

**HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
FY 2020 BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2020

Present: Dwayne Adams, William B. Allen, Alex M. Allman, Kenneth R. Avery, Honorable Susan H. Hazlett, Taryn J. Martin, Durbin Vido, Carol Wright, CEO Mary L. Hastler, and Jennifer Button

Absent: Trustee Nancy Brown, County Councilman Chad R. Shrodes, and Student Liaison David C. Oguh

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Alex Allman called the virtual meeting of the Harford County Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 6:32 PM.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Motion by Judge Hazlett, seconded by Mr. Vido and approved by unanimous vote to accept the Minutes of the February 20, 2020 Board Meeting.

CEO REPORT – Ms. Hastler

The following provides an overview of the Library’s response to the COVID-19 Pandemic from March 12 through April 16, 2020.

March 12, 2020 – The library announced that all programs and events would be cancelled beginning March 13 through the end of March

March 13, 2020 – The Library announced all branches would be closed effective Monday, March 16, through the end of March

- Regular emails are being sent out to all staff providing updates on the library system and other pertinent information. In addition, the emergency phone line message is being updated for employees who do not have online access along with the text alert system. These methods will continue to be used during the crisis.
- The Marketing Department created a communications plan to push out information regarding online eBooks, eMovies, and all the library online products through eNews, Social Networking, Library website, etc. The Library began working with vendors to lift vendor prescribed restrictions in order to provide smooth access for customers and many vendors came forward and lifted restrictions without a request (Ancestry.com, etc.).
- All fines and fees are lifted during the closure period and all materials due dates have been extended through June encouraging customers to keep materials home until we reopen. Library card anniversary renewals have been extended through July 1. Promoting the availability of online digital library cards as a great way to access eBooks and more.
- The Library Wi-Fi extends into the parking lots of the branches and Riverside providing 24/7 access. The IT Team has been monitoring this remotely and this has been a critical service in the northern part of the

county where there is no high speed internet as well as in other areas of the county where access is complicated (Havre de Grace).

- The Board of Trustees approved (through email) paying all full and part-time staff their regular pay during closure. Staff complete their electronic timesheets through PayCom for their usual schedule. The expectation is for staff to work from home and be available to return to work immediately when the restrictions are lifted. Staff who wish to take annual and personal leave during this time may do so and the expectation is they would not be available to work from home or return to work immediately during their leave time.
- Designated essential staff were provided a letter from the CEO authorizing permission to come to work to perform a critical and essential function/task.

March 15 – The Library was contacted by Upper Chesapeake Health System to consider setting up daycare for designated essential/critical medical and health care staff. The Library designated both the Abingdon and Havre de Grace Libraries for this purpose during closure and developed an operational plan effective March 19 coordinating several community partner services. The service was cancelled the evening of March 18th by University of Maryland in Baltimore.

March 20 – The Materials team begin ordering additional eBooks through Overdrive. MacMillian Publishers lifted the eBook embargo and returned to library eBook pricing model.

Week of March 23

- The Library announced that all branches would be closed indefinitely on **March 25th**
- The Library provided access to all supervisors Zoom to use for department meetings, etc. The first weekly Administrative Council meeting was held on March 24th.
- The Library Foundation Executive Board met through Zoom. The Rodeo has been postponed until June 19, 2021.
- The renovation project at Aberdeen Library continues and is moving along nicely.
- The Library researched using 3D printers to make masks. It was determined that two of the printers in Abingdon were the size required. The filament the library uses is corn based and non-toxic requiring no venting or PPE while printing. The filament needed to make the masks requires special venting and PPE and was difficult to source.
- A weekly report of digital usage during closure was created to track how customers are using the library's online products during closure.

Week of March 30

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act Procedures (Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act and Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act)
- The Families First Coronavirus Response act (FFCRA) requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick or family leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division administered and enforces the new law's paid leave requirements. These provisions will apply from the effective date April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, and the library is developing procedures to address this act.
- The Library began planning for the new future when we reopen.
- Summer Reading Challenge 2020 will be virtual and open to all ages.
- There will be no encouragement of group gatherings in the library through the end of August. No programming, no events, no meeting room bookings, etc. Developing the capability of providing online events and programming. Summer edition of Headlines & Happenings has been cancelled.
- Staggered staffing, limited hours of operation, drive through service only, etc. Mandatory mask wearing, revised service delivery model, etc.
- Staff are encouraged to participate in staff development opportunities while closed including cybersecurity training, customer service training, new technology, etc.

Week of April 6

- CEO participated in a Public Affairs interview with Jeff St. Pierre on what the library was doing to help the community during the pandemic.
- The CEO was interviewed by *The Daily Record* for an article on how the library is responding during the crisis, etc.
- The Library approved lifting some of the restrictions pertaining to the 457 and library employees as a result of COVID-19. This enables library participants to access their 457 account if needed during this difficult time.
- The Cultural Arts Board is working on developing emergency grants to struggling artists in the county. Each artist would be eligible to receive \$1,000 and CAB is modeling this program on the Maryland States Arts guidelines.
- CEO was interviewed by Greg Graham, *The Baltimore Sun*, on what the library is planning in the new future and top five titles being read through the Library digital products.

Week of April 13

- The County Executive announced his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021 and the library has received a 3% increase (\$534,147) for a total appropriation of \$18,339,055. This is \$1,251,093 less than we requested. As an overview, the Library requested wage parity and a 1% increase for staff is equal to \$129,244 and we always hope for a minimum of 2-4% salary increase for eligible staff; \$528,000 to address the compression issue; 10% increase for health and dental benefit for active and retired employees (\$491,668); a materials increase of \$372,313 to support STEM and eProducts; Software \$153,000; electricity increase \$41,000; Paycom/onboarding/and ACA reporting increase \$89,000; Security services \$13,000; Cataloging vendor increase \$5,500; Vehicle maintenance \$18,000. The Library also requested \$922,201 for technology for public and staff computers, server, firewall, and RFID and received \$400,000 in the capital budget. We do not know if the State aid to the library will be affected by the current freeze and forecast of reduced revenue. In addition, the revenue the library generates (fines and fees, meeting room bookings, copying, printing, Passport Processing) will also be lower than budgeted in this fiscal year and into next year.
- The Library is participating on the review panel for the bidding process to offer Medicare Advantage to library retirees.
- We are appreciative that we received a 3% increase and are in the process of reallocating funds in the budget for fiscal year 2021. The County Council will be reviewing the proposed County Executive budget and approve sometime in May/June. The Board of Trustees will be reviewing and approving the final budget at that time. The County Council cannot add money to the Library budget and can only cut from the budget. They are only allowed to add money to the school budget.
- The Materials Team is working on purchasing additional eBooks to expand the collection this fiscal year to meet customer needs.
- The Library submitted a Governor's Rural Broadband Emergency Grant request to expand the range of our current Wi-Fi service throughout the system. This request is on hold due to the State freeze.
- Facility projects continue through the closure including electrical projects in several branches, Abingdon HVAC replacement, preventative maintenance, etc. All branches are being deep cleaned prior to reopening.
- Begin planning open enrollment for benefits procedure for employees and retirees in May.
- Planning next week's virtual celebration of National Library Week. Virtual proclamation scheduled for Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.
- The Library is ordering 1,000 masks for staff in anticipation of reopening.

Ms. Hastler also noted that the Library's search for two candidates for Board membership and one candidate for Student Representative has been extended to June 30, 2020. Applications will remain open until the Library has reopened and candidates selected. Both Judge Hazlett and Mr. Avery are willing to remain on the Board until replacements have been selected.

ACTION ITEMS

FY2021 Annual Review of Benefits Package Policy

Ms. Hastler provided Board members with the draft “Overview of Employee Benefits for FY21” for annual review and approval. There were no changes to the details of the FY20 policy.

MOTION: Motion by Judge Hazlett, seconded by Mr. Avery and carried by unanimous vote to approve the Overview of Employee Benefits for FY21, as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business from Board members.

A question was submitted virtually by a staff member, asking if nonessential staff supervisors could have remote access to the network while at home. Ms. Hastler noted that only a very few employees have access to behind the firewall remotely and we are required by state public library law to protect the information of our customers. Even the library CEO does not have access to files that are behind the firewall. We have been very fortunate to not have been hacked and take cybersecurity very seriously. The answer is no and if an employee feels that their work is critical or essential during this pandemic closure, please speak to your supervisor. If deemed critical and essential, you will be allowed to go into work to accomplish the tasks required. We are at the peak of the pandemic and for the safety and health of our employees, it is critical that we continue to practice safe social distancing.

ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING

There being no further comments or questions, the public meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.