



Central Rappahannock Regional
Library

INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING
FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

March 8, 2021

Meeting held electronically via telephone conference call/live-stream
due to COVID-19 restrictions.

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Kimberly Young (Chair), Xavier Richardson (Vice Chair, arrived 4:17), Martha Hutzal (Secretary-Treasurer), Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Cheryl Miller, Diana Risavi, David Ross (arrived 4:21)

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Kathy Roberts

GUESTS: Elaine Farmer; Bishop, Farmer & Company, LLC (Auditor); Reagen Thalacker, Public Library Consultant/Library Development Networking Division, Library of Virginia; Cynthia Bullock, Human Resources Consultant

Kimberly Young called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm and read the following statement:

This Meeting is being held electronically by live stream, pursuant to Fredericksburg City Council Ordinance 20-05, An Ordinance to Address Continuity of City Government during the Pendency of a Pandemic Disaster.

The Board members participating are: Kimberly Young, Xavier Richardson, Martha Hutzal, Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Cheryl Miller, Diana Risavi, and David Ross. CRRL staff participating are: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, and Kathy Roberts.

Members of the public have been invited to access this meeting via livestream on the CRRL website Board of Trustees page (librarypoint.org/board-of-trustees). On this web page, documents to be discussed during this meeting are available for public view and a link is provided to submit written comments. Each public comment that has been received will be read aloud during the Public Comment period in the agenda. Comments



librarypoint.org

540-372-1144

received after the Public Comment period will be forwarded to members of the Board following adjournment of the meeting.

Meg Bohmke moved to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2020 Library Board meeting. Kerry Devine seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Martha Hutzel introduced Elaine Farmer of Bishop, Farmer & Co. to present the FY20 Audit Report. Elaine Farmer presented the summary of the results of the FY2020 audit. Ms. Farmer thanked the administration and staff of the library for their full and enthusiastic assistance with the audit. She stated that the audit found no deficiencies. Ms. Farmer explained the opinion of the auditor is unqualified, meaning that there were no negative qualifications. Ms. Farmer reviewed the audit statements. She explained that leases will show up as a liability in FY22 due to new standards. Ms. Farmer stated there were no issues with internal compliance or internal controls.

Kimberly Young asked for clarification regarding how the new standards will affect the long-term leases. Elaine Farmer explained that the impact will be placing a capital asset and a liability on the Library's books. It is yet to be seen if the capital asset and capital liability will match under the new structure.

Kimberly Young thanked Farmer for her presentation. Farmer thanked the Board and excused herself from the meeting.

Hutzel presented the Director's Report. She expressed her hope that the Board had a chance to review the slideshow and reported that almost 4,000 online requests for library cards have been processed this fiscal year; this is in addition to those requested by customers in the branches. She added that 5,800 library cards have been issued since the pandemic started. Hutzel reminded the Board that on March 1 all CRRL locations returned to Phase 3c, which provides building access for customers with curbside pickup upon request during all open hours. She informed the Board that the six weeks during which CRRL returned to Phase 2c, staff were conducting curbside pickup, answering phones to assist customers with questions, and printing and faxing for customers upon request; there were a lot of tax forms requested for printing during

this time. At most locations, staff worked additional hours opposite curbside pickup hours on “processing teams,” pulling the thousands of requested materials for customer holds and processing those items and returned materials. Part-time staff either reported to the branches, teleworked if that was possible for their position, or took leave without pay if they turned down proffered shifts. Full-time staff, including Branch Managers and Department Heads, were also working in the branches supervising staff, and when teleworking, they, along with teleworking part-time employees, were also answering questions through our online question and answer platform, writing web content, planning and presenting online programs, attending meetings and continuing with all of the demands of providing library service to our customers.

Meg Bohmke asked about library cards issued to customers outside of CRRL’s four supporting jurisdictions and an explanation of why some of these customers pay fees while others do not pay fees. Martha Hutzel explained that CRRL has a long-standing reciprocal agreement with Caroline, Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, and Prince William Counties whereby residents of these localities can obtain a CRRL library free of charge, and residents of CRRL’s localities (Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland) can obtain a library card free of charge in those respective localities. Hutzel added that at a future board meeting, the administration will present the board members with information to consider increasing the current \$30 fee, explaining that this fee was established years ago when our Library was much smaller with significantly fewer resources.

Hutzel announced the completion of the annual staff survey by an independent, human resources consultant who created a “placemat” for the Library Board. Thirty-five questions including two open-ended questions were asked, there was a comments field, and while there were additional questions specific to demographics, as in previous surveys, none of these were mandatory. This was necessary to ensure staff anonymity. Hutzel introduced Cynthia Bullock, Human Resources Consultant, to present the results of the survey.

Cynthia Bullock introduced herself sharing that she has worked in Human Resources for nearly 20 years, currently serves as the head of HR for the Virginia Department of Transportation, and has HR experience in both the private and public sectors. She owns and operates the “Learn and Love HR” consulting business under the umbrella of Bullock Real

Estate & Investments.

Bullock provided an overview of the one page, placemat summary of the survey results, which assessed satisfaction in five areas: the work, workplace, leadership, total reward (salary and benefits), professional development, and safety/wellbeing. She said the participation rate was exceptionally high and shared the following highlights:

- 72% of CRRL employees completed the survey (180 out of 251). 37% of the 180 respondents are full-time (67 out of 85 full-time employees).
- The overall satisfaction rating was 4.5 out of 5 stars.
- Staff love their colleagues, the customers and the work; 90% of employees are aligned with CRRL's core values.
- The gray box in the upper-right-hand corner shows the highest rated questions by category; 86% felt that they had a safe work environment, which is an impressive statistic during a pandemic.

Bullock also directed the Boards' attention to the "Key Takeaways" in the lower left-hand column and the adjacent "Employee Experience" section. While overall staff were positive about their jobs and felt well trained, they would like more hours and better schedules. Hopefully that will come once CRRL is able to fully return to regular hours and work. She pointed to the comment on the right-hand side and mentioned that increased pay was a recurring answer to the open-ended question, "what could improve your experience as a CRRL employee." Communication, input, and autonomy were also areas in which employees indicated needed improvement.

Kimberly Young asked Bullock to explain how the survey was structured. Bullock responded that she met with leadership to assess what would be measured. The leadership stated that they wanted to assess the satisfaction level of employees so Bullock developed questions to assess satisfaction specifically. She said the "Survey Monkey" platform allowed for anonymity. Bullock further stated that she has conducted similar surveys for many years and rarely sees results this favorable - both in the compensation rate, which was exceptionally high, and the high level of satisfaction of employees across multiple facets of the organization.

Board members requested that each member be provided with copies of the survey questions and survey results placemat. Hutzel confirmed that additional information would be distributed to members.

Kimberly Young thanked Bullock for her presentation and Bullock excused herself from the meeting.

In response to the climate survey presentation, Martha Hutzel stated that she was not surprised to see the three areas (communication, input, and autonomy) stated as needing attention because they are challenges the organization has been facing and working hard to improve. She reminded the Board that when she became Director almost 6 years ago there were nine branches that in many instances were implementing the same task, procedure, and even policy in nine different ways. One of the primary goals and challenges of the administration has been standardizing processes and ensuring compliance with policy at all levels of the organization. She said that this has been very hard for some staff who struggle with what they perceive as administrative interference with branch operations, but it is a necessary evolution of professionalizing the library system. She stated that additionally, the system has experienced significant growth, is serving more customers, and experiencing high levels of change. Some changes, such as the leave accrual change, were not popular with staff which also resulted in high turnover rates as staff opted to take a higher payout. She stated that change management is a constant challenge. She also stated that the survey results demonstrate the need for more full-time and fewer part-time positions, something we have worked on for the past 5 years. Hutzel explained that because of COVID, part-time staff have been limited to working at only one location as opposed to multiple locations to minimize exposure and potential contagion.

Hutzel announced that improved communication to include explanations of these changes continues to be a goal for the organization and she reminded the Board of one recent effort in this area. In October, a new bimonthly initiative began called Ask ADMIN Anything. All staff are invited to attend these optional, virtual meetings where a specific topic is presented by various Administrative staff and a portion of each meeting is devoted to answering staff questions. Staff also have a format to submit questions anonymously. In-depth recaps are printed in CRRLs biweekly staff newsletter for those who were unable to attend; the staff newsletter was weekly

before the pandemic. Feedback has been positive and these meetings were mentioned several times in the comments on the climate survey.

Hutzel stated that clearly more work needs to be done and that these efforts will be a focus of the coming year. She informed the Board that they were the first to see any results and that the placemat will be shared with staff tomorrow. She mentioned that library leadership will be evaluating the survey results in the coming months to identify next actions. Leadership will reference the survey with staff at every opportunity and will inform staff whenever something is addressed that resulted from the climate survey. Hutzel said she is pleased that this climate survey will serve as a benchmark for future evaluation.

Hutzel stated that the climate survey results would also play a role in updating the current Strategic Plan. She reminded the Board that the Strategic Plan was finalized in 2016 and is in its fifth year. Hutzel stated that the Plan will undergo an update and refresh that will involve staff at all levels of the organization which will support the climate survey request for “more input” and “better communication.” She announced that a more thorough review will be conducted in the next couple of years and will involve the Board members as much as possible. She stated that an update only is the current course of action based on the fact that the pandemic is still ongoing and that staff are working on multiple big projects at this time. Hutzel said that she will be bringing updates to the Board as we start the process, for input on setting the vision and for other feedback throughout the process.

Kimberly Young commended the Library’s leadership on working with Bullock on the survey and said she was pleased to see the high participation rate. She expressed appreciation for the work that the leadership team has done to increase communication with staff, especially considering the challenges of the pandemic and the increased need for staff to feel connected. She said she is looking forward to continuing efforts to increase engagement with and satisfaction of employees.

Kimberly Young stated that no public comments have been received.

Martha Hutzal presented the Fiscal Report from the second quarter and announced that local and state revenues for operations were as expected. She directed the Board's attention to the CARES income received in the 2nd quarter totalling \$83,351 and reminded the board that the Commonwealth allocated additional funds for state aid to libraries which we will receive in the 2nd half of the year, an increase of \$42,485. She said that CRRL continues to receive the highest amount of state aid in the Commonwealth.

Kerry Devine asked if Spotsylvania County provided additional funding. Martha Hutzal said that CRRL did not receive direct CARES Act funding in the 2nd quarter but the county has provided support through enhanced cleaning, spraying when we've had a positive COVID case, and providing PPE.

Martha Hutzal directed discussion to the Expenses and thanked the jurisdictions for their CARES support. She pointed out that the CARES funds were allocated into categories where CRRL incurred actual CARES expenses - Benefits, Temporary Services, Books, Supplies, and Equipment. She noted we are underspent in some categories like Professional Services because our largest expense, the annual audit, has yet to be billed, Continuing Education because of a lack of in-person events and Equipment Contracts because a portion of our monthly Xerox expense is based on the number of copies. Hutzal reminded the Board that some expenses are front loaded like Insurance and Memberships, and others like Computer Services, we hope will be offset by e-rate reimbursement later in the year. The Library is expecting System Upkeep and Furniture and Equipment to go up in the 2nd half of the year as a few ongoing projects are completed. Specifically, the systemwide meeting room technology upgrade and the update of the FX public spaces are still ongoing. Hutzal pointed out that at the end of the second quarter, CRRL spent 47.59% of expected funding for the year. She acknowledged that some expense categories would remain underspent the entire year and suggested a budget review with possible amendments at the next meeting.

Kimberly Young expressed appreciation for the comparison columns that have been very helpful.

Martha Hutzal stated that the Law Library fund balance is sufficient to cover the slight deficit experienced so far this year. She noted that income is down slightly, by \$4,917, as compared to last year at this time and speculated that fee collection at the localities is lower this year because of Covid.

Kimberly Young asked if, due to time constraints, could the remainder of the financial reports be limited to questions since all had the opportunity to review this information. There were no objections.

Martha Hutzal explained a new circulation report has been provided to members that breaks down information by jurisdiction. Martha informed the board that Fredericksburg officials had verified that all approved funding would be appropriated in the current fiscal year.

Old Business:

Martha Hutzal mentioned that the FY22 budget has been sent to the jurisdictions and they are in the process of finalizing their budgets. She shared that CRRL's budget team had a follow-up virtual meeting with the locality budget officers in late December that was productive. Following the meeting, CRRL's budget team revisited the library's FY22 budget request and identified two possible areas to reduce the requested amount. The original budget request included a full year of evening hours; however it is unlikely CRRL will be able to reopen fully in July 2021 as previously thought. Moving to reinstate evening hours in January 2022 instead results in a savings of \$34,207 (the same change will also reduce the benefits expenditure a small amount - \$2,424) in the salary line item. Hutzal reminded the Board that in light of the FY21 budget cuts, the building owner of the LAC had agreed to a deferred payment plan. She stated that savings from reduced utilities and cleaning costs at the LAC has meant the library can begin paying the facilities' full rent in March 2021. This will reduce the number of months LAC's rent will be partially deferred by four months resulting in a savings of \$12,000. The proposed budget changes equal a local budget decrease of \$48,631 (from the original FY22 request) or 0.41%. Hutzal shared that Fredericksburg's request would be reduced by \$5,857, Spotsylvania's request would be reduced by \$19,343, and Stafford's request would be reduced by \$23,623 (from the original FY22 request). She noted Fredericksburg's total FY22 funding would fall below their

FY21 contribution by \$5,666 with the reduced request; Hutzal expressed that she hoped Fredericksburg would approve level funding. According to the language in the State Aid requirements, the TOTAL local support may not drop below the previous year. (Local support and common government are added together.) She stated that Westmoreland's request would not be affected due to the difference in funding structure. Finally, Hutzal announced CRRL's FY22 State Aid will be \$44,993 less than FY21. The decrease will be taken from the General Supplies line item to reduce impact on CRRL's collection; all of CRRL's State Aid is used for Books and Materials. In keeping with further changes to the budget process and presentation, Hutzal reminded the Board that she would be bringing the FY23 budget goals to the June meeting for discussion.

Meg Bohmke said she has met with Stafford finance department, Stafford has no problems with any changes in the FY22 budget update, but wanted to remind board members that the Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook is very specific regarding what the Board of Trustees is responsible for, citing "Duties and Responsibilities" of a governing Library Board to "secure adequate funds to carry out the library's program; assist in the preparation of the annual budget. Officially approve budget requests." Bohmke said that in an effort to improve the effectiveness of the CRRL Board of Trustees, she has looked at other library systems. She shared that the Jefferson Madison Library in Charlottesville has committees and suggested that a budget development committee might provide the means to develop the annual budget in a collaborative way allowing board members to fulfill their responsibility according to the manual. Bohmke said that she would support the board's decision on the budget in today's meeting, but was not satisfied with the process and hoped that would be changed to be more inclusive of the board moving forward.

Kimberly Young thanked Meg for her suggestion and shared that she has been working with Martha Hutzal to develop a more collaborative process. Young said that there would be additional discussion on this topic at the June board meeting. Young said that she has seen great improvement and changes implemented by the leadership in recent budget development. She reminded members that they could abstain from voting on the budget if they did not approve of the process by which the current budget proposal was created yet support the budget.

Martha Hutzal said that there are four staff members currently involved in the budget development process and the plan is to involve board members moving forward. She added that information would be forthcoming at the June board meeting.

Kerry Devine moved to approve the proposed changes to the FY22 Budget (V.3)

Cheryl seconded the motion. The motion passed and the FY22 Budget (V.3) was approved by a vote of 6-1 (YEA - Young, Richardson, Devine, Miller, Risavi, Ross; NO - Bohmke)

New Business:

Kimberly Young introduced the Board Assessment Review and said that a self assessment by board members has not yet been conducted. She said that she would like to reintroduce the idea of a half-day board retreat and asked for volunteers to assist her with planning a date and outline for the retreat. Meg Bohmke offered to help.

Kimberly Young introduced Reagen Thalacker, Public Library Consultant/Library Development Networking Division from the Library of Virginia to conduct a training session for the Library Board of Trustees. Thalacker presented a general overview of board success regarding responsibilities, relationships (Board & Director, Board & Staff), advocacy, and records management. Kimberly thanked Thalacker for her presentation and said she would like Thalacker to provide further instruction on targeted items in the future.

Martha Hutzal requested the Board's approval of the proposed changes to the Holiday section of the Policy Manual based on changes to the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management official holiday calendar. She informed the Board that staff are working on a review of the entire Manual and that other recommended changes, including information regarding the suggested fee increase for people who live outside of the service area to get a library card (non-resident borrowers), will be brought to upcoming Board meetings.

Meg Bohmke moved to approve the updates to the Holidays section of the Policy Manual. Kerry Devine seconded the motion and the updates to the Holidays section of the Policy Manual were approved unanimously.

In response to the suggestion by Meg Bohmke at a previous board meeting, Kimberly Young proposed adding a Consent Agenda to the Order of Business in an effort to improve the efficiency in board meetings and allow more time for meaningful discussion. She suggested that the Consent Agenda would include items such as the fiscal, circulation, special use and director's reports. She added that the Director would still be slated to provide an update but no longer need to provide a walkthrough of each report. Young suggested adding a Consent Agenda and asked if there were any objections. There were none.

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.

Meg Bohmke moved that the Board enter closed session. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote (YEA - Young, Richardson, Bohmke, Devine, Miller, Risavi, Ross). Hutzel and CRRL staff left the meeting. The Board convened a closed session at 5:46 P.M. Martha Hutzel was called back into the closed meeting by the chair at the appropriate time.

Diana Risavi moved that the Board return to regular session. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

CRRL staff members Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, and Kathy Roberts rejoined the meeting at 7:09 P.M. Martha Hutzel and all Board members were on the call at that time.

Kimberly Young reconvened the regular meeting 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.

Kimberly Young moved to certify the closed session. The motion was passed unanimously by roll call vote. The regular meeting was reconvened at 7:12 P.M.

Meg Bohmke moved to restore the Director to pre-Covid compensation. The motion was seconded by David Ross and was passed unanimously.

David Ross moved to adjourn the meeting. Xavier Richardson seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 P.M.

Board Chair, Kimberly Young, announced that the next Board meeting will be held June 14 at 4:00 P.M.