



Central Rappahannock Regional
Library

INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING
FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

September 13, 2021

Howell Branch

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Kimberly Young (Chair), Xavier Richardson (Vice Chair, arrived at 4:12), Martha Hutzel (Secretary-Treasurer), Meg Bohmke, Kerry Devine, Cheryl Miller, Diana Risavi, David Ross (via audio call)

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Kathy Roberts

Kimberly Young called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm

There was no public comment.

Martha Hutzel presented the Director's Report. She stated that COVID cases and exposures among staff, even those fully vaccinated, are increasing. She mentioned that she is sure that everyone is aware that the area is seeing a high increase in cases overall, with a continued increase in the local positivity rate as well. As a response to a request at the board retreat to put the board meetings in the local paper, Hutzel stated that the Free Lance Star no longer prints the free community calendar, but we do post the Library Board meetings on our website as well as on public bulletin boards at all locations.

Hutzel introduced staff member Sean Bonney, Community Engagement Manager. Bonney gave a presentation on his role and his department's work, specifically on Library publicity which promotes CRRL's news, events, services, and programs through various media. Bonney provided an overview of the electronic customer newsletter which is emailed every two weeks to approximately 110,000 customers. Sean highlighted the goals to provide targeted, timely, compelling, useful, and complete information to customers.

Meg Bohmke asked Bonney how publicity has changed over the last decade and what challenges have come with those changes. Bonney shared that during his 27 years on staff, the library has



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experienced tremendous change in this arena, as has our culture in general, with the increase in various media, especially social media, the internet, and electronic communication. As an example, the customer newsletter has gone through a number of broad changes including format and length. Bonney said their ongoing greatest challenge is getting CRRL's message out to customers. He said email has been an effective means of transmission because it delivers directly to the customer. Choosing content for the newsletter and other publicity is also a challenge. Bonney explained that the Community Engagement department continues to explore targeting (providing content that will be of the most interest to customers) and added that CRRL's current platform, Bibliocommons provides data to help meet this goal.

When asked about the status of the quarterly magazine, @ Your Library, Bonney explained that the publication was paused after the Spring 2020 issue when the branches were temporarily closed and access to physical materials was limited due to Covid restrictions. Sean said that beginning in August 2021, the publication resumed in a monthly version in order to keep content as current as possible given the continually changing mandates due to Covid. Bonney shared that the September issue is available now and encouraged Board members to pick up a copy before leaving.

Young thanked Bonney for the informative presentation. Cheryl Miller commended Bonney on the quality of the most recent issue of the customer newsletter.

Young directed the Board's attention to the next order of business and asked if there were any members wishing to pull an item from the Consent Agenda. Meg Bohmke asked to pull Item 8 (Circulation Report FY21-Q4) from the Consent Agenda. Kimberly confirmed that Item 8 was removed from the Consent Agenda and would be taken up under New Business. Kimberly asked for a grammatical correction on Item 2 (July 23, 2021 Board Retreat Minutes) and asked if any member wished to pull Item 2 from the Consent Agenda for this purpose. The members agreed that pulling the item was unnecessary and gave permission for the clerical error to be corrected and the item to remain included in the Consent Agenda.

Hutzel asked to add some clarification on two new reports in the fiscal reports. Hutzel pointed out the inclusion of an IdeaSpace report on the 4th page as requested at the last meeting. Hutzel asked if members felt the report was informative and, if so, whether or not they would like to receive it on a quarterly or annual basis? Kerry Devine suggested quarterly reports and Cheryl Miller agreed.

Hutzel directed the Board to the Reimbursable Fund report and pointed out the assigned balance of \$49,693. She explained that this report is typically shared through the audit, but we will provide it annually with our fourth quarter reports. These funds are gifts, grants and donations which are unpredictable from year to year.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda (which included 7 items: June 14, 2021 Board Meeting minutes, July 23 Board Retreat Minutes, Q4/FY21 Financial report, Q4 Special Use report, FY21 Special Use report, and Q4 Circulation report.) Kerry Devine seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Old Business

Kimberly Young shared an update on the July 23 Board Retreat. She thanked everyone for

attending and said she felt the opportunity for extended discussion was beneficial. She reminded members that the Board supported the decision to continue to learn about and keep abreast of trends in the library industry, and to listen to ideas from administration and staff without squelching them. She commended the Board for the decision to increase Board involvement in funding development and praised Xavier Richardson and Meg Bohmke for their tangible efforts to date.

Kimberly directed the Board to the FY23 budget. She commended the Administration and board members for increasing Board involvement in the budget development process as requested by the Board last year and opened the floor for discussion.

Meg Bohmke referenced Version 1 of the budget and asked for clarification on the salary increases, noting they were sizable. Martha Hutzel explained that this item would raise the salary scale for all Library Clerk positions with all budget priorities met, adding that library clerks are currently our lowest paid positions. She said that in order to attract and hire clerks, CRRL must increase these salaries to be competitive with local business wages and the \$15/hour rate for minimum wage mandated by the State of Virginia. Bohmke suggested it might be better to gradually increase the salary in step format as opposed to implementing the increase all at once in order to avoid compression. Hutzel explained that Version 2 allows this increase to be spread over two years. Bohmke said that, given the proposed salary scale increase, she would not be able to vote in support of the FY23 Budget proposal without further input from her board (Stafford Board of Supervisors).

Bohmke asked if there were any expenses in the FY23 budget that are one-time expenses that could be paid out of the fund balance? Hutzel responded that only the furniture and equipment are one-time expenses. Bohmke asked where the furniture would be going and Hutzel explained that furniture is provided wherever it is needed throughout the CRRL branches.

Bohmke asked if it would be possible to delay the vote on the budget so that she could get feedback on the proposal from her board because the jurisdictions are still very early in the budget process and the Library is just one of numerous partner agencies. Hutzel explained that the jurisdictions require the Library Board's approved budget proposal in November, which is the next Library Board meeting so delaying the vote would require a special called board meeting. Kimberly Young suggested that, as has been done in the past, the Library Board vote on a final budget proposal today and send it to the jurisdictions for consideration in their budget process.

David Ross said that Spotsylvania County has a 3-year rollout plan to increase employee salaries so it would be hard for him to support the Library's 1-year rollout plan increasing salaries with a budget increase of 14% (Version 1). Hutzel clarified that the 14% increase applies only to salary increases for the lowest paid positions and the proposed overall budget increase is 8.94%. David responded that he was sure Spotsylvania's overall revenue would not increase by that much (8.94%) and that he was unsure he could support the budget explaining that it's a matter of equity.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to have a special called meeting allowing each member to take the budget proposal back to their jurisdictions, allow the jurisdiction to make adjustments, flesh those out and then vote on a revised budget. David Ross seconded the motion. Kimberly Young opened the floor for discussion and affirmed the desire to be collaborative but reminded the members that the role of the Library Board is to present the best budget proposal possible to the jurisdictions and advocate for the

Library. Rebecca Hutzal said that over the past year, at the Board's request, the budget development process was expanded to include more involvement from the board and allow for ongoing discussions with jurisdictional finance staff. She said that the meetings with the jurisdictions have been very helpful and, based on their input, we have made adjustments and benefited from their insight. Martha Hutzal said that these meetings have been beneficial and will continue through the fall as the budget process continues. Kerry Devine said that the process of submitting the Library's proposed budget to the jurisdictions in the early fall has worked well and was not in favor of changing it. Following discussion, Meg Bohmke withdrew her motion.

Kimberly Young reminded the board that there are 3 versions of the FY23 budget before the board for consideration. Kerry Devine made a motion to approve Version 1 of the FY23 budget. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion. YEAS: Kimberly Young, Xavier Richardson, Kerry Devine, Cheryl Miller, and Diana Risavi. NO: Meg Bohmke, David Ross. The motion was approved 5-7. FY23 Budget Version 1 will be communicated to the jurisdictions to continue through the budget process.

At Kimberly's request, Martha Hutzal directed the Board's attention to the FY22 Budget Update document. She explained that this was the line by line list of reductions to Spotsylvania Branches equal to the \$181,987 in local funding that the Board requested at the June meeting. She pointed out that just over \$80,000 in salaries was recovered by keeping one full-time position at the Salem Church branch frozen and closing 1-2 evenings at each of the three Spotsylvania Branches; \$19,000 was also recovered from benefits on the frozen position. In addition, Hutzal explained that supplies to those branches have been reduced to save nearly \$33,000, and that plans for meeting room furniture updates and new copiers have been paused at the three branches in FY21 to save another \$50,000.

Kerry Devine asked if there was any feedback from Spotsylvania customers on the reduction in the Spotsylvania branches. Martha Hutzal confirmed that these changes have only been in effect for one week so it is likely customers are not yet aware of them.

David Ross asked for clarification on several figures in the FY22 Budget Update, which Martha Hutzal provided. Ross said that two of the four jurisdictions, Stafford and Spotsylvania, cover 70% of the budget and that those jurisdictions would now bear the brunt of the 8.48% increase that was just approved by the Board in the FY23 Budget. Hutzal replied that the majority of branch locations and services provided are in those two jurisdictions, and that we would not be asking for an increase this large were it not for the dire need to raise salaries in order to attract staff and fill vacancies. Xavier Richardson commented that the funding breakdown is reflective of the services rendered in each locality. Ross said the approved budget increase would place a greater burden on Stafford and Spotsylvania than it will on Fredericksburg and Westmoreland.

Meg Bohmke said the benefits line-item seemed high. Martha Hutzal explained that figure includes full-time employees as well as part-time employees who qualify for benefits. Cheryl Miller said that the board must remember that a number of budget items were decreased in 2020. Hutzal confirmed Miller's comment and reminded the board that a total of \$550,000 in funding that had been received was actually returned to the jurisdictions of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, and Stafford; no funding was returned to Westmoreland. Kimberly Young asked how, in situations where funding is reduced, the decisions are made regarding what budget items to cut. Hutzal responded that, per the bylaws, the Library Director would make those operating decisions which would then come before the Board for approval.

Kimberly asked for further discussion. There was none. Diana Risavi made a motion to close discussion on the FY22 Budget update. Kerry Miller seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Kimberly Young directed the Board's attention to the three documents provided on the Library Agreement and opened the floor for discussion.

Meg Bohmke said that, despite repeated requests from Stafford, Fredericksburg has yet to weigh in on the draft revision of the agreement and until we receive their input, we cannot move forward. Kerry Devine replied that the delay has been the result of the city having a very small staff and that they simply have not had the time to address this request to date.

Kimberly Young said that she had some concerns regarding Item 8, Section c. Young said this section was unclear regarding revenues approved and revenues projected and how expenses are determined. She added that there is a big difference between revenues and expenses and suggested that section be reviewed and clarified. Martha Hutzel added that in that same section, she had concern regarding the text next to "Total Local Budget" suggesting that the budget would include "revenues projected to be those received from Commonwealth of Virginia and any other sources as regular operating revenues." Hutzel said that it is impossible to project what grants, gifts, and donations we will receive and that it is even difficult to project what interest will accrue on the accounts.

Diana Risavi asked for clarification of roles in updating the agreement, stating that she understood each jurisdiction would provide their input and that the Library Board would approve or reject the final agreement put forward. Kimberly Young responded that the Board's role is to provide input for staff proposed edits or feedback on edits received. Young asked how the Board could best represent the Library's interests and if there was legal counsel available through the Library of Virginia or elsewhere. Meg Bohmke agreed that there should be an attorney representing the Library. Martha Hutzel said that although the Library is a government entity, there are no public legal resources provided to CRRL through the Library of Virginia or any other state agency. Bohmke made a motion to approve Library Director Martha Hutzel securing legal counsel for the purposes of representing CRRL's interests in the Library Agreement revision not to exceed \$2,500 in cost. David Ross seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Moving to New Business, Kimberly Young opened the floor for discussion on the FY21 Annual Circulation Report that had been removed from the Consent Agenda. Meg Bohmke asked why there was such a large variance between FY21 and FY20 on the figures for Combined Circulation and Circulation of Physical Materials. Chris Glover explained that the anomaly was due to the pandemic and that while overall circulation numbers are down, they continue to increase slowly. Martha Hutzel stated that while circulation numbers continued to recover, and Q4 circulation was much higher than Q4 of FY20, the annual circulation was still about half of the previous year due to the effects of the pandemic. eMaterials circulation fell in Q4 from its peak at the height of the pandemic, but annual circulation of eMaterials grew by 14%.

Kimberly Young announced elections and called for nominations for Chair. Xavier Richardson nominated Kimberly Young. Kerry Kerry Devine seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously with Young abstaining.

Kimberly Young called for nominations for Vice Chair. David Ross nominated Xavier Richardson. Richardson respectfully declined. Richardson nominated Diana Risavi. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously with Risavi abstaining.

The next Board meeting will be December 13 at 4:00pm at Salem Church Branch.

Meg Bohmke made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 P.M.