**Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees**

Minutes of the October 21, 2024 Meeting

Present: Jay Silcox, President; John Murphy, Vice President; Amy Sine, Treasurer; Erin Counihan, Secretary; Rachel Durso, Trustee; Robert Bell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Executive Secretary; Katie Sardo, Branch Clerk; Chris Lehman, Auditor; Jeanne Edwards, Senior Accountant for Kent County Government

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

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed. No changes were made.

Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Results

Mr. Chris Lehman introduced himself to the trustees and reviewed the audit for Fiscal Year 2024. Mr. Lehman stated that a clean/unmodified opinion of the financial statements had been issued with no instances of fraud and no material weaknesses identified. Mr. Lehman noted that they had received the full cooperation of management, and there were no audit adjustments noted.

Mr. Lehman reviewed the audit process, noting that a FORCAM approach was utilized.

No questions were asked about the process or the audit results.

Mr. Silcox moved to accept the audit as submitted. Ms. Sine seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Mr. Lehman and Ms. Edwards left the meeting following the presentation.

Review of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. No changes were made.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Counihan seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Ms. Sine reported that the balance of the Peoples Bank Savings Account was $219,094.25, and that this would need to be reviewed to make sure that the reserve is in compliance with the reserve policy. Ms. Sine stated that the PNC Checking balance was $115,693.50, which was sufficient cash flow to cover anticipated expenses such as the Rock Hall furniture, and the PNC Money Market balance was $31,244.57.

Secretary

Ms. Counihan thanked those who were present last week for the meet and greet with Mr. Bell, noting that a follow-up email had been received from Chief Dixon of the Chestertown Police Department about continuing to work together.

Ms. Counihan stated it was National Friends of the Library Week, and asked if it would be appropriate to send a message to the Friends of the Kent County Public Library on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The trustees discussed this with the consensus that a card should be sent on behalf of the Board and that it was appropriate for the secretary to handle this responsibility.

Foundation for the Kent County Public Library Representative

Mr. Murphy stated that the annual meeting of the Foundation had occurred the previous week, and that the Foundation had approved the grant request and begun fundraising efforts. Mr. Murphy continued that the Foundation would collect funds through January 31, 2025.

Friends of the Kent County Public Library Representative

Ms. Durso stated that the Friends had met on October 5, with most of the meeting dedicated to the logistics of the book sale. Ms. Durso noted that the book sale was a huge success, raising over $9,000 for the organization, and that there were two book sales planned for the upcoming calendar year.

Ms. Durso shared with the trustees that the Friends thanked the trustees for forming the Safety Committee and working to address some of the issues related to safety around the library.

Ms. Durso noted that the Friends requested more regular reports about progress on the Chestertown Library, Inc. building.

Committees

Finance Committee

Ms. Sine informed the trustees that the Finance Committee had not met due the short turnaround between meetings and a lack of agenda items.

Rock Hall Facility Committee

Mr. Silcox noted that he had been unable to attend the most recent meeting of the committee, but that ongoing items included the crosswalk and sign approvals.

Mr. Walmsley reviewed the current progress of the Rock Hall facility, noting that some items were ordered but had not yet been delivered.

The trustees discussed the role of the committee in the future and continuing the path for a new or larger building.

Safety Committee

Mr. Silcox reported that the Safety Committee had met. Ms. Durso reviewed the meeting, stating that the committee would like to work with the director to review some safety concerns associated with the library. Ms. Durso wanted to work to identify the top 5 to 10 risks faced by the library, and what the library felt prepared to address.

Ms. Durso continued that a site meeting had been proposed with Chief Dixon related to camera placement and evaluation, and walkthrough or drive-by policies from the police.

Ms. Durso noted that there was a discussion about how the library space was used, what trainings had been given to staff and what additional training they would like to receive.

Mr. Bell stated that he had spoken with Chief Dixon and would be setting up a meeting with the senior team. Mr. Bell reviewed his de-escalation training and proposed doing some in-house training.

The trustees discussed lighting, the extent of the responsibility of the county, and storage for camera recordings.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Bell reviewed previous events, noting that Applefest, and the book sale had happened during October, and that upcoming events included the Rock Hall Branch grant reopening, early voting and the general election, and a variety of STEMfest events.

Mr. Bell reported that he had attended the MAPLA annual meeting, with most of the first day being about Maryland Government and legislative changes like the Right to Read, which the government was working to clarify some elements of the bill.

Mr. Bell continued that there was a discussion at the meeting related to the SAILOR outage at the beginning of October. Mr. Bell noted that backup systems and repairs to the original system were being worked on and investigated, with a contingency plan being developed after the repairs were completed. Mr. Bell informed the trustees that communication issues were being addressed at the state level.

Mr. Bell informed the trustees that he was looking into software alternatives for some systems that were currently being used for HR, payroll and scheduling. Mr. Bell noted that BambooHR was being used by some libraries and that he would like to look into it for the library.

Mr. Bell shared that he was investigating an organizational membership for the Maryland Library Association.

Mr. Bell informed the trustees that the Director of Branch Services position had been posted to the American Library Association joblist, the Maryland Library Association jobline, and the Delaware Library Association website.

Mr. Bell noted that Mr. Michael Sampson, the Director of Information Services, would like to change the part-time Information Services Clerk position to a full-time position, which would require more funding.

Mr. Bell informed the trustees that he was investigating alterations to the service hours for the library including moving the opening time to 9:30 am every currently open day, extending closing time to 7:00 pm on selected evenings between Monday and Thursday, extending open hours on Friday until 5:00 pm, and leaving Saturday and Sunday unchanged. Mr. Silcox stated that more open hours was a great goal but questioned if there would be costs associated with the increased hours and staff availability. Mr. Bell noted that there had been some concern related to being open every evening until 7:00 pm, but there was probably a happy compromise to be found.

Mr. Bell reviewed that following the renovation of the Chestertown Library, Inc. Building, he may look at moving the youth services department to that space and using it for programming and other special events.

The trustees discussed the Memorandum of Understanding for the Chestertown Library, Inc. Building and how to progress with it.

Old Business

Chestertown Library, Inc. Building

Mr. Silcox reviewed the current progress on the renovation, stating that a contract had been developed by the county for the architect, and that some issues with the contract from the architect’s perspective were being reviewed to be resolved.

Mr. Silcox stated that he would be working with the library until the project was completed.

The trustees discussed why the building was not being used at present.

The trustees discussed how to share updates and progress on the project with community partners and other stakeholders.

New Business

Mr. Murphy noted that he had met with the county related to potential conflicts of interest in being both Vice President and a Trustee for the Foundation, and as a result had resigned from the Board of the Foundation.

Mr. Murphy stated that the Town of Millington had a library, which was currently a small room in their town hall building, but that the proposed facility being constructed in and around the former Millington Elementary School contained a proposed library space. The trustees discussed the Millington facility and potential partnership avenues.

Trustee Recruitment

Ms. Sine stated that there had been three applications received for the upcoming trustee vacancies and that recommendations would be presented in November. Ms. Sine said that if trustees had particular input related to what they would like to see in potential trustees, this information should be sent directly to Ms. Sine.

No further business was brought before the trustees.

Ms. Sine moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Durso seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 pm.