

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 7, 2012**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on March 1, 2012, at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick, Maryland.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Greenway, M. Kurtianyk, G. Laugelli, B. Poteat, T Prensky, and C. Smith.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: T Kutz and Commissioner D. Gray

STAFF PRESENT: D. Batson, Director; B. Pelle, Associate Director; D. Maminski, Associate Director; K. Lewns, Financial Business Office Manager; E. Cromwell, Community Partnership Manager; S. McCoy, Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; M. Cramer, Assistant Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; Sharon Lauchner, Branch Administrator – Middletown/Walkersville Libraries; M. Carlson, Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary

CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: G Laugelli made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2012 meeting; seconded by C. Smith. VOTE. Unanimous.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Mr Kurtianyk reviewed an article titled "A Country Without Libraries. The poet, Charles Simic, wrote:

"I don't know of anything more disheartening than the sight of a shut down library No matter how modest its building. a municipal library is often the only place where books in large number on every imaginable subject can be found, where both grownups and children are welcome to sit and read in peace, free of whatever distractions and aggravations await them outside."

Mr Kurtianyk stated that he found these words most apt in today's society Public library systems across the country are under siege from outside influences. Yes, we do live in tough economic times. However, this does not mean that taking away resources is the way to go. Mr Simic asks:

“How many book lovers among the young has the Internet produced? Far fewer, I suspect, than the millions libraries have turned out over the last hundred years. Their slow disappearance is a tragedy, not just for those impoverished towns and cities, but for everyone everywhere terrified at the thought of a country without libraries.”

Mr Kurtianyck stated that these words ring truer today than ever before.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. FCPL – Update: Mr Batson reviewed FCPL statistics. He noted that back in 2010, library hours were reduced by 12% (208 hours per month) and it has taken awhile to recover from that. Usage statistics are now increasing and we are doing quite well. In the month of February, Walkersville circulation statistics increased by 3.7% over the same period last year and for this year, they are up 5 1%. The system is up just a little under 2%. Audio and E-book circulation statistics increased by 205% over the previous February and for the year, it is up 130%. Audio and E-books account for about 30% of FCPL's total circulation. Print circulation is still the majority. The problem, which we have discussed previously, is that four of the six major publishers in the United States will not sell E-books to public libraries. Mr Batson thereafter reviewed virtual visit statistics. FCPL has started to track visits that are electronic as well as physical visits. When patrons contact FCPL electronically, they are downloading books, downloading music, asking reference questions, etc. and they are doing the exact same thing electronically that they would be doing if they physically visited the library. The number of visits to FCPL so far are 101,858,896 (almost 2,000,000 visits) in the first eight months of this fiscal year. The usage of the library is increasing both physically and virtually

Mr Batson thereafter reviewed statistics for children's storytimes. For the first eight months of the current fiscal year, Walkersville Library has had 256 children's programs and 4283 children have attended these programs. This amounts to a 27% increase in programs and 30% increase in attendance. Most of the children's programs are held in the morning. For the system, FCPL has increased 15% in the number of children's programs and 18% in attendance.

Fregal, a downloadable music program for our patrons became available last month. So far 1,138 songs have been downloaded. Patrons can download three songs per week and keep it forever. There are approximately 6 or 7 other library systems in the State of Maryland that offer this program.

Mr. Batson then introduced Karen Lewns. She is the new Business Manager for the library system.

b. Budget/CIP – Update: Mr Batson advised that the budget has been submitted to the Board of County Commissioners. As far as the CIP is concerned, he stated that it was believed that FCPL was finished with the CIP, however, last week he was asked to speak with the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Shreve brought forth a question about the possibility of placing the Walkersville Library Branch adjacent or within the confines of the Walkersville

Middle School. Ray Barnes from the Board of Education and myself agreed that we would go back to the Board of County Commissioners within 90 days and bring back our findings and recommendations from not only what we gather but also recommendations from the Board of Education and the FCPL Board of Trustees. Mr. Batson stated that two years ago on the County's CIP, the breaking of ground for the new Walkersville library facility was scheduled in the year 2012, which means at this point in time the library would currently be under construction. Mr. Batson further noted that we had the land, the permits, the architectural plans and \$500,000 from the State of Maryland for the construction of the Walkersville library. As Boards change, priorities change and this project was taken off the books and put back in time. Because of the nature of the grant from the State of Maryland, the \$500,000 was returned to the State of Maryland. At the present time, the construction of the Walkersville library is currently listed under the year 2017 in the County's CIP. Mr. Batson stated that everyone was a bit surprised when this request came about because we had received no indication that the BOCC was considering doing anything with the Walkersville facility other than push the construction back to 2017. Mr. Batson added that he did speak to Commissioner Shreve last Fall in his office about this issue. At that meeting with Commissioner Shreve, Mr. Batson stated that he did outline FCPL's concerns.

Mr. Batson stated that he has been in communication with staff from the Board of Education as well as FCPL staff and we will begin researching this further and a presentation will be made to both of the respective Boards before we take the information to the BOCC. The schematics and electronic footprints for the planned Walkersville Library have been forwarded to Mr. Barnes at the Board of Education by the Department of Public Works. A meeting has been scheduled with Mr. Barnes and the Supervisor of Media Services from the Board of Education for next Tuesday to begin initial discussions concerning this matter. Mr. Batson further noted that Emily Gamertsfelder has been instructed to do a literature search to update the report that was done in 2000-2001, which was the last time this issue was addressed. The issue was also addressed in 1995 and a little earlier than that. This same issue has been brought up 3 or 4 times over the past 20 years. There is quite a bit of literature on this subject, both pro and con, in the 1990s and up to about 2002 and after that point of time, there is just nothing about this subject in the professional literature. Mr. Batson noted that he finds it interesting that with the swell of the economy since 2002 and the current depression, this subject has just not surfaced. Ms. Gamertsfelder will also be contacting library systems that in the past have instituted this and see how things are going, what the history is, and if they have evaluated the effectiveness and efficiency within the community.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Report: Ms. Pelle noted that revenue for public copiers is continuing its downward trend but she stated that this is just the nature of times with so many other ways that people can save information now and, therefore, people aren't making as many copies. Another decrease is in rental income and this is income from for-profit organizations renting our meeting rooms and a lot of this is due to the fact that the libraries now close at 8:00 p.m. instead of 9:00 p.m. She added that those two decreases are more than made up by increases in miscellaneous revenue. FCPL will definitely go over what was budgeted for miscellaneous revenue and book sales. Ms. Pelle thereafter reviewed operating accounts. She noted that there are a few accounts that will go

into the red by the end of this fiscal year. Due to the increase in gas prices, the motor pool fuel account will probably go into the red. The other account that may go into the red is branch phones. This is due to the fact that Verizon increased our costs by \$500.00 per month for the T-1 lines to Middletown and Walkersville. This increase was totally unexpected and IIT is looking into changing the T-1 lines to fiber lines and getting away from Verizon completely. Ms. Pelle noted that there are a few balances which have changed from the report that was initially given to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees. The travel/training balance is no longer \$32,000; there is \$14,000 left in this account. Another account is the special programs account there is not \$14,000 left in this account. There is probably only about \$6,000 or \$7,000 left in that account since staff has started working on booking programs for the Summer Reading program. She also noted that the book account only has 7.4% of the original budget remaining, the audio-visual account has 25% of the original budget remaining and the computer software account has 17% of the original budget remaining.

b. Books by Mail Service: Ms. Maminski stated that FCPL has been providing books by mail services for many, many years and in the past it was used more than it is used now but never overwhelming. There are a very small number of patrons that take advantage of this service at this time. She also noted that through this service FCPL provides books to the Record Street Home but this is not in the same way that we serve our other books by mail patrons. Ms. Maminski added that in preparation of this presentation, she stated that she sent an e-mail to the MAPLA list serve which consists of administrators and associate directors of public libraries in the State of Maryland and inquired whether they have books by mail services. She noted that she only heard back from four library systems and three of them do not have books by mail service and one that did and that was Enoch Pratt Library and they serve about 30 people with this service. In examining everything we do for effectiveness and efficiency and not to keep doing things just because we have done them forever, and after discussions with Ms. Cramer, it is felt that this would be the time not to cut anyone from the current service but to phase the program out at this point. The Record Street Home would also be part of the continual service as long as we have a cooperative relationship with them to get the materials to/from the library. She stated that it is recommended to phase out the books by mail service by continuing to serve our existing patrons but not to take on any new patrons for this service effective April 1, 2012.

Mr. Batson added that this is a classic example of the technology changing the way that libraries serve the community. There are just so many other alternatives to our home bound patrons that the usage for books by mail has dropped dramatically. Discussion followed.

T. Prenskey made a motion to approve the recommendation about phasing out books by mail and no new patrons will be accepted for this service starting on April 1, 2012, seconded by B. Potat. VOTE. Unanimous

c. Renewal Policy: Ms. Maminski stated that over the years FCPL has received many, many, many requests from our patrons to be able to renew materials more than one time. Many home schoolers have made this request because they are not able to access school libraries and they depend on their public libraries for curriculum support. She noted that we have been hearing this request for so long from so many patrons that staff now thinks it is time to make this change. The financial aspects of this issue have been reviewed and Ms. Pelle has made plans to build into

FCPL's budget the shortfall that is anticipated from increasing renewals. We do not know what the impact will be until we try it. Currently, you can check out something and if there are no holds on the item, a patron would be able to check it out for another three weeks. It is proposed that we change from one renewal to two renewals as long as there is no hold on the item. This would mean that a patron could check out an item for nine weeks with two renewals instead of the current six weeks with one renewal. She noted that everyone must keep in mind that if someone has placed a hold on the material that was originally checked out, that item cannot be renewed.

Mr. Batson added that this a preliminary change request. If this works out and FCPL does not see massive financial difficulties or demands increasing, staff will look at expanding this even further. Some counties such as Carroll County allow up to 7 renewals by their patrons. Discussion followed. Mr. Laugelli requested that he would like to state for the record that he does not agree with the logic about the holds and he does not see why if he checks out a book that his interests are sacrificed for the interests of another patron that has placed a hold on the item that he already checked out when he should be allowed to renew the book. The definition of a hold is that you would need to wait for the book. Further discussion followed.

C. Smith made a motion to approve the recommendation to increase the renewal period from one renewal to two renewals effective July 1, 2012, seconded by G. Laugelli. VOTE. Unanimous.

d. Nooks (extension of check-out time): Mr. Carlson stated that as of March 5, 2012, the e-Readers have been checked out a total of 291 times. FCPL has received 137 responses to our surveys and the biggest request that was received was for more children's material. Holds peaked at 70 holds just before the holidays and have averaged approximately 15 per month for the last few months. Patrons have had time to play around with the devices and use them as demonstration units. As a result, some patrons have gone out and bought their own. The opinions of patrons started out strong for the 7 day check-out period but over the last couple of months, patrons have requested a longer check-out period for the e-Readers. Mr. Carlson made a request of the FCPL Board of Trustees to extend the circulation time from 7 days to 21 days. This extension would bring the e-Readers in line with other reading material in FCPL's collection. Discussion followed.

Ms. Poteat made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to extend the loan period for Nook e-Reader devices from 7 days to 21 days effective Monday, March 12, 2012; seconded by T. Prenskey VOTE. Unanimous.

e. Frederick Reads: Ms. Cromwell stated that she is very excited about this year's Frederick Reads program. This is the seventh year for Frederick Reads and it has grown to the point that there is a wide variety of people who want to come and see authors speak in Frederick about their materials and about their process of writing. Therefore, it was decided for 2012 not to focus on one particular author or one particular book but to embrace a more thematic format so we would be able to incorporate several authors. This year's theme is medicine and miracles. This theme allows us to look at the world that medicine plays in our society from a variety of different angles and different groups. Frederick Reads had its first event with Diane Ackerman who came to the Weinberg Center on February 5, 2012. There was a very nice turn-out for this event. The

C. Burr Artz Trust underwrote that particular event. She noted that the next event will be held at Frederick Community College on March 27, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. The author for this event will be the novelist, Robin Oliveira. Her debut novel is My Name is Mary Sutter. She sounds like a fascinating person herself. She is a registered nurse and has a fairly extensive background in Russian and is now a novelist. She won a big award in Gettysburg last November for the best fiction novel about the Civil War. We were a little concerned because she is not a household name so we got in touch with our old friend, Cokie Roberts, who was here several years ago and asked if she would be interested in coming back to Frederick to interview Robin Oliveira since they have both written about women in American History and Cokie said she would love to. We are very excited about that.

Following that event, Frederick Reads will be sticking with the interview format and we were able to get Rebecca Skloot, who is an author we have had numerous requests for. She wrote The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, which is her debut novel too. A lot of people from The National Cancer Institute here in Frederick have been requesting her for awhile. It was a highly competitive process to get her here for Frederick Reads. Hood College made the initial approach to Ms. Skloot for this event and the author actually turned it down and said that she had done enough author appearances at colleges and universities. However, she said that if it was a Frederick Reads event with the public, she would reconsider. This is pretty amazing for Frederick Reads. Ms. Skloot knew about Frederick Reads and wanted to be part of it. She will be appearing at the Weinberg Center at 7:30 p.m. on April 19th. Because we wanted to keep this in the interview format as well, last Friday we were able to confirm that NPR's All Things Considered Host, Michele Norris, will be here in Frederick on stage doing the interview with Rebecca Skloot. Also, as of last Friday, NPR (National Public Radio) is now a sponsor of Frederick Reads. It is hoped that this will grow into a bigger relationship. Frederick Reads has received authorization from all of the authors to podcast the events which we have never had the rights to in the past.

Ms. Cromwell noted that Frederick Reads would not be able to do all this without Hood College (who has provided Frederick Reads with a tremendous amount of financial support), Frederick Community College, the Delaplaine Foundation, the Ausherman Family Foundation, NPR (who is providing a very expensive speaker at no cost to Frederick Reads), Cokie Roberts (who has waived her fees), the Weinberg Center, Frederick Memorial Hospital, the C. Burr Artz Trust and many other funders. She further noted that there are several other companion events and information on one of those events can be found in Bookmarks, a Frederick County Public Libraries publication. It is a special program called Through the Eye of the Needle: The Art of Esther Nisenthal Krinitz. She mentioned that there is one other author that will be coming to Frederick during this time frame and it is not an event that was produced by Frederick Reads and that author is Richard Louv, who wrote The Last Child in the Woods. He is an expert in what he coins as nature deficit disorder. There are numerous studies that have shown that children who are not spending enough time outside are having physical illness as a result. He will be at Mt. Saint Mary's on May 4th. It is not a free event but it will be an all day conference and he will be the keynote speaker.

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: Mr Kurtianyk stated that he would like to send warm thoughts out to Commissioner David Gray who is a little under the weather today and

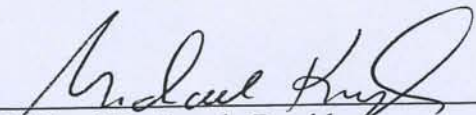
couldn't be with us this evening as well as to fellow Board member, Thomas Kutz, who was involved in an accident and it is hoped that he has a speedy recovery

OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the C. Burr Artz Library – 110 E. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD.

T Prensky made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by B. Poteat. VOTE. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8 10 p.m.



Michael Kurtianyk, President
Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees