



May 2021 Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Doran Stegura
James Stewart
Carol Turrentine
Lynn Mitchell
Dr. Breyette Covington
Dr. Jennifer Brown, Director
Debbie Sweeney, Assistant Director

ABSENT: Steve Morelli, Board of Supervisors
Melody Puffenbarger
Betsy Curry
K. Wayne Glass, Foundation Liaison

VIRGINIA: At a Regular Meeting of the Augusta County Library Board held at the Augusta County Library Fishersville, Virginia on May 27, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. and in the 244th year of the Commonwealth. . . .

Call to Order

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Board meeting was held by electronic communication means using Zoom and phone calls as well as in-person attendees.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by chair, Doran Stegura.

Delegations

None

Minutes

The minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting were approved as submitted.

Friends of the Library/Library Foundation

The Friends' book sales are slowly returning and working towards normalcy. Book sales will be held one Saturday a month at Fishersville starting May 22 and continuing through the summer. Fishersville and Churchville held book sales during National Library Week that raised over \$700.



Currently there is no clear leadership for either the Friends or the Foundation. The Friends' president of record has moved out of the area and has been unable to find a successor. Wayne Glass wants to step back from the Foundation and transition out but will wait for Jennifer Brown to get more acclimatized before stepping down. Dr. Brown spoke to Dan Layman of the Community Foundation regarding suggestions for moving forward. Leadership and membership will be a priority, including the possibility of combining leadership and having clearly defined roles and expectations. It's a good time to start with refreshed bylaws and membership as we move out of the pandemic. Suggestions include having the Friends' president of record write a letter of introduction for Dr. Brown to provide to potential members, finding a rallying point to generate interest, and providing some children's activities during Friends' meeting time to help parents that would be interested in serving.

Library Board of Trustees

Thanks were expressed to Lynn Mitchell for her service on the Board as her service concludes with this meeting. A new representative for the Pastures District should be present at the July meeting.

None of the current board members have received trustee training. Dr. Brown is exploring workshop opportunities provided by the Library of Virginia and will contact board members with information. Ms. Stegura and Carol Turrentine offered to assist.

Committee Reports

None

State of the Library

The county added \$3,000 to the Furniture and Fixtures budget line to spend before the end of the fiscal year. Display items, shelving, storage, and partitions were purchased.

The county approved the library's FY22 budget which included promotions for three staff. Matt Frenger will be classified as an IT Specialist (10% increase), Doug Keith will move from Circulation Supervisor to Librarian I – Branch Manager (5% increase), and Debbie Sweeney remains Assistant Director but with new duties and equitable pay (10% increase). The frozen Library Associate II – Adult Services position was included in the budget and applications close on May 28, 2021. The application for State Aid for FY22 was submitted on time and the library is also receiving \$23,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.



After a soft opening on April 19, 2021 locations officially opened to the public on April 26, 2021. This included opening the Deerfield Library Station on Thursdays after moving their public computers outside of the library room to allow more people access to the library's resources. There were no major issues at any locations beyond reminding patrons to wear their masks properly. For a time food and drink were not allowed in the building to discourage mask removal. When the governor lifted the universal mask mandate on May 14, 2021, Dr. Brown contacted Jennifer Whetzel for guidance. Since library staff are unable to ask patrons their vaccination status, mask wearing restrictions are no longer enforced. Staff who are vaccinated are also able to go mask-less when interacting with the public. It is a personal decision for each individual as to whether or not they feel comfortable wearing masks.

Discussion continues regarding opening the library up more, especially in light of the governor's plan to discontinue required social distancing and capacity limits on May 28, 2021. With research and guidance indicating minimal likelihood of contracting Covid 19 through touching surfaces, staff removed keyboard covers from the public computers. Staff are still cleaning high touch surfaces before and after service hours and at the end of desk shifts. Staff are also surveying the community to determine what hours they are most likely to use the library to guide extending service hours. Service hours may increase by July 1. We are also looking at the timeline for returning more furniture to the floor, the availability of toys in the children's area, meeting room availability, and when to restore notary services. Meeting rooms will likely not be available until the fall.

Programming will be outside and socially distanced throughout the Summer Reading Program to keep the children safe since they can't be vaccinated yet. If trends continue we are looking to resume regular, in-person programming by the fall. We are taking this reboot opportunity to work on a new programming structure.

The Board will receive regular Strategic Planning updates starting with the July, 2021 board meeting. Currently the priority is internal communication and leveraging Google Suite's capabilities to streamline where information is communicated and stored.

Dr. Brown is meeting with each staff member to get a feel for their work and their role in the organization. Recent staff changes include Margaret Robison's retirement and Matthew Grant's subsequent promotion to Stuarts Draft Library

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Station Manager, Keith Bell's hiring as a Library Aide, and Jessica Walker's resignation as Craigsville Library Station Manager. Tara Wall recently completed her Master's in Library Science from the University of North Texas and Charley Schillinger completed her degree in Business Administration from Mary Baldwin University.

Dr. Brown has met with key personnel from the Library of Virginia including Division Director Nan Carmack, Grants and Data Coordinator Kim Armentrout, Continuing Education Consultant Cindy Church, and Public Library Consultant Reagen Thalacker. She received information on two services of interest that the state provides; web hosting for WordPress-based websites such as the library's, and the free open source integrated library system (ILS) Evergreen which could replace the library's problematic and expensive The Library Corporation (TLC) system. Dr. Brown also attended the Virginia Public Library Directors Association meeting on April 8, 2021, where she obtained updates on ARPA, possible additional electronic resources for all Virginia public libraries, and was a guest speaker on BOWTIE leadership.

In April and May Dr. Brown also met with Augusta County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Eric Bond, County Parks and Recreation Director Andy Wells, Dan Layman of the Community Foundation of the Blue Ridge, as well as each library staff member. Dr. Brown attended the Virginia Library Association Council meeting, the county's monthly Department Heads meetings, The Mountain 6 meeting on May 5, 2021, the Library of Virginia New Directors meeting, Library of Virginia Coaching, the curriculum meeting of the Old Dominion University Master of Library and Information Service Advisory Board, and the Valley Library Consortium (VLC) library directors' meeting.

The VLC meetings will be held monthly to foster greater collaboration and to deal with problems. Their first meeting dealt with several TLC issues including data management and a reports schedule, the ongoing MARC records issue, and work-arounds for TLC holds issues that have been exacerbated by Covid. They looked at possible solutions such as OCLC (too expensive), or MARCIVE (staff intensive). A next step is to look at Baker & Taylor MARC records and exploring other options including possibly changing to the state-supported Evergreen system. A recent Zoom call with TLC and the VLC gave the directors the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding poor communication and customer service, broken updates, and the ongoing issues with cataloging records. After listening to the concerns TLC's Chief Operating Officer provided credit for the broken ITS MARC system and suggested that the consortium might want to look for a different ILS.



Jenny Novalis from Bedford Public Library System recently reinstated the TLC Virginia Users' group to help voice concerns, obtain training, etc. Doug Keith attended and provided feedback on what TLC reports would be helpful, information we are taking from patrons, etc. and collaborating with other TLC libraries.

Dr. Brown discussed in her meeting with Mr. Wells reinstating the joint Activities Guide in the fall and making it more of a county collaboration. She would like to see Mia Kivlighan, county Communication Manager, to take point and to include Economic Development.

Dr. Brown is expanding her knowledge of Boards of Trustees, is working with the Library of Virginia Outreach Services Panel, and attended the Connecting our Communities webinar to gain information on subsidized broadband internet. The library is included as a place to apply for this benefit.

Correspondences

Copies of all correspondence are in the packet.

Old Business

Several suggestions were made to improve the Technology Plan. It will be re-worked and submitted to the board for review prior to the July board meeting.

New Business

None

Adjournment

With thanks expressed to Dr. Brown and there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on July 22, 2021, at the Augusta County Library at 4:00 p.m.

Secretary