

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG
LIBRARY

**Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Independence Regional Library
6000 Conference Drive Charlotte, NC 28212
Monday, April 15, 2024, 4:00pm – 6:00pm**

Trustees Present

Ailen Arreaza
Peggy Brookhouse
Dr. Stacey Brown
Jon Buchan
Joe Helweg
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Tracy Montross
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson
Preethi Srinivasan
Charles Thomas, Chair
Dr. Ricky Woods

Staff Present

Karen Beach
Rachel Bradley
David Dillard
Michael Engelbrecht
Jenni Gaisbauer
Sarah Gherghel
Krystel Green
Eric Hartman
Saul Hernandez
Christine Keitt
Mario Lopez

Staff Cont.

Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Emery Ortiz
Marcellus Turner

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Gene Cochrane – CMLF Board Chair
John Brien

Mr. Charles Thomas welcomed everyone to the Board meeting at 4:00pm.

Living Archives Tour

Ms. Sarah Gherghel informed the Trustees about the Living Archives traveling exhibit located within the branch. Ms. Gherghel invited the Trustees to tour the exhibit.

- The Library has been involved in a partnership since pre-Covid, and as a result of Covid, this partnership has evolved into something much bigger. The partnership is between the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, Levine Museum of the New South, Johnson C. Smith University, and the Library. It's an initiative to document Covid stories of underrepresented groups in our community, and Mecklenburg County.
- The original goal was to gather 200 stories, create this archive and go from there, but the team gathered 340 stories and got multiple community organizations involved. This turned into an actual physical exhibit that tells the stories of 18-20 individuals that were in the 340 stories. The traveling exhibit will be stopping at various library locations through May 13th and then end with a celebration at Discovery Place on May 16th. The physical archive will be housed by the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room.

Introduction

Mr. Shawn Krizanik, Branch Manager for Independence Regional, introduced himself and spoke about the history of the branch. Mr. Krizanik has been with the Library for fifteen years, five years as Branch Manager of this location. Mr. Krizanik informed the Trustees that since this branch is across the street from East Mecklenburg High School, it has a large influx of high school students in the afternoon.

Absence with Cause

Mr. Thomas stated that every board member was in attendance and there was no need for a motion to approve the absence with cause.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve the minutes from March 11th. On a motion by Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson and seconded by Mr. Joe Helweg, the Trustees unanimously approved the minutes.

Public Comment

One member of the public, Mr. John Brien, signed up to speak during this meeting's public comment section.

Mr. Brien spoke about his desire for the Library to provide access to the Charlotte News archives and to Architectural Record Magazine. Both publications are useful for gathering local historical information. Mr. Brien also spoke about his concerns regarding the bound periodicals that were originally housed at Main Library but were removed prior to demolition.

Chair Update

Mr. Thomas thanked Ms. Gherghel for providing an informative tour of the Living Archives Exhibit and Mr. Krizanik for his introduction. Mr. Thomas thanked the Trustees, the Foundation Board of Directors, and County leadership for attending the Project Shema training that occurred on April 10th. Mr. Thomas informed the Trustees that he and MT were working to arrange additional cultural competency trainings such as Islamophobia and would provide the dates once set.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Ms. Srinivasan and Ms. Angie Myers provided the following updates:

- Ms. Myers informed the Trustees that she had the audit contract ready to be signed by Mr. Thomas, Ms. Preethi Srinivasan, MT and herself. Ms. Myers wanted to bring the contract to the full Board for approval. The recommended vendor is Cherry Bekaert. This recommendation comes out of the County's recent RFP process as well as the strong history and positive customer experiences with them over the years.
- The contract is for \$68,000, plus \$5,000 per State or Federal program that rises to the single audit level, not to exceed \$83,000.

After some discussion, Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve the selection of Cherry Bekaert for the FY2024 Audit Contract. On a motion by Dr. Ricky Woods and seconded by Mr. Helweg, the Trustees unanimously approved the contract.

***ImaginOn Management Committee**

Dr. Kimmerly Martin provided the following updates:

- Dr. Martin informed the Trustees that Duke is raising rates by 8% which was implemented in February. The Library is monitoring this increase and will continue to keep it in mind for budget purposes.
- The parking garage located beneath ImaginOn is currently accessible to everyone, but there will be an automated garage system installed this summer. It will have a 90-minute grace period for ImaginOn patrons and visiting board members.
- Dr. Martin informed the Trustees about the impact the Lovin' Life Music Fest will have on the Children's Theatre of Charlotte and ImaginOn. The festival is happening May 3-5th across from ImaginOn. ImaginOn will be closed during these days due to concerns regarding customer and staff access, security, crowds, and the child safety. The Children's Theatre of Charlotte, ImaginOn's partner agency, is impacted financially by this music festival. The organization is

going to lose approximately \$45,000 in revenue from having to cancel already ticketed shows due to logistical and safety concerns in relation to the festival. The Library and Children's Theatre of Charlotte will keep documentation on the impact of this festival to reference in the future.

CEO Report

Mr. Marcellus Turner provided the following updates:

- MT reminded the Trustees that StoryCorps is coming to Charlotte April 25th through May 24th and will be parking their airstream recording studio at the front entrance of ImaginOn. The Library has been granted three interview sessions so the search for people who would like to participate has begun. The interview is between two people, one person is asking questions and the second person is answering. MT asked that if any Trustee has suggestions for people to be interviewed, please let him know. The Library's interviews will be on April 26th at 10:30am, 11:30am, and 12:30pm.
- MT acknowledged that National Library Week was April 7th – 13th. The Marketing and Communications department created shirts to celebrate the week. The role and value of libraries is highlighted nationwide to every person across the United States during this week. MT also informed the Trustees that they can receive a shirt if they would like to have one.



- Ms. Emery Ortiz provided an update to the Trustees regarding the six Strategic Planning focus group sessions that the library hosted. The groups were not large, but attendees were passionate and communicative. Many of the attendees were regular active users of the library and complimented the staff for always being helpful and making customers feel welcome at any branch. Another common theme that arose from these sessions was the need for more marketing and awareness surrounding what the Library does. Currently, nearly 4,000 surveys have been completed which exceeds the original goal of 2,000 surveys.
- Strategic Planning focus group session dates:
 - Thursday, April 11
 - Independence: 11am-1pm
 - ImaginOn: 5:30-7:30pm
 - Friday, April 12
 - Allegra Westbrooks: 11am-1pm
 - Saturday, April 13
 - South County Regional: 11am-1pm
 - Hickory Grove: 3-5pm
 - Sunday, April 14

- North County Regional: 1-3pm
- Ms. Krystal Green spoke to the Trustees about the Heritage Months the Library wanted to focus on for the next month or so. The Library will be recognizing and celebrating Arab American Heritage Month. Marketing and Communications worked on designing a graphic that specifically paid homage to the culture and made sure to incorporate things that are important to the culture, including calligraphy, earthy tones, and mosaic work. The department also reached out to people from the Arab American community to make certain that the graphics were not offensive and did receive positive feedback. Ms. Green informed the Trustees that May is Jewish American Heritage month, Older Adult month, Mental Health Awareness month, and Asian American Pacific Islander month. The department is working on putting together graphics and a plan on how to recognize each.



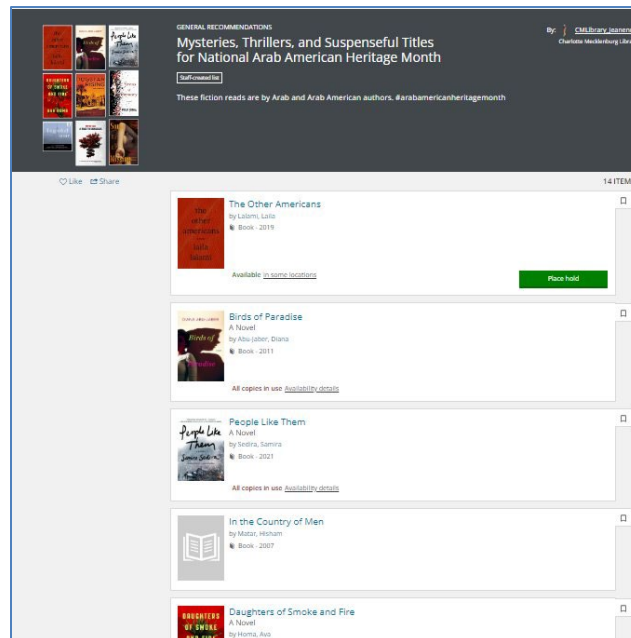
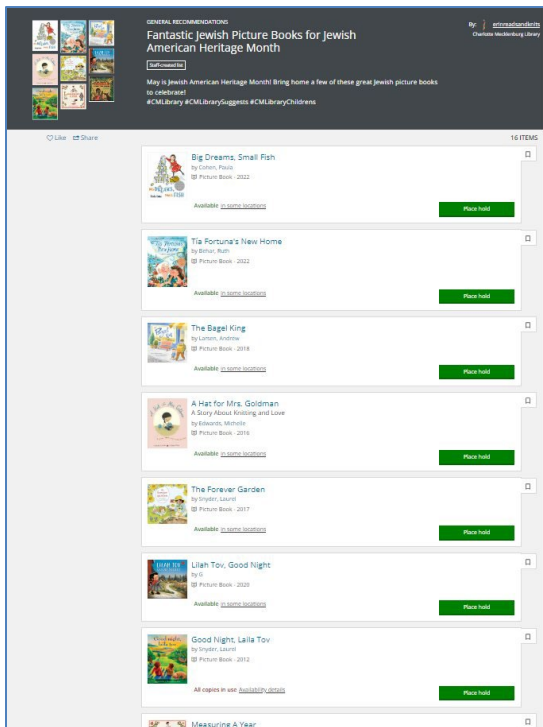
Library Director Report

Ms. Caitlin Moen provided the following updates:

- Ms. Moen informed the Trustees that her department collaborated with Marketing and Communications to determine what the Library will recognize and celebrate for the next few months. Ms. Moen's department then worked to ensure that there is timely programming related to what is being recognized. Typically, branches will create displays and book lists for almost every recognized heritage month. These displays might not be at every branch due to space or programming limitations.
 - **Upcoming Heritage and Honor Months**
 - **April: Arab American Heritage Month**
 - Displays and book lists
 - Programs – ex: Arabic Alphabet Learning Circle
 - **May: Mental Health Awareness Month**
 - Displays and book lists
 - Programs – ex: Mental Health for Teens
 - **May: Jewish American Heritage Month**
 - Displays and book lists
 - Programs – ex: Book Club discussing *The Escape Artist*
 - **May: Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Month**
 - Displays and book lists

- Programs – ex: AAPI Teen Cooking Challenge

Examples of Curated Book Lists



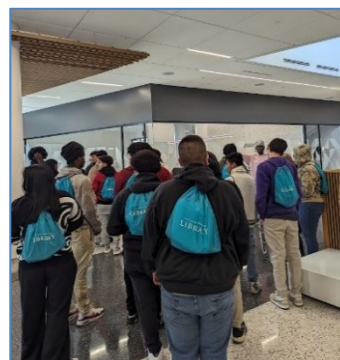
- Ms. Moen gave an update on the 2024 Public Library Association Conference in Columbus, Ohio. This conference was held from April 3rd through April 5th. There were about 12 staff members who attended the conference this year. Ms. Emery Ortiz and Ms. Martha Yesowitch led a convening on partnerships on April 2nd prior to the conference beginning. They invited library leaders from across the country to join together to learn and talk about partnerships, and how those are managed. There was a successful presentation by Ms. Ortiz, Mr. Michael Engelbrecht, Ms. Tyler Mayser, and Mx. Greyson Keller regarding digital equity initiatives and lessons learned. The group also discussed MeckTech and the impact it had on the library and community. The Library was able to bring staff from multiple levels of the organization, including Central Administration staff and branch staff from several locations.



- Ms. Moen informed the Trustees that two staff members were able to attend the Welcoming Interactive Conference the week after the Public Library Association Conference. This conference focuses on successful practices and inspiring stories about immigrant inclusion, programs, policies, and partnerships on economic development, civic engagement, and government leadership. Ms. Lonna Vines and Mr. Cameron Smith attended the conference. They head up the WelcomeCLT Initiative for the Library.
- Mr. Smith spoke to the Trustees about the April 6th Naturalization Ceremony that took place at South County Regional Library. This event has been in the works for about six years, since 2018. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the planning and execution until this year. There were 14 new Americans at the event. Staff were able to connect these people with library resources and ten of them signed up for a library card. Library Leadership was present at this ceremony along with two County Commissioners and one City Councilwoman.



- Ms. Moen announced three new branch managers, Mr. Cameron Smith at Pineville Library, Mr. Leslie Hutchins at Matthews Library, and Ms. Cassandra Chaney at West Boulevard. All three were internal candidates and are excited to take on their new roles.
- Teen programs at Harding Institute of Technology culminated in a college tour of CPCC on Monday March 11th. Students and faculty had the opportunity to meet with admissions staff, gather information on completing an application to attend CPCC, met the CPCC recruiter who is connected to HUHS, and walked the campus with student ambassadors and get the POV of student life.
 - The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library furnished lunch for students, faculty, and CPCC student ambassadors, and facilitated a review of information learned during admissions session and campus tour.
 - Ms. Amrita Patel, an Outreach staff member, led this event.



- Ms. Moen reviewed a few programs that are coming up soon.
 - Who Told it Best: Book vs. Film? The Lorax - Saturday, April 20th from 10:00am – 12:00pm at Visart Video
 - Charlotte Author Conversation – Saturday, May 4th 11:00am – 12:30pm at Pineville Library
 - Dia – Saturday, April 27th 9:00am – ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center

Foundation Update

Ms. Gaisbauer provided the following update:

- The next Around the World in 21 Branches is being held at ImaginOn on April 27th in conjunction with the celebration of Dia event. This will be the tenth stop for this series.
- On April 23rd, The Foundation is hosting *A Conversation with Tommy Tomlinson*, an author talk and book launch. There are about 200 people already signed up to attend. This will be hosted at ImaginOn and is in partnership with WFAE.
- On May 9th, The Foundation is hosting *A Conversation with Dr. Judy Butler*, a planned giving virtual seminar.
- The Foundation is partnering with The Gambrell Foundation and Queens University of Charlotte for a Carnegie Circle event, *An Evening with Author Dacher Keltner*, on May 22nd at 7:00pm.
- Foundation Board members, Alessandro Morante and Jennifer Bennett, hosted Whistle Stop events for the CommonSpark Campaign. Their events brought in new donors and raised funds for the campaign.
- The Foundation recently received an anonymous donation for \$500,000.
- The Foundation also received another financial gift that will underwrite the programming person for the new Main Library for 5 years.
- Book Club Madness II had 772 registrations and 156 book clubs participated. Social media engagement was up 327.6% from last year and social media audience growth grew 97.5%.
- Library Giving Day was April 3rd and the Foundation had 273 donors and raised \$36,416. This is a 39% increase over last year plus a \$10,000 matching gift for a total of \$46,416.

After some Board discussion, Charles Thomas adjourned the board meeting at 5:53pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcellus Turner
CEO

***Note: Section in blue is an additional update that was not on the meeting agenda.**