

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 06, 2024**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on March 06, 2024 at the C. Burr Artz Library – Community Room.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Sheppard, T. Lancaster, M. O’Leary, S, White, K. Spertzel, G. Mayfield, J. D’Agostino, J. Donald.

STAFF PRESENT: J. Kelly, Director; C. Hall, Associate Director; B. McDermott, Finance Manager; B. Hissong, Community Engagement Manager; J. El-Zeftawy, Development Officer; M. Currens, Library Collections Manager; J. Marshall, Manager – Systems; K. Cambrel, Communications Manager; C. Brohawn, Project Coordinator; A. Archibald, Personnel Supervisor; B. Heltebridle, Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; J. Diaz, Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; A. Knight, Branch Administrator – Middletown Library; R. Cox-Steib, Branch Administrator – Myersville Library; A. Whitney, Branch Administrator – Thurmont Regional Library and Emmitsburg Library; S. Yates, Branch Administrator – Urbana Regional Library and Point of Rocks Library; C. Krogh, Facilities Coordinator; B. Watts, Staff Development Coordinator – Admin Coordinator; A. Rennix, Library Associate; M. Parchment, Library Associate; R. Sell, Spring Development Intern; P. Frost, Spring Development Intern; J. Spiegel, Special Project Manager – Frederick County Government; and M. Fowle – Technical Services Coordinator, acting as Recording Secretary.

CITIZEN REMARKS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: S. White made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 07, 2024; seconded by K. Spertzel. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

CHAIR’S REPORT: The Board Chair acknowledged the importance of libraries in the community for creating places of connection, whether deep or momentary, which is vital to the community, and thanked Library staff for maintaining a commitment to creating those spaces.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Mr. Kelly introduced the Development Interns, R. Sell and P. Frost, working with the library this Spring.

Mr. Kelly then reviewed ways in which staff exemplified the three areas of our strategic plan in the month of February.

Finally, Mr. Kelly reported on the statistics for January. Of import is that usage of e-content in January was FCPL's highest monthly e-content circulation recorded to date. Mr. Kelly closed by noting that staff are confident that based on the year-to-date trends, the library will close the year with strong statistics.

BUDGET/CIP UPDATE:

Mr. Kelly confirmed that the Board approved draft of the FY25 Budget was submitted to County. In relation to the appeal for increased per capita funding, the County Executive asked for data on funding from Frederick's peer libraries in Maryland, which showed that among peer libraries, Frederick has the lowest per capita local funding.

Mr. Kelly encouraged attendees to participate in the Balancing Act platform.

Mr. Kelly confirmed that the new Middletown branch project is nearing completion and provided an update on the final phase of installations. He confirmed the opening day is May 4th, 2024.

The feasibility study for the West Frederick project was submitted to the County for review. The study will be translated into Spanish to share with community. Once the feasibility study is returned, the City will vote to re-zone the site, which must be favorable to move forward.

Mr. Kelly closed with a reminder that the April Board meeting was moved to the second Wednesday of the month, April 10th.

The Board asked for clarification regarding the data on peer library per capita local funding. They also asked how per capita state funding is determined. Mr. Kelly explained that state funding is determined by formula that takes into many factors including total population and county wealth.

Per the Board's question, Mr. Kelly clarified that some peer library systems Collections budgets are fully funded by their local government. FCPL's Collections budget is currently a mix of per capita local funding, some state aid, and other library-generated revenue.

The Board asked how long the current Middletown Branch will be closed, to which Mr. Kelly confirmed it will be one month. Further discussion occurred to determine if alternative services such as the Bookmobile will be provided, to which Mr. Kelly replied that there will be no change in the Bookmobile schedule.

The Board asked how much of the new Middletown's branch will consist of new materials. Ms. Knight, Branch Administrator, confirmed that it is approximately 80%.

NEW BUSINESS:

Financial Report:

Ms. McDermott presented the current FY25 budget, with numbers as of January 31, 2024.

Revenue is at 45%, a 2% increase from the previous board meeting. There was a transfer to County in-kind revenue of \$61K and a transfer from the MD State Education Grant of \$317K. Passport revenue increased by \$13K, and Miscellaneous Operating by \$5K. Federal Grants increased by \$4,800 for reimbursement related to the Staff Development grant.

FCPL's expenditures are at 47%.

Since the last Board meeting, there has been no change to grants awarded. There was a new grant application submitted. The Dollar General Summer Reading Grant application was submitted for \$3K to support material for the library's annual Summer Reading Challenge.

Donations are at \$103,654. For FY24 YTD, there have been 720 monetary gifts received – ranging from \$3 to \$16K- with an average gift of \$500. These gifts include donations of an allowance from our youngest library supporters to transformational gifts from people who are looking to invest in the library's mission. For each and every gift, we are thankful for the community's support.

DEIB Update:

M. Currens and J. Diaz presented on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) initiative. Ms. Diaz began by stating the aspirational goal of the DEIB group: “that people who have been historically excluded from the library feel like they belong and that this is their space.”

Ms. Diaz shared the projects that the workgroup has completed since initiation, which included performing a diversity audit, adding a DEIB component to the New Hire Orientation, and coordinating the Staff Day keynote on microaggressions, or “Subtle Acts of Exclusion.”

Ms. Diaz then shared work that is currently ongoing, including the DEIB action planner, a requirement for all staff to participate in a training this FY on “Dismantling Institutional Racism in Libraries”, and a workshop for supervisors to further discuss subtle acts of exclusion.

Ms. Currens shared the future work the group will undertake, including operationalizing all DEIB efforts through a policy review, implementing an equity lens, and developing a communications plan to ensure both internal and external messaging is clear, consistent and impactful.

The next strategic plan period, for FY26-28, will include a full policy review. Certain policies, such as Code of Conduct, will be prioritized and the Board can expect to see updated policy in the Fall for review. The Strategic Plan workgroup will prioritize embedding DEIB work fully into the new plan.

The Board discussed staff reception to this work and asked clarifying questions about the Widerstand training. The Board also discussed the merits of reevaluating the new Board member orientation, given this aspect of the library's mission.

Library Legislative Day

Mr. Kelly discussed Library Legislative Day, which occurred on February 13th. Ms. McDuff and Mr. Kelly met with local delegation to discuss current legislation that might affect libraries,

including the Freedom to Read Act, the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) funding bill, and the Collective Bargaining bill.

The next important date is March 18th, known as “Crossover Day.” At this point, any bill that has not crossed over will not be guaranteed a vote on the floor. As of the Board meeting, only the SLRC bill had crossed over.

The Board discussed how the Collective Bargaining bill could affect the Budget approval process, in addition to how it might change how the Board operates. Mr. Kelly confirmed that operations would remain the same, and that the Bill only seeks to provide guidance.


Board questions and comments: None

Other Citizen remarks: None

The next FCPL Board of Trustees meeting will be held at the C. Burr Artz Library – Community Room at 7:00 p.m. on April 10, 2024.

S. Sheppard made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by T. Lancaster . No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.



Jenny D'Agostino, Chair
Frederick County Public Libraries
Board of Trustees