeting by 5:15 P.M, Kimberly asked Martha Hutzell to hold the Director's Report to present at the end of the meeting.

There was no public comment.

### **Old Business**

Martha Hutzell directed the Board's attention to the document titled FY21 Proposed Budget Adjustments. Hutzell stated that the Budget Team has reviewed year-to-date spending and assessed spending trends for the year. Because we froze hiring for non-essential positions, were open fewer hours, hired fewer subs, and purchased fewer supplies due to fewer customers and staff in the buildings, we saw significant savings in several expense categories. Under item #1

“Proposed Amendments,” library leadership recommends the first of several adjustments to the FY21 budget. These amendments would increase spending on books and materials, replace old, worn and out-of-date furniture and equipment and repay the rent deferment granted at the beginning of FY21. The increase to the book budget also reflects additional funds allocated from the Library of Virginia. Hutzel asked if there were any questions related to item #1 of the document.

Kerry Devine made a motion to approve item #1 in the proposed FY21 budget amendments. Diana Risavi seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Hutzel directed the Board’s attention to item #2 on the document, “Proposed salary adjustments.” She apologized for an error in the document that states “staff received no raise or COLA in FY20 due to budget cuts” that should have said FY21. She reminded the Board that as stated for item #1, the hiring freeze on non-essential positions plus limited subbing opportunities for part-time staff and reduced hours due to our pandemic response has led to savings in Salaries expenses (page 2, 3rd column, first figure under (“FY21 Approved Expenditures.”) Hutzel proposed using that savings to offer a retroactive to July 1 COLA of 2.5% to all active employees. She explained that this is in keeping with other libraries in the region who are giving 2.5%-5% in FY22, while we are giving only 1.5% in FY22. One of the most frequently requested items in the staff survey was better pay. Our employees have worked hard this year, pivoted when asked, and continued to prioritize customer service given difficult circumstances. Hutzel said she feels the staff deserve this COLA. She also stated that this would have an added benefit of helping to attract new employees now that CRRL is actively hiring again.

Meg Bohmke asked if PPE was included in the supplies expenditure listed and if all CARES act funding had been spent. Martha Hutzel confirmed that all CARES Act funding had been spent and that PPE costs actually exceeded the CARES Act funding.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to approve item #2 in the proposed FY21 budget amendments. Xavier Richardson seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Hutzel directed the Board’s attention to item #3 “Proposed end of year transfer to vehicle fund.” Hutzel requested approval to transfer excess FY21 operating funds up to \$30,000 to the vehicle fund. She shared that projections are indicating we may be modestly under budget for the year and if that is the case, we’d like to transfer some excess funds from the Operating to the Vehicle fund. Hutzel said that two vans are currently inoperable and are in the process of being disposed, and that replacing one van would deplete the current vehicle fund balance’

Xavier Richardson made a motion to approve item #3 in the proposed FY21 Budget

Amendments. Kerry Divine seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Martha Hutzel directed the Board's attention to the spreadsheet labeled FY22 Proposed Operating Budget. She noted that the column "FY22 Anticipated Revenue" showed the FY22 funding amounts. Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Westmoreland all approved the library's request; Spotsylvania voted to not increase the library's budget over FY21. She stated that since we ended up getting slightly more from Fredericksburg and the State than originally budgeted, the overall shortfall ended up being \$134,361 over our original total request.

Hutzel reminded the Board that the Benefits line item is always built on projected renewal rates. She recommended recalculating the Benefits line item to reflect the actual renewal rates of the health insurance plans and the amount collected from employees for their health insurance premiums. That difference (\$222,384) will make up much of the shortfall.

Hutzel recommended moving \$40,000 from the Programming line item due to an adjustment to IdeaSpace; IdeaSpace costs would be paid out of Equipment and General Supplies instead of Programming. \$10,000 would be moved to General Supplies bringing that amount up to \$216,634, and \$30,000 would be moved to Furniture & Equipment. Hutzel said that since we are able to make up most of the shortfall through the benefits savings and we have additional anticipated costs to update equipment at all branches, she requests increasing the Equipment line item by \$90,000. The total amount for the Furniture & Equipment, including the \$30,000 for IdeaSpace would be \$209,460. Hutzel stated that these adjustments would result in a budget adjustment of \$103,790 which leaves \$30,571 to recover based on reduced funding received.

Kimberly Young opened the floor for discussion on the FY22 budget.

Kerry Devine asked if, in the future, IdeaSpace expenditures be listed separately, similar to the Library Administration Center to better gauge the overall cost of that location. Martha Hutzel responded that we would do that.

Meg Bohmke asked Hutzel about possible adjustments specific to Spotsylvania since they did not fully fund the library's request. Hutzel responded that she has had questions from the other participating localities as to how the disparate funding between jurisdictions will be managed. Hutzel said that there were some adjustments that could be made specifically to the three Spotsylvania branches without greatly impacting other locations. She listed reducing programming in FY22 as well as not restoring the 4th evening, and holding on equipment updates as options. The equipment would be new copiers, staff computers, and technology for the meeting rooms. Hutzel added that this is not the first time one jurisdiction has underfunded their portion of the budget, and reiterated that the unexpected increase in funding from

Fredericksburg and the State would be helpful in offsetting the blow from Spotsylvania's reduction in funding.

Meg Bohmke responded that the additional funds from the state should benefit all supporting jurisdictions and not be used to offset Spotsylvania's reduction in funding. Kimberly Young asked Martha Hutzel if the administration could construct a plan detailing cuts to Spotsylvania branches equivalent to their cut in funding. Hutzel responded affirmatively.

Xavier Richardson suggested possibly having only one Spotsylvania branch open each evening as opposed to all Spotsylvania branches being open on the same week night.

Kimberly Young requested a motion for the FY22 Budget as presented. Kerry Devine made a motion to approve the proposed FY22 budget adjustments with \$181,987 in cuts to the Spotsylvania branches. Meg Bohmke offered a friendly amendment to the motion to include the provision that a line by line list of cuts would be provided at the next Board meeting. Kerry accepted the amendment. Diana Risavi seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. Martha confirmed that Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Westmoreland branches and citizens will not be impacted by any budget cuts to Spotsylvania branches.

Martha Hutzel presented an update on the Library Agreement. Hutzel stated she received the suggested changes to the Library Agreement after the four jurisdictions met this spring. She stated that Mr. Presley (Stafford) requested CRRL add its own suggestions and minor edits. CRRL has completed that task and returned the document to Mr. Presley. Mr. Presley has informed Hutzel that a draft is forthcoming to share with the board.

Kimberly Young provided an update on plans for the Board Retreat. The retreat will likely be held in mid to late July, on a weekday morning or afternoon, off-site, and approximately 4-5 hours in duration. Young said the members will be developing the strategic plan, hearing from a speaker on current trends in the library industry, and completing and discussing the board's self-assessment. Young told members that they will receive a survey form to poll which dates and times work best.

New Business:

Kimberly Young introduced the proposed update to "Order of Business" in the bylaws and asked Martha Hutzel to describe the proposal. Hutzel directed the Board to the document provided and said that, at the request of the board, the proposed changes would add a Consent Agenda to the order of business in order to increase efficiency during board meetings. The Consent Agenda will include the quarterly statistical reports, the Director's written report,

approval of past meeting minutes, and other measures where discussion is not anticipated. She said that each item will be numbered and that board members will be able to request an item be moved from the Consent Agenda to the regular agenda for the purposes of discussion or to ask questions, suggest changes, or oppose that particular item.

Meg Bohmke suggested that the draft be adjusted to have public comment placed on the agenda before the Director's report in order for members of the public to have the opportunity to speak early in the meeting and not have to wait through other agenda items if they'd prefer not to stay.

Diana made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the Bylaws including the amendment to move public comment before directors report. Kerry Devine seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Following the change to the Bylaws, Xavier Richardson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Meg Bohmke seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. Xavier Richardson made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda (which included the minutes from the March 8, 2021 Board meeting to be approved, Director's written report, quarterly statistical and financial reports (fiscal, special use, circulation), and eight proposed policy manual updates.) Kerry Devine seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Hutzel announced that the budget team has prepared a list of proposed goals for the FY23 Budget for the Board's consideration. She stated that this is the first time budget goals have been presented to the Board before the draft budget is created and that the change is in direct response to requests from the Board for more involvement in the budget process. She directed the Board's attention to the FY23 Proposed Budget Goals document and informed them that staff reviewed jurisdictional salary trends and conducted a survey of salaries at comparable libraries. They reviewed the Employee Survey for requests from staff which included increased salaries and more benefits, especially health insurance.

Hutzel said that under Salaries, the Board will see the recommended measures in order to keep pace with comparison libraries and local school systems as well as to address a recurring concern raised by staff during CRRL's employee survey. Comparison libraries are library systems comparable in size to CRRL and likely attract the same candidates for positions as CRRL given their locations. We especially need to make a salary scale adjustment for all Library Clerk positions to address a 15% disparity between CRRL wages and the average of comparison libraries. There is also the necessity to adjust the Page salary scale due to the mandated increase of minimum wage to \$12.00/hour effective January 1, 2023.

Hutzel said the goals under Benefits, especially those for part-time employees, are proposed based on concerns raised by staff during CRRL's employee survey; currently only full-time employees are able to acquire health benefits. She also pointed out the proposed increase to the Books and Materials line item; and said in order to meet demand we must continue focusing on developing our e-resources.

Meg Bohmke asked what the cost would be to part-time employees who purchase health insurance. Hutzel responded that employee contribution amounts are a percentage of the premium ranging from 2% to 78% based on the plan and level of coverage selected.

Kimberly Young opened the floor for questions or discussion on the FY23 budget.

Kimberly Young announced that the Central Rappahannock Regional Library Board of Trustees wishes to convene a Closed Meeting under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act in order to discuss matter of personnel and cited:

*Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(1).*

*1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body.*

Diana Risavi moved that the Board enter closed session. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote (YEAS - Young, Richardson, Bohmke, Devine, Risavi.) The Director and CRRL staff left the meeting. The Board convened a closed session at 4:45 P.M

Kimberly Young reconvened the regular meeting at 5:04 P.M. and announced the Board of Trustees of the Central Rappahannock Regional Library does hereby certify that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed in the Closed Meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the said Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to certify the closed session. Xavier Richardson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously by roll call vote (YEAS - Young, Richardson, Bohmke, Devine, Risavi.) The regular meeting was reconvened at 5:16P.M.

Kimberly announced the Board's decision to increase the Library Director's salary to Step 19, an increase of 2.5%. Diane Risavi made a motion to approve the increase. Meg Bohmke seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Kerry Devine departed the meeting.

Martha Hutzel presented the Director's Report. Hutzel stated the Library of Virginia has received American Rescue Plan Act funding this spring. After purchasing databases and other statewide resources for all Virginia public libraries to have access to electronically, LVA will begin making cash payments to public libraries through a sub-grant program. Hutzel stated the library is expecting approximately \$96,000 based on what is known so far. She stated the sub-grant application from LVA was sent out Friday afternoon.

Hutzel informed the Board that the library was awarded a grant of \$5,500 from Transurban's Express Lanes Community Grant program. These funds will be used to expand the WiFi coverage at the Salem Church and Howell branches. The expanded coverage will provide increased coverage in the library parking lots and also in the surrounding communities. Salem Church was chosen due to its close proximity to the Greens of Salem Run and Howell due to its close proximity to England Run North Apartments. Both of these communities have a significant number of economically disadvantaged residents and helped us meet the grant's criteria of supporting "the health, economic development or well-being" of a community within the Transurban's Express Lanes corridor.

Hutzel noted that a new version of the library's "CRRL Mobile" app was released last week for both Apple and Android smartphones. She also noted that the app's developer, Bibliocommons, has asked the library to be a beta test site for a new self checkout function in the app. This would allow customers to check out items directly from their phone and could reduce the need for the library to purchase more self checkout kiosks in the future.

Hutzel announced that the work continues on reviewing and addressing the Employee Survey results. Staff have received the results and library leadership at all levels of the organization have met in small groups to discuss the results. The Steering Committee has

reviewed leadership's recommendations and will meet with them to discuss the recurring themes. Starting at the end of June/early July, there will be optional staff group discussions/focus groups to gather feedback and provide input on the survey's key themes. Work on the refresh of the Strategic Plan will begin the visioning process with the Board at the upcoming retreat.

Hutzel informed the Board that the renovation of the second floor of the Fredericksburg Branch is almost complete. The City has painted and carpet installation is underway. The new shelving will be installed in early July and, for the first time ever, the branch will have an entire floor devoted to childrens and teens services. She pointed out that this is the Board's first meeting at Fredericksburg since the 1st and 3rd floor renovations were completed during the shutdown and invited the Board members to stay after tonight's meeting for a brief tour.

Hutzel announced that staff and customers have welcomed the Governor's recent announcements regarding masks, physical distancing and capacity limits. She said that the Board had requested that we provide temperature checks at all entrances and we have complied. She said that we believe it's time to remove temperature checks now, but wanted to check with board members to see if they had any concerns before doing so. She noted that CRRL has implemented all of the changes and that while we are still not at the same level as customer visits pre-COVID (359,746 January - March 2020), more customers have been returning to branches in recent weeks. Second quarter customer visit numbers were 59,475 (October - December 2020).

Hutzel said that branches have been evaluating staffing levels and readjusting as needed in an effort to expand operating hours. On July 6, Howell, Snow and Montross branches as well as IdeaSpace will reopen for all of their current operating hours. The other branches will be open for around 95% of their operating hours, adding a second night ; and every location except the Fredericksburg Branch is adding Monday morning. Like many businesses, CRRL has had a hiring freeze in place for non-essential positions during the pandemic due to reduced operating hours, fewer customer visits, the previously mandated physical distancing requirements, virtual programming in lieu of in-person events, etc. CRRL has also had many staff resign in the past six months to make major life changes such as to move out of the area, return to school, stay home with children, or avoid the possibility of contracting COVID. While CRRL began the hiring process months ago for several positions there are still many vacancies. Like many businesses CRRL is having difficulty recruiting, a problem that can be correlated with our current salary scale. Hiring continues to be a priority and we expect to expand to all current operating hours at all locations within the next few months.

Kimberly Young informed the board that the next quarterly meeting is scheduled for



Monday, September 13.

Diana Risavi moved to adjourn the meeting, Meg Bohmke seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:34 P.M.