

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 2, 2019**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on January 2, 2019 at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick, Maryland.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Greenway, K. Kane, D. Kiser, G. Laugelli, S. Manny, M. O’Leary, and C. Smith.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: J. Kelly, Director; S. McDuff, Associate Director; C. Hall, Associate Director; S. Lauchner, Coordinator/Library Collections; J. Vogel, Youth Services Coordinator; B. Hissong, Community Services Coordinator; J. El-Zeftawy, Development Officer; K. Martinez, Communications Manager; B. McDermott, Finance/Office Manager; B. Heltebridle, Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; B. Bradley, Branch Administrator – Middletown Library; N. Keppler, Acting Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; R. Cox-Steib, Children’s Supervisor – C. Burr Artz Library; D. Spurrier, Library Specialist – Walkersville Library; A. Baldwin, Library Associate – Walkersville Library; L. Craven, Library Associate – C. Burr Artz Library; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary.

CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: C. Smith made a motion to approve the Minutes from November 7, 2018; seconded by G. Laugelli. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

CHAIR’S REPORT: K. Kane welcomed everyone to the first meeting of year. There are a lot of exciting things that will be going on this year that we will be hearing about tonight. He noted that personally he is excited that the Frederick Speaker Series begins on Sunday. Bob Woodward will be the first of the five speakers. He added that The Frederick Speaker Series is always one of the highlights of the year for him.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

a. FCPL – Update: Mr. Kelly wished everyone a Happy New Year. He noted that 2018 was a very exciting year for FCPL. In a recent message to donors, Jess El-Zeftawy highlighted some of FCPL’s biggest accomplishments:

- The Walkersville Branch was opened and it has seen incredible support by the community.
- Thanks to donors, FCPL also opened two popular early literacy play and learn spaces at the Urbana and Walkersville Libraries
- Ground was broken for the Myersville library branch
- FCPL welcomed over 2 million visitors who borrowed approximately 3 million items
- FCPL hosted popular programs across the county which were attended by over 200,000 people
- 10,000 new library cards were issued helping to connect even more members of the community to the vital resources that they need

He noted that these are just a few of the many successes FCPL has had over the past year and he added that none of them would have been possible without the commitment of our staff, the support of the Library Board and the partnerships that we've built with the community and our elected officials.

Mr. Kelly noted that on a personal note, 2018 was his first year serving as FCPL's Director. He thanked all of the aforementioned people. He stated that he is extremely lucky to work with such an engaged and energetic team and he hopes that everyone is as proud as he is of the library we are building together.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly stated that while he is thankful for all of 2018's successes, we are excited for what is to come in 2019:

- The opening of the Myersville Library
- Developing and embarking upon FCPL's strategic plan
- Continued collaboration with the County Executive
- The opportunity to build relationships with the newly-elected Council Members
- The work that is happening every day by staff in every branch who continually look for innovative ways to connect to their communities and meet evolving needs.

Mr. Kelly thereafter reviewed November, 2018 statistics and noted that the numbers are very strong and continue to trend up. Visits are up 30%, which is huge. The trends that we observed in previous months with regard to WiFi use which was trending upward and public computer use which was trending downward continues so we will continue looking at this. He added that more members of the community are bringing their own devices into the library to work and do research.

He further noted that program attendance in November was up 7.5% while, curiously, the number of programs offered actually declined slightly. He stated that he believes this is a testament to staff who are working smarter, rather than harder. They are creating programs that are more meaningful to the community and we are getting the word out more effectively about the programs that we do offer.

Finally, Mr. Kelly advised that circulation is up 14% for the year while circulation of digital content continues to account for over 25% of that total. As Mr. O'Leary correctly highlighted at our last meeting, digital holdings are vast and varied and, while we have many users who visit our brick and mortar locations, we have many others who interact with FCPL primarily via our website and digital offerings.

Mr. Kelly noted that Sharon Lauchner and her team do an excellent job monitoring these trends, watching usage statistics, talking to staff and the people that we serve, and anticipating our future needs. Given FCPL's limited budget, their work is not easy. They often have to make tough decisions but I think these circulation numbers demonstrate how effective they have been at finding the balance between physical and digital holdings as we strive to meet community needs and interests.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly noted that in today's Frederick-News Post there were two articles about FCPL. The first was a front page story about 2018's most popular titles and library staff was able to share the titles of books that were most borrowed by our customers. The second article entitled *Public Libraries Hidden Treasures in Plain View* was written by Don DeArmon, a contributor to the Frederick-News Post. Mr. DeArmon reflected on the evolving role of libraries and on the value of FCPL in our community. Again, both pieces are a testament to the hard work of our team – from those who select the books to those on the front lines - who make sure that each book finds its readers.

b. CIP/Budget – Update: Mr. Kelly advised that the Fiscal Year 2020 operating budget will be presented to the Board's Finance Committee on January 23, 2019. Thereafter, the operating budget will be presented to the full board on February 6, 2019.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly advised that on Monday, January 7, 2019, he and members of his team will be meeting with the County's CIP Committee to answer any questions they might have about our pending projects (Middletown and Linganore/East County Regional Libraries). He noted that we are hopeful that these projects will remain in the CIP and on the current timeline, however, we won't know for sure until the Fiscal Year 2020 CIP budget is adopted and released near the end of the fiscal year.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Report: Brandy McDermott wished everyone a Happy New Year. She thereafter reviewed the financial statement containing tentative data through November, 2018. The revenues are currently at 38% and expenditures are at 36%. Currently, the grants awarded are at \$771,000. Grants submitted total \$55,000. Donations are at \$141,000 and other endowment account revenues at this time are at \$76,000 for a grand total of \$988,000.

Ms. Smith inquired whether there has been a decision regarding the Master Facilities Plan. Mr.

Kelly advised that FCPL was contacted by the State of Maryland and we were funded. At this time, we are working through the County Procurement Department to see which vendor we are allowed to select. Proposals were received from two vendors. There was one vendor that we would prefer and we are awaiting a decision from the County Procurement Department. The funding is there. Ms. Smith further inquired whether this will be a joint venture with the other counties. Mr. Kelly advised that after a conversation with the CAO, the projects will be funded individually. FCPL will be working independently from the other two counties. We are still in conversations with the other two counties but we are all picking our own vendors and will be funded independently.

b. Construction Update: Ms. McDuff noted that the Myersville Library is on track. At this time, the library is approximately 40% complete as of the last construction meeting on December 19, 2018. Everything is on track for a late summer opening date. The trolley renovations continue and there has been quite a bit of progress with that as well. The trolley will be ready to go into the building, when construction is completed. Ms. McDuff noted that FCPL received a \$750,000 grant from the State of Maryland for the construction of the Myersville Library and, at this time, we have spent approximately 55% of the grant.

Ms. McDuff also advised that we are looking forward to hiring for the Myersville Library. The funding for staffing at the Myersville Library started January 1, 2019. She noted that the Branch Administrator will be the first person hired, which will be a brand new position. Thereafter, we will start with hiring management positions and then bring on front line staff.

She noted that there are no major concerns going on with Myersville right now. She added that she does have some drone pictures that were provided by the construction company, however, since our technology is not working at the moment, she will provide those at a later time.

c. Strategic Plan Update: Kim Martinez, Communications Manager, advised that in addition to her day job, she has the opportunity to lead FCPL's strategic plan committee. This is a group of individuals from across branches/departments that are tasked with developing our next strategic plan. The new strategic plan will go into place in Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019). She noted that her goal tonight is to give everyone an overview of the work that has been done so far and preview the game plan to get us to July 1st. She stated that all good strategies are rooted in one thing – research. She added that we do not want to create a strategy that is in a vacuum and does not reflect the priorities of our staff or the communities that we serve. The front end of our work as a team has been completely focused on research. The group consists of approximately 13 individuals and there are 3 different sub-groups. One of the groups is focused on community research. Another group is focused on researching what FCPL staff has to say. The third group is what we are calling “secondary research”. This group is looking at a couple of different things: 1) the priorities that our County Executive has for the County and 2) researching organizations similar to FCPL and their best practices and what their strategic plans look like. Thereafter, the three groups will come together and develop FCPL's strategic plan.

She noted that the community sub-group that was mentioned earlier, has launched a community

survey. FCPL has received approximately 300 responses so far but we would like to receive more so we will be doing a “push” now that the holidays are over. There was a focus group held in late December at the Walkersville Library. We thought it was important to hold a meeting at one of our libraries to speak to the people that visit FCPL. Staff received a lot of good input as a result of that meeting. She advised that the next two focus groups will be held at off-site locations (not at a library branch) and this is intentional. She noted that we want to speak to people that maybe don’t know FCPL as well. We want to hear what they have to say. If they are not frequent customers we want to know why. Throughout all of this (surveys, focus groups, etc.), we are asking a lot of important questions: 1) What are the priorities that you have for the County? 2) What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses? 3) Where are there opportunities that FCPL can improve? She added that she is confident that all of this will come together and create a stronger plan.

Ms. Martinez advised that posters have been created and are displayed around town, web content has been created, social media content is out there, all of which are encouraging members of the community to share their input through completing a survey, attending a focus group, etc. We are really trying to get the word out. This is an opportunity for those who utilize FCPL, or for those who possibly don’t visit the library, to share their thoughts and help us hear what their priorities are. All of this will help us shape our strategy moving forward.

Thereafter, Ms. Martinez presented a time-line as to how staff is going to get from the current phase to July 1st, when the strategic plan begins. In December, 2018 and continuing into January, 2019, we will be doing thorough research and this will drive us to where we will go next. In January/February, 2019 we will be completing the research, do an analysis to determine themes, trends, etc., and what we are seeing other organizations do. Based on this information, staff will begin to develop the strategic plan.

K. Martinez noted that she will provide an update to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees in March, 2019. In April, 2019, the goal is to finalize the strategic plan. In May, 2019 a final strategic plan will be presented to the FCPL Board of Trustees so that we can spend June, 2019 communicating the plan. It is particularly important that we get the word out to staff and the community prior to the plan going into effect July 1, 2019 so everyone knows where we are headed.

G. Laugelli inquired as to the findings of the focus group meeting in Walkersville. Ms. Martinez advised that we had one focus group meeting in Walkersville that was open to the community and we have had two focus group meetings that were opened to FCPL staff. She advised that we heard a lot of positive comments at the public meeting. There were some requests for certain programs to be considered. One of the themes that was heard in that meeting was the opportunity to do more programs/events that revolve around seniors. This happens to be a priority of the County Executive as well.

Mr. O’Leary inquired as to how many people attended the Walkersville meeting. Ms. Martinez advised that the Walkersville meeting was unique because it was the only meeting that was held

at one of FCPL branches. The meeting was intentionally held immediately following a popular story time. Staff invited the caregivers and their children to stay. In total, in terms of adults, we had approximately 40-50 people. It was a great turn-out.

Ms. Smith inquired how emerging technology is going to be incorporated into the research for the strategic plan. Ms. Martinez stated that this subject will fall into the category of secondary research. It is also something that will most likely come up in the focus groups, particularly with staff. She added that she does not know at this time how it will affect our strategy but we will have to wait and see.

Ms. Manny inquired whether staff plans to meet with seniors to find out their input. Ms. Martinez stated that at the moment there are no specific plans for that but she is assuming that seniors will be represented in the surveys and focus groups. She added, however, that if we see that emerging as a theme, perhaps it will become a part of the strategic plan. At this time, again, we will have to wait and see.

Mr. Laugelli noted that he will be attending the focus group that will be held in Brunswick.

d. Make-It Initiative: D. Spurrier introduced herself as the Children's Specialist at the Walkersville Library. She noted that she is the Chair of the make-IT place committee at FCPL.

FCPL is well known for its innovation and willingness to implement cutting-edge technology for their patrons on a variety of platforms. Particularly, we were an early-adopter for STEM programming for youth services. In the Fall of 2017, FCPL was asked to be a part of a pilot program of a state-wide initiative to create a collaborative network of STEM project ideas – part of which is called the make-IT place. Some of FCPL's staff were chosen to go to a training in Baltimore to learn how to use all of the exciting technology that we were provided free of charge from a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. In return, FCPL staff contributed to creating step-by-step projects that are part of the state-wide collaborative and FCPL's goal is to basically build a vibrant community of makers in Maryland.

She thereafter reviewed/displayed some of the excellent technologies that have been put into our programming. As part of the grant, FCPL received a set of 6 Parrot Mambo Drones with 6 Fly Pads, a charging case with 12 Sphero Sprk+s, 10 Circuit Scriber maker kits and a MaKey MaKey kit, which was added to a kit that FCPL already had.

She displayed an actual Parrot Mambo Drone. It is small, light and has cute green eyes when it is on. It looks like a fun toy, however, FCPL is actually using the drones to teach very important concepts to the kids. Mambo Drones are a great way to introduce elementary-age students to aerodynamics and small motor skills. It takes quite a fine-tuned ability to navigate the drones. The Parrot Mambo Drone will hover which is great because it gives the child time to grasp the concept of how to fly it forward, backward, sideways and even do flips. She provided a sample of the Parrot Mambo Drone to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees so they could look at it up close. Ms. Spurrier noted that FCPL received fly pads with the drones which is a hand-held

device. FCPL was also able to purchase a set of travelling iPods that have the actual app on it which can be downloaded from the I-tunes store and this adds the ability to use it like they would the iPad that the students use at school.

Ms. Greenway inquired as to what age group this is for. Ms. Spurrier stated that the target age for the drones is for elementary school students starting at second grade and going through high school. She noted that the app that she spoke about for the iPods allows programming so students can program the drones to take off, move forward and maneuver them through things such as hula hoops, etc. With the younger students we are just getting the technology in their hands and honing their fine motor skills as well as critical thinking skills. It helps students address stressful situations and how to problem solve. It also provides an introduction to early coding skills. Ms. Spurrier added that staff also talk about drone careers. Drone careers are really taking off.

Ms. Greenway inquired if she is too old to attend one of the programs. Ms. Spurrier stated that she is absolutely not too old to attend one of the programs; you are welcome to attend any of the programs.

Ms. Spurrier thereafter displayed a Sphero SPRK+. The Sphero programs introduce and enhance a child's understanding of coding. Sphero is a rolling robot. It can roll at a given speed for a given amount of time or it can be made to continuously drive. She noted that the company that developed the SPRK+ is the same company that does BB8. FCPL has a set of 12 Sphero SPRK+s that come with individual cases. FCPL has added some ramps to the programs so the children can really learn physics by working with momentum, speed and laws of motion. Ms. Spurrier noted that next week one of the branches will be hosting a program where they will be painting with the Sphero SPRK+. She provided a Sphero SPRK+ to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees so they could see it/touch it up close.

The next item reviewed by Ms. Spurrier was the Circuit Scribe Maker Kit. FCPL has a series of kits that are housed at one library branch but can be requested by other library branches. She provided a sample Circuit Scribe kit for members of the FCPL Board of Trustees to look at. Circuit Scribe is a more advanced product. She noted that this product is used for students in the 5th Grade (and up) because it takes a lot of patience. The kits are used to build circuits with a conductive pen. The pen is in the kit and there are different projects that use the conductive ink to create lines instead of wires. There are a lot of different flexible aspects of using the Circuit Scribe Maker Kit. There are a lot of activities in a work book that is included in the kit. Anyone who likes to doodle can do the Circuit Scribe.

The last item she reviewed was the MaKey MaKey. She noted that it may be small but it is mighty. It is an electronic invention tool that allows users to connect everyday objects to a computer. It has a series of clamps that would connect to the keyboard and then plug into the computer. You can actually play a game on your computer using bananas. FCPL utilizes play-doh because we don't like to use food in our programs. Any material can be used that is conductive. The MaKey Makey uses closed loop electrical signals to send the computer either a

keyboard stroke or mouse click signal. This function allows the Makey Makey to work with any computer program or webpage since all computer programs and webpages take keyboard and mouse click inputs. Ms. Spurrier distributed the Makey Makey kit to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees so they could see it up close.

Ms. Smith inquired as to the age group for the MaKey Makey. Ms. Spurrier noted that if staff sets everything up, second graders would be a good place to start, however, it can go all the way up to high school. There are a lot of tutorials on the MaKey Makey website that can teach the kids how to set up something for them to create.

Thereafter, Ms. Spurrier advised that FCPL hosted a Technopalooza for library staff in January, 2018. FCPL received all this amazing equipment but if staff does not know how to use it, it isn't any good. It was interesting to work out the challenges that staff might face with patrons. It was a great opportunity.

Ms. Spurrier further advised that FCPL's Virtual Branch created a beautiful landing page on FCPL's website that describes what the make-IT place is, provides a link to the state-wide maker place, as well as highlights make-IT place programs that are upcoming at our local FCPL branches.

She noted that as we look back over the past, FCPL held 22 make-IT place programs in 2018 utilizing this new technology that we were provided free of charge and we attracted over 283 participants in those programs. FCPL is really leveling the playing field and providing access to quality STEM programming.

Mr. O'Leary inquired whether the materials that were discussed are only available at the Walkersville Library. Ms. Spurrier advised that the materials are housed at the Walkersville Library but they are available to the entire system. Mr. O'Leary further inquired whether these materials have been used or demonstrated at the other library locations throughout Frederick County. Ms. Spurrier advised that the materials have been used by the other library branches quite extensively. Thereafter, Mr. O'Leary inquired whether there will come a time when you would want more equipment so that the materials would be available at other locations at any time. Ms. Spurrier stated that FCPL could absolutely use more. They are very popular programs. She noted that a drone program was recently held at the Thurmont Regional Library and there were 50 people in attendance at that program.

Ms. Greenway wanted to confirm that the Sphero SPRK+ would help teach kids how to start coding and inquired as to what that exactly means. Ms. Spurrier advised that the Sphero SPRK+ does introduce coding. It has a drag and drop program which includes buttons that would include turn right, turn left, go forward, go backwards. You have to put in how long you would want it to go forward or the way you want it to turn. A lot of kids are learning coding in school so it utilizes the same language.

Ms. Spurrier invited everyone to come to a make-IT program.

e. **Frederick Reads:** Bryan Hissong stated that it has been another year and we are excited about another Frederick Reads. Last year we had a fantastic set of events with author and Chef Jose Andres. This year we decided to do something a little differently. This year's event will include a fiction author; something we haven't done in a while. The dates for the event are:

Monday, April 15, 2019 7:00p.m. Weinberg Center for the Arts

Tuesday, April 16, 2019 11:15 a.m. Frederick Community College

Mr. Hissong thereafter announced that Cristina Henriquez will be the speaker for this year's event. She is a fiction writer. She is the author of *The World in Half* (a novel) and she also wrote *Come Together, Fall Apart*, which was a Novella and collection of short stories. She has had a number of stories and non-fiction articles published in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, The New York Times Magazine, The Wall Street Journal as well as a variety of other publications.

The novel she is best known for is *The Book of Unknown Americans*. We selected Ms. Henriquez based on the popularity of her novel. It was a New York Times Notable Book and one of Amazon's Top 10 Books of the Year. There is a whole host of accolades that were given to this book.

The story involves a family from Mexico who came to the United States on a work visa. They came to the United States to seek help because their youngest daughter had sustained a severe head injury that affected her ability to function. While the family was here, they met another family from Panama who became naturalized citizens but were struggling to make ends meet. It is a story of human experiences and connections and this is something that is very fitting. Those two things – experiences and connections - made Mr. Hissong think of FCPL. FCPL is a place where the community is connected to the experiences that they share.

The novel also focuses on the issues of culture and identity. These are important issues for America but particularly in Frederick County. Approximately 25% of all new residents that come to Frederick County are from international destinations.

Mr. Hissong stated that FCPL is pleased to partner with the C. Burr Artz Trust, Frederick Community College and the Weinberg Center for the Arts. Due to demand from the last couple of years, we will be doing tickets again. The tickets will be available at no cost and will be available through the Weinberg Box Office (electronically or physically).

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: Mr. Laugelli stated that new technology is what FCPL needs to be doing. Clearly the attendance at these events shows that there is a terrific demand in the community. Mr. Kane stated that on a recent visit to the Walkersville Library, he was impressed by the fact that the parking lot was overflowing on a weekday. He noted that if

that is what is going on there, he can see why.

Mr. O’Leary noted that he completed his tour of all of the library branches. He stated that the last branch he visited was the Detention Center. He added that he was very impressed with that operation. The facility was very welcoming and although there is a small collection there, it is a good collection. He noted that he was particularly impressed how Joe connects to the individuals there and their distinctive needs. Mr. Laugelli stated that he would like to second those sentiments. He stated that he was out there a few years ago and he thinks it is a good idea for members of the FCPL Board of Trustees to visit the Detention Center and show our support. Ms. Smith inquired whether Mr. O’Leary visited the bookmobiles. Mr. O’Leary stated that he had not visited the bookmobiles. Mr. Kelly stated that the folks that do the work on the bookmobiles and at the Detention Center have a passion for the work they do.

OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the C. Burr Artz Library – 110 E. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD.

C. Greenway made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by S. Manny. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.



Kyle Kane, Chair
Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees