



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

March 11, 2024

4:30 p.m.

Fredericksburg Branch

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Cheryl Miller (Chair), Mary Becelia (Vice Chair), Martha Hutzel (Secretary-Treasurer), Kerry Devine, Lori Hayes, David Ross, Christy Maupin, and Monica Gary

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION: Rebecca Purdy, Chris Glover, Tracy McPeck, Sean Bonney, Laura Baxter-Christopher

Cheryl Miller called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Cheryl Miller welcomed Christy Maupin and David Ross to the Library Board. Miller informed the Board, Christy Maupin, a resident of Colonial Beach, will be representing Westmoreland County. Mrs. Maupin has an extensive background including serving as an active member of the Colonial Beach Community Foundation.

Miller informed the Board, David Ross will be representing Spotsylvania County as a citizen; however, he has previously served on this board as an elected official. Mr. Ross is a retired Marine Aviator, and for the past 14 years has been a Program Manager in the software development field.

Public comment opened at 4:32 p.m.

Ann Little, Tree Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg City resident. Little was given 5 minutes to speak as she was representing a group per library policy. Laura Baxter-Christopher was the timekeeper. Little spoke about the library's Meeting Room Policy.

David Ross asked Little who she talked to in order to determine there were priority organizations? Little responded she spoke with the Fredericksburg Branch Manager and also submitted a FOIA request for documentation.

Ross also questioned if Little was she assuming all commercial groups noted were charging for events held at the library? Little researched the commercial groups websites she was able to confirm they do charge.

Ross said CRRL policy says tuition and fees may be charged for classes sponsored by an accredited educational facility. Ross asked Little if she found some of these are not educational facilities? Little responded she believes an educational facility is different from a ballet class.

Cheryl Miller opened the floor for Board member comments. There were no Board member comments.

Martha Hutzel presented the Director's Report. In addition to the previously distributed Director's Report Hutzel informed the Board the annual Fredericksburg Regional Spelling Bee, sponsored by CRRL and the Free Lance Star was held on March 2nd. Hutzel shared library staff devoted countless hours preparing, judging, promoting, and officiating the event.

Martha Hutzel introduced Tracy McPeck, CRRL Adult Services Coordinator, who presented an overview of two unique services housed at the Fredericksburg Branch that are utilized by customers throughout the service area.

McPeck described the Virginiana and Law Collections. McPeck presented information about CRRL's special collections at the Fredericksburg branch encompassing the Virginia room, the law library and resources for grant seekers.

Kerry Devine asked if the grant funding sites cannot be accessed from other branches? McPeck confirmed the grant funding database can only be accessed at the Fredericksburg branch due to licensing costs.

Devine also asked how the Law Library is funded? Hutzel noted some of the funding comes from the Library's Operating Budget but a great deal of funding comes from court fees generated in the jurisdictions.

David Ross asked, if Douglas Jackson, Law Librarian, was an attorney? McPeck said Douglas Jackson is not an attorney however, has paralegal experience and he doesn't provide legal advice but he is well qualified and he has experience with West Law and other databases and resources CRRL utilizes.

Ross then asked, if a constituent were to come in, would he be the only person to help them one on one or are there other librarians could help? McPeck said, anybody in Adult Services would be able to

help customers navigate some basic legal resources. McPeck said Doug Jackson is the best qualified to provide the in-depth one on one instruction and he is a valuable resource we couldn't replicate.

Ross asked if appointments can be made with Doug? McPeck confirmed appointments can be made with Doug and he can also be reached by email, online chat service, or by calling the branch.

Lori Hayes asked if there is data pertaining to the number of people in a calendar year who have accessed these resources? McPeck said she didn't have those figures at the time however, she is confident staff could provide the information. Hayes said she would be curious to know what those numbers might be.

Mary Becelia described how her son recently discovered the Law Library was located in the FXBG branch and noted what a neat resource it is.

Cheryl Miller asked if attendance numbers to the Law Library could be added to the quarterly reports? Martha Hurzel said staff would research the possibility of adding the data and report back.

Lori Hayes asked if GWRC and different organizations assist the localities with grants that have this database? McPeck said in a recent search she conducted the nearest locality using the database was Prince William Public Library. McPeck said organizations might use similar databases.

Lori Hayes asked if CRRL knew how many people had actually been awarded grants by using the database and if the information was tracked? McPeck said she thought that would be hard to track. Martha Hutzel continued to state CRRL would not know if organizations applied for a grant or received it unless they reported this information to CRRL. Hayes continued she thought this would be valuable data to have based on the cost of the fees for the database.

Cheryl Miller requested a motion to take the second item (item B) out of New Business on the Agenda and allow the presentation of the Audit Report. David Ross made this motion and was seconded by Kerry Devine, it passed unanimously. The motion was adopted.

Elaine Farmer of Bishop, Farmer & Co. presented the FY23 Audit Report.

Lori Hayes said members of the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors are curious as to why CRRL has such a large fund balance when we are covering the majority of the costs with the facilities?

Farmer said you can't have a \$0 fund balance. Farmer noted you need to define what is the fund balance and what is your definition of that? Farmers said as presented in the audit there is actually a deficit when all the assets and liabilities are added. Farmer said some analysis needs to be done to ask what is the comfort level of the fund balance?

Hayes asked if Farmer had an opinion on what that number would look like? Farmer said work needs to be done to quantify what type of definition you want to put to the fund balance and to look at

the expenditures and the timing of the expenditures.

Martha Hutzel clarified the total in the audit report also includes an assigned fund balance which includes the Finley Trust monies received. Hutzel said the Fund Balance used to be a higher percentage of the operating budget and was as high as 25% at one time. Hutzel noted the last few years CRRL has spent the fund balance down and has been trying to keep it at around 15% of the operating budget.

Hutzel said one of the main reasons CRRL uses the fund balance is when a payment from either Spotsylvania or Stafford arrives late the money is needed to cover payroll costs. Also, those funds may be used for one time purchases.

Hayes added maybe we could all discuss what we think is a good number for the fund balance going forward.

Farmer said a study should be conducted and more than likely there is not going to be a magic number. Farmer noted there are several factors that need to be researched and 15% is not a huge percentage.

Monica Gary said because the library system does not own the buildings then that is not an asset. Farmer confirmed the buildings themselves are not on the financial statements.

Cheryl Miller thanked Farmer for her presentation. Farmer thanked the Board and left the meeting.

Miller 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. David Ross and Christy Maupin asked to pull the board minutes from December, as both were not yet on the board. Monica Gary made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda minus item 1 (which included 5 items: December 11, 2023 Board Meeting minutes, Director's Written Report, Q2 Financial Report, Q2 Special Use Report, and Q2 Circulation Report). Kerry Devine seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Cheryl Miller stated David Ross and Christy Maupin asked to pull the December 11, 2023 board meeting minutes from the Consent Agenda. Ross and Maupin stated they asked to have them pulled because they needed to abstain as both were not serving on the board at that time.

Cheryl Miller asked for a motion. Monica Gary made a motion to approve the December 11, 2023 meeting minutes and Lori Hayes seconded the motion. Ross and Maupin abstained. The motion was adopted.

As Old Business, Cheryl Miller asked Martha Hutzel to provide the Board with an update regarding the FY25 Budget. Hutzel said CRRL has heard from the County Administrators in Spotsylvania and Stafford, they have made their recommendations but have not yet heard from

Fredericksburg and Westmoreland. Hutzel said Spotsylvania is recommending not approving \$116,061 in the FY25 Budget Request. Hutzel said that is the exact amount requested to reopen the three branches in the county for two additional nights during the week until 8 p.m. Those branches close at 5:30 p.m. two days a week. Hutzel said Stafford has recommended full funding.

Lori Hayes noted she wants to set the expectation this is a very difficult budget year and just because a recommendation has been made doesn't mean an organization will receive the amount of funding. Monica Gary and Kerry Devine also confirmed their localities are in a challenging budget scenario.

Martha Hutzel said staff have met with the locality Budget Managers in December and will meet with them again soon. Hutzel added Stafford has recommended a 5% COLA for staff and is what has been recommended for CRRL Staff. Hutzel continued by stating they did get a 5% COLA last year however, staff have not received a merit increase in over a decade. Hutzel noted historically any COLA received by CRRL staff is well below what the local government employees make.

Lori Hayes suggested looking at areas to make potential cuts in order to prioritize staff compensation. Martha Hutzel noted the budget was very lean already and the materials increase could be cut, however, would result in longer wait times.

David Ross said employees in the commercial sector were not receiving an 8% raise. Ross noted it might be beneficial to look at employee retention. Ross also commented about operating hours and what scenarios might be better. Hutzel said data was used in the decision making process for establishing operating hours. Hutzel noted several options have been tried to accommodate most citizens.

Cheryl Miller added an item to New Business that consisted of adding the Meeting Room topic to the next meeting.

Lori Hayes said due to budgeting constraints maybe the board needs to look at other avenues of revenue. Hayes added possibly adding fees to commercial business using meeting spaces. Martha Hutzel said some systems do charge room fees. Hutzel said staff are considering other options to expand meeting room spaces.

David Ross also said he would like to know do other locations have priority organizations and for policy clarification?

Kerry Devine asked if consideration has been made about the possibility of the Theater Room at the Fredericksburg branch opening on Sunday. Devine noted the space is accessible without the rest of the branch being open. Martha Hutzel said this space has been used at times when the rest of the branch is closed.

David Ross suggested a Parks and Recreation employee could supervise the space like is done

in Spotsylvania County. Kerry Devine said the City does have a similar operating practice however funding would still be impacted.

Cheryl Miller noted discussions will continue at the next meeting.

The next Board meeting is scheduled on June 10, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at the Cooper Branch.

Kerry Devine made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Monica Gary seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.