

Kent County Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the June 27, 2022 Meeting

Present: Valerie Overton, President; Judi O'Brien, Vice President; Jay Silcox, Treasurer; Erin Counihan, Secretary; John Murphy, Trustee; Amy Sine, Trustee; Arnessa Dowell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Staff Member; Kris Costas, Keith McDevitt, Matt Trafis, Roofing Representatives

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

Ms. Overton noted that she would need to leave the meeting at 5:15 pm, and would hand the meeting over to Ms. O'Brien at that time.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Mr. Murphy moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Ms. Dowell reviewed the agenda for the meeting, no changes were made.

Ms. Overton called for public comment, of which there was none.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Mr. Silcox reported that the Finance Committee had met on June 14 to discuss various grants. Mr. Silcox noted that the Chestertown ARPA Grant Letter of Intent was due on June 30, that a grant had been received from the Local Management Board which the library had started to utilize, and that LSTA grant applications had been submitted, but there was no word yet related to approval.

Mr. Silcox informed the trustees that the Finance Committee had discussed a compensation study which had been sponsored by ESRL. Mr. Silcox noted that there was very little consistency across position names and descriptions, which made comparisons of compensation difficult. The trustees discussed competitive pay for the area and what comparable counties would be for Kent County.

Ms. Dowell noted that only three libraries on the eastern shore did not have a pay scale, and that Kent was one of them, and working towards creating a pay scale would aid employees in progress or promotion.

Mr. Silcox noted that the committee had discussed capital projects including the roof for the Chestertown location, the Rock Hall branch location noting that the current location was secured for 17 more months but was not viable long term, and the meeting room and yellow building which needed to be considered.

Mr. Silcox informed the trustees that the PNC Checking account had a current balance of \$140,865.95, and the PNC Money Market account had a balance of \$31,237.13. Mr. Silcox informed the trustees that the Peoples Bank account had gone inactive after 18 months without a transaction, and that he was working with the previous treasurer and the bank to get responsibilities transferred and reactivate the account.

Mr. Murphy revisited the LSTA grant discussion, asking if the request to send staff to the ARSL conference was sufficient to send everyone? Mr. Silcox noted that the grant request had not been approved by the state yet. Ms. Dowell replied that they had requested enough funding to send the entire library staff to the conference. The trustees discussed the implications of sending the entire staff.

Friends of the Library

Ms. O'Brien reported that she had visited with the Board of the Friends, and that the organization was doing well and recruiting new members. Ms. O'Brien reminded the trustees that the Friends would be making a contribution on July 1 to the Library's annual budget.

Ms. O'Brien presented a draft memorandum of understanding between the Library and the Friends which clarified responsibilities and privileges of both organizations. Ms. O'Brien asked for comments and feedback related to the memorandum be sent to her.

Foundation for the Kent County Public Library

Mr. Murphy noted that there was no update from the Foundation, and that the next meeting would be in September. The trustees discussed the Foundation grant request guidelines and timeline.

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning Committee

Ms. O'Brien informed the trustees that she and Ms. Counihan had met to discuss strategic priorities, and if these are items which need to be pursued by the Library alongside the Foundation.

Ms. Overton noted that she had met with Mr. Murphy related to the Foundation grant funding, noting that the submission needs to be approved by the trustees, and that if there was not an August meeting the timeline became limited. Ms. O'Brien asked if the trustees knew how much of the Foundation funding was available. Mr. Murphy replied that the Foundation was not designated as an endowment. Ms. Overton added that the Foundation had been clear that they do not want to provide funding for operational expenses. The trustees discussed the strategic priorities and which were the most important to the trustees and the strategic process.

Ms. Dowell noted that the website redesign had been added to the priority list. Mr. Silcox questioned if the tech director position was necessary for the website project. Ms. Dowell replied no, and that the process could proceed without that position being filled.

Ms. O'Brien noted that the signing bonus for the Tech Director position and the patio/outdoor space furniture were identified by the committee. The trustees discussed the amount of the bonus, and what challenges had been encountered in hiring for the position. Ms. Dowell noted that a request for a signing bonus contribution would not be very substantial.

Ms. Overton reviewed the meeting room funding request and the outdoor furniture/patio request, noting that these aligned with the strategic plan, and were large requests which were already well prepared. The trustees discussed options for the meeting room request including making it a multi-year project, and pursuing additional funding partners.

Mr. Murphy questioned if the meeting room, the patio furniture & signage, and the website redesign were the top three projects for consideration for grant funding. The trustees agreed that these were the projects most prepared and most aligned with the strategic plan.

Librarian's Report

Capital Project Update

Ms. Dowell introduced Mr. Kris Costas and Mr. Matt Trafis, who were there to present related to the roof issues in the Chestertown location. Mr. Trafis noted that he worked for Blue Streak Project Management, who had been working with the library on the roof issues and some other projects. Mr. Trafis noted that Mr. Costas had arranged for a contractor to inspect the roof, and reviewed the findings of the inspector: shingles need replacing in some areas, some shingles were curling and sliding, some sealer around windows was not intact.

The trustees questioned Mr. Trafis and Mr. Costas related to the roof and what the extent of the repair may be needed. The trustees reviewed what work was included in the quote provided, and some of the limitations of the quote, such as how much plywood would need to be replaced if the entire roof was replaced.

Mr. Silcox questioned how long the project would take. Mr. Costas replied that it would take a few weeks depending on when the contract is accepted.

Ms. O'Brien called for further questions, which there were none.

Ms. O'Brien thanked Mr. Trafis, Mr. Costas and Mr. McDevitt for their time. The presenters left the meeting following their presentation.

The trustees discussed the organization and structure of the agreement.

The trustees discussed the roof and a repair to the existing roof or replacing the entire roof.

Mr. Silcox indicated he would meet with the county engineer related to the responsibility of the county for the roof to the Chestertown location. Ms. O'Brien requested that the county provide documentation if the responsibility was determined to lie with the library for the roof.

Facilities Master Plan Update

Ms. Dowell noted that the Facilities Master Plan document was in the supplemental materials for this meeting, and that all feedback which had been received was incorporated into the document. Ms. Dowell called for questions and comments. Mr. Silcox asked if this was the final document. Ms. Dowell replied that it was.

Ms. O'Brien asked if the plan needed to be voted on to be accepted. Ms. Dowell replied that it needed to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Murphy questioned if the strategic planning committee had reviewed and discussed the Facilities Master Plan. Ms. O'Brien replied that the plan had been discussed by both the finance committee and the strategic planning committee.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the facilities plan as presented. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion. Ms. O'Brien called for discussion. The trustees discussed how to verify that the changes requested had been made. Ms. Dowell reviewed the changes, including adding a statement about who had developed the plan, and changes to the strategic plan document. Mr. Murphy asked if the document would be changeable in the future. Ms. Dowell replied that it would be. No further discussion was held. Ms. O'Brien called for a vote on the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Grant Updates

Ms. Dowell noted that most of the grant updates had been reviewed earlier in the meeting.

Ms. Dowell noted that the Chestertown ARPA grant was included in the packet. Mr. Silcox questioned if the quote for the meeting room was also provided by Blue Streak Project Management. Ms. Dowell said that it was.

Ms. O'Brien questioned if there would be a need for a bid process if the grant was funded or if there was a difference when utilizing grant funding compared to public funds. The trustees discussed the need for a competitive bid process.

Mr. Silcox moved to approve the grant request as written. Ms. Sine seconded the motion. Ms. O'Brien called for discussion, and noted that the town wanted organizations who continued to support the town throughout the pandemic. No further discussion was had. Ms. O'Brien called for a vote, which was approved unanimously.

Old Business

Staff Handbook

Ms. Dowell presented the revised staff handbook to the trustees. Mr. Silcox questioned if the new effective date would be July 1, 2022, Ms. Dowell replied that it would be, and the footer would be updated to reflect that. Ms. O'Brien asked if this was the final compilation of changes. Ms. Dowell noted that some policies were still undergoing revisions. Ms. Dowell reviewed the changes with the trustees.

Mr. Silcox asked if it was possible to track changes for this version. Mr. Walmsley noted that the changes had been made across a variety of documents, making it difficult to incorporate into a single document.

Mr. Silcox moved to approve the handbook as presented. Ms. Sine seconded the motion. Ms. O'Brien called for discussion. The trustees discussed the supporting policies. Ms. O'Brien asked if it would be better to approval a final package at a later meeting? The trustees agreed to table the motion pending a final approval packet.

New Business

Trustee Recruitment Announcement

Ms. Dowell reviewed the recruitment process with the trustees, noting that it typically began about this time so that recommendations could be made to the county commissioners.

Roe v. Wade

Ms. Dowell noted that with the Supreme Court's recent actions, at least one county had put out a memorandum related not conducting business in or with states which do not support abortion rights, and that approval needed to be sought for county employees to travel to or do business with states which were not in line with Maryland State laws related to abortion access. The trustees discussed how these actions could impact library business and travel.

No further business was brought before the trustees.

Mr. Silcox moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.