



Central Rappahannock Regional
Library

INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING
FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Proudly serving Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland

LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

September 11, 2023

Porter Branch

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Diana Risavi (Chair), Xavier Richardson (Vice Chair), Martha Hutzel (Secretary-Treasurer), Mary Becelia, Kerry Devine, Monica Gary, Lori Hayes, Cheryl Miller

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Sean Bonney, Darci Caswell and Laura Baxter-Christopher

Diana Risavi called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Public comment opened at 4:32 p.m.

Nancy Minor, Stafford County resident. Minor voiced her appreciation for the library system and is grateful for the community resources that it provides.

Candace Schmidt, Stafford County resident. Schmidt is a former CRRL employee and detailed being a part of the Porter Branch family. Schmidt described a deep appreciation for the entire library system and stated that a regional library system works well and that we are fortunate to have it.

Larry Towne, Stafford County resident. Towne stated as a former member of the Library Board and having worked with Library staff in the past was always very impressed. Towne continued to note several initiatives and programs currently offered throughout the Library system. Towie noted that these programs help to keep the community engaged.

Diana Risavi opened the floor for Board member comments.



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Monica Gary detailed a recent meeting with a CRRL employee at a local coffee shop during an event. The employee is a member of the Ideospace staff and was participating in the event. The employee described several services offered at Ideospace. Gary was encouraged and plans to tour the facility to see these services first hand.

There were no further board member comments.

Martha Hutzal presented the Director's Report. Hutzal introduced Laura Baxter-Christopher as the new Executive Assistant at CRRL.

Martha Hutzal shared that annual circulation is returning to pre-pandemic levels, with FY23 circulation topping 1.6 million which is higher than circulation in FY20.

Marth Hutzal informed the Board that the iOS version of the CRRL Mobile app has had its age rating successfully changed to 12+ in the App Store. Hutzal shared that the app's home screen had also been reordered to first feature Staff Lists and Events and then highlight New Materials. A forthcoming version of the mobile app is expected to allow customers to be able to customize the order of items on their home screen and show or hide sections if they would like.

Martha Hutzal announced to the Board the insurance payment for the flood damage at the Library Administrative Center and the Cooper Branch had been received. The payment was much higher than anticipated and staff had no way to predict how much or when it would be received. Hutzal did note that the payment took much longer than expected.

Martha Hutzal introduced Darcie Caswell, CRRL Youth Services Coordinator, who presented an overview of the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. Caswell described the nation-wide program's goal is for caregivers to read 1,000 books to their child before they go to kindergarten. The program is self-paced and how long it takes to complete will depend on how often a child is read to.

Darcie Caswell detailed the importance of this program because the first five years of a child's life are critical for brain development. Also, doing things "right" in the first five years can have a lifelong impact. The program is a natural fit as CRRL's mission to inspire lifelong learning for everyone in the community and also aligns with the organization's 0-5 year reader initiatives.

Darcie Caswell described the book logging process and also noted milestone incentives and awards along throughout the challenge to 1,000 books.

Lori Hayes asked how many participants are currently enrolled in the program? Caswell stated that as of the meeting there were 112 participants.

Monica Gary asked that two sentences be struck from the draft July 26, 2023 Special Meeting minutes.

Old Business

Martha Hutzel provided an update regarding the FY24 Budget and stated that after discussions with the library board and the localities, it was determined that CRRL would use library funds in order to restore all of the hours that were reduced at the beginning of the fiscal year. The amount has been prorated because the branches have been closed for some of the fiscal year. The FY24 budget has been updated to reflect the use of those funds. Hutzel noted that by reopening Fredericksburg and Salem Church branches the week of October 2nd to allow time for staff to adjust their schedules. All other aspects of the budget remain unchanged.

Lori Hayes asked what was damaged- the building or the materials? Hutzel stated that most specifically library furniture was damaged as a result of the burst pipes at both locations. Any damage to the building that houses the Cooper Branch was repaired by the Town of Westmoreland.

Diane Risavi stated that the insurance payments would be used to provide the necessary funds needed to reopen the closed branch hours. Hutzel also stated the vast majority of the funds are available because all of the payment was not needed to cover the cost of replacement furniture.

Risavi asked staff to confirm that provided the funds from the insurance payments that the fund balance amount was still over the auditors recommendation? Staff was able to confirm the fund was within the auditor's recommendations.

Lori Hayes questioned why the auditors ask to have that percentage in the fund balance especially since the localities are responsible for the building maintenance of the branches? Risavi said that historically auditors have suggested no less than the 15% fund balance as a minimum to cover cash flow. Hutzel stated the fund balance is sometimes used to cover payroll expenses in the event that money from the jurisdiction payments don't arrive in a timely manner. Hutzel also noted that budget managers from the localities urge Library staff to use the fund balance to make one time purchases for expenses like furniture. It was also noted that policy says the fund balance should maintain 25% of the operating budget, however, recently that has not been kept at that level.

Lori Hayes suggested a group meeting with the Spotsylvania County Administrator and Martha Hutzel regarding the fund balance to explore some additional questions separately.

Diana Risavi requested a motion to approve the adjusted FY24 budget. The motion was accepted by Monica Gary and seconded by Xavier Richardson. The motion passed unanimously.

Diana Risavi requested a motion to approve the reopening of the Salem Church Branch on Thursdays from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The motion was accepted by Lori Hayes and seconded Monica Gary. The motion passed unanimously.

Diana Risavi requested a motion to approve the reopening of the Fredericksburg Branch on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The motion was accepted by Kerry Devine and seconded by Cheryl Miller. The motion passed unanimously.

Diana Risavi noted that the board has discussed the possibility of audio recording Library Board meetings on multiple occasions. Risavi encouraged the board to reach a final decision during the meetings. Risavi proposed that the Board decide to make audio recordings of library meetings that will be posted on the library website. Funds received from the insurance payment will be used to purchase the system. Staff was asked if the system could be in place by the December meeting. Staff noted that it could be possible to have the system in place by that date. The floor was opened to the board for comment and with no comments issue was closed.

Diana Risavi requested a motion to approve audio recordings of Library Board meetings for posting on the library's website. The motion was accepted by Xavier Richardson and seconded by Monica Gary. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Diana Risavi announced elections and called for nominations for Chair. Cheryl Miller was nominated by Diana Risavi, Miller accepted. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Diana Risavi called for nominations for Vice Chair. Mary Becelia was nominated by Kerry Devine, Becelia accepted. Xavier Richardson seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Martha Hutzler introduced Lisa Gray, CRRL Planning and Development Specialist, who presented a brief overview of the two proposed FY25 budget options. Gray noted that Option 1 incorporated all of the FY25 budget goals that were given to the Board at the June 12, 2023 Library Board meeting, and Option 2 incorporated only some of those goals and requested less money from the jurisdictions.

Gray most specifically noted that Option 1 requested a full-year of a 5% COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) for all staff, a mid-year 2.5% merit increase and a \$120,000 increase to the books & materials budget. Additionally, Option 1 included a request for the funds needed to reopen the following hours at the Spotsylvania locations that were closed in FY21.

Gray presented Option 2 that included some Budget Goals. Most notably this option did not include a merit for employees and the additional hours at the Spotsylvania Branches.

Kerry Devine asked staff if opening the Fredericksburg branch on Sunday and closing sometime during the week would increase funding? Hutzel responded that she understood some patrons might prefer a Sunday opening, however that shift provides challenges for payroll costs and employee availability. Rebecca Purdy shared that an evaluation of customers was conducted and that branch in particular, Sunday was one of the least days of usage.

Lori Hayes asked if the board was expected to take action on one of these options during the meeting? Hutzel stated it was up to the board to decide how to move forward on a vote. Hayes noted that she would like time to consult with the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors and county administration staff before voting on an option. Hayes asked if it was possible to schedule a meeting sometime between now and December 11 to vote? Hutzel stated that historically the Budget Managers from the localities request a copy of the budget as soon as it is voted on.

Xavier Richardson asked if voting for the budget at the meeting had any bearing on the upcoming election. Lori Hayes noted that the BOS will be different in January when this comes through, however she felt that it would have little effect since only three possible seats that might shift with her board.

Monica Gary noted that initially she had thought something similar, however, she noted that voting on a proposal and then moving it to the locality to work through might be best. Gary noted her vote is not a reflection of the entire Stafford Board of Supervisors.

Diana Risavi noted Westmoreland is the only locality that pays what is decided based on calculations presented as part of the proposal. Risavi described that Westmoreland follows a specific calculation model.

Diana Risavi requested a motion to approve FY25 Budget- Option 1. The motion was accepted by Xavier Richardson and second by Monica Gary. The motion passed with 6 votes in favor and 1 in abstention (Lori Hayes).

The next Board meeting will be December 11th at 4:30 p.m. at the Salem Church Branch.

Cheryl Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kerry Devine seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 P.M.