



**Library Board of Trustees**  
**Library Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Via Zoom**  
**Monday, March 15, 2021, 4:00pm – 5:30pm**

**Trustees Present**

Jennifer Appleby  
Ailen Arreaza  
Rob Harrington  
Joe Helweg, Chair  
Gloria Kelley  
Brandon Neal  
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson  
Charles Thomas  
Ed Williams

**Absent**

Dr. Ricky Woods  
Dr. Kimmery Martin

**Staff Present**

Karen Beach  
Kevin Bittle  
Shelley Book  
Barbara Cantisano  
David Dillard  
Michael Engelbrecht  
Seth Ervin  
Jenni Gaisbauer  
Lea Glaze  
Saul Hernandez  
Jesse Isley  
Lee Keesler  
Meryle Leonard  
Pamela McCarter  
Caitlin Moen  
Angie Myers  
Emily Nanney  
Chantez Neymoss  
John O'Connor  
Elesha Roupp  
Ann Stawski  
Sandy Stratton  
Holly Summers-Gil  
Kim Sykes-Joseph  
Tony Tallent  
Martha Yesowitch

**Others Present**

Mark Kutny  
Dr. Leslie Johnson

Joe Helweg welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time.

**Absence with Cause**

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve Dr. Ricky Woods' and Dr. Kimmery Martin's absence with cause. On a motion by Jennifer Appleby and seconded by Brandon Neal, the Trustees unanimously approved the absence with cause.

## **Minutes**

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on February 15, 2021. On a motion by Charles Thomas and seconded by Brandon Neal, the Trustees unanimously approved the February 15, 2021 meeting minutes.

## **Chair Report**

### **Library Area of Impact**

Mr. Helweg turned the meeting over to Caitlin Moen to review the Main Library transition to the Support Services Center.

Ms. Moen reported the following:

### **Timeline**

- Planning and preparation going on now
- Move to SSC October – November 2021
- Main Library demolition slated for December 2021

### **Main Library Shutdown**

- Operational Planning
  - First Floor Operating Model
  - Appointment-Based North Carolina Room Services
  - Decreasing Service Points/Shifting Staff as Needed
- Contents and Packing
  - Arts and Awards Inventory and Sorting
  - Clearing out Offices
  - Continuing to Clear Basement Storage Areas
- Collections Planning
  - General Collections – Weed, Redistribute, Store
  - Special Collections – Move to SSC or Redistribute to Alternate Locations
  - North Carolina Room Collections – Prepare for Move to SSC and Service During Closure

### **Move Management includes:**

- General items
- Art such as Romare Bearden piece, framed pieces and statuary
- Special collections such as the Robinson Spangler Carolina Room

### **Preparing for SSC**

- Support Services Workflow
  - Finance
  - Library Technology
  - Technical Services
  - Office-Based Employees (Education, Outreach, Operations, etc.)
  - Logistics

- **Customer-Facing Workflow**
  - Interlibrary Loan
  - Library by Mail
  - Telephone Reference
  - Online Library Card Applications
  - Book Club Kits
  - Online Chat

### **Services and Staffing During Closure**

- Mobile Library
- Small storefront space
- Library pop-up space

### **Staffing Planning**

- Specialized Services
  - North Carolina Room
  - Job Help Center
- Temporary Services Operations
  - 8-10 FTE for 3 service types
- Virtual Services
  - SSC or other branches
- Critical Gaps in System

### **Communication Plan**

- Internal
  - FOREWORDnet (intranet) page
  - Main Library/Support Staff Town Hall held 3/10
  - Monthly updates moving forward; weekly or as needed as we near the move date
- External
  - Conducted survey to help inform temporary services
  - Generally, begin active communication to Library users 6-8 weeks ahead of closure
  - May adjust if temporary locations become available sooner
  - End with Goodbye Main Library party (update later in meeting)

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

Angie Myers provided the following updates:

#### **Budget Adjustments**

- \$60,000 from Reserves Appropriated to Programming
- \$700,000 from Salaries & Benefits to:
  - \$206,847 to Professional Services for the Library's portion of 7<sup>th</sup> & Tryon Predevelopment Expenses
  - \$221,441 to Professional Services for County's portion of 7<sup>th</sup> & Tryon Predevelopment Expenses
  - \$157,712 to Misc. General Operation for Marketing & Advertising
  - \$100,000 to Facilities Related for Maintenance
  - \$14,000 to Professional Services for CEO Recruiting/Relocation

On a motion by the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Budget Adjustments and Transfers.

### **Approve Selection of Cherry Bekaert as FY2021 Library Auditor**

CML went to RFP in 2019 in partnership with Mecklenburg County. Cherry Bekaert was selected for 3 years with the possibility for an extension up to 5 more years. CML is still within that 5-year timeframe. CML remains happy with the service quality and the contract amount of \$62,000 is reasonable and acceptable.

On a motion by the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the use of Cherry Bekaert as the FY2021 Library Auditor.

Ms. Myers committed to gather the necessary electronic signatures after the Board meeting.

### **HR Update**

Ms. Myers thanked Lea Glaze for her interim role as the HR Leader and introduced our new HR Leader, Kim Sykes-Joseph. Ms. Sykes-Joseph introduced herself and thanked the Board for their support.

### **Governance Committee**

Rob Harrington provided the following updates:

- The 4 Trustees scheduled to roll off in June are Jennifer Appleby, Ed Williams, Gloria Kelley and myself
- There are 4 Trustees scheduled to roll-off this year and given the number of important initiatives taking place in the organization, we made a request to the BOCC to allow Gloria Kelley and myself to serve another year on the Board and they BOCC approved our request last week.
- The deadline for applications for the Board of Trustees is April 28, 2021 and the Governance Committee will be working to fill 2 slots. We will bring those recommendations to the Board before sending them to the BOCC.
- Charles Thomas and Brandon Neal are up for reappointment at the end of June. Our recommendation to the BOCC will also included their reappointment.

### **Real Estate Committee**

Brandon Neal and David Dillard provided the following updates:

#### **University City Action Item**

##### **Actions**

Seeking the Boards approval to determine that the Library has a critical need for a capital improvement project, the University City regional branch library, and authorize Library CEO to direct the staff to enter into a Public Private Partnership to develop a new University City regional branch library, following the requirements set forth in the North Carolina General Statutes (GS 143-128.1C) with advice and guidance from legal counsel, Mecklenburg County leadership, and AFM.

##### **Rationale:**

University City Regional library is the second most active circulation branch in the system and has the third largest literacy program attendance. There are 220,000 residents within 5 miles (46% African American, 32% Caucasian, 15% Hispanic, & 7% Asian) and 93,000 library card holders claim it as their home branch. There are 35 FTE library staff employed at UC.

##### **Process:**

The ability to create a Public Private Partnership is governed by GS 143-128.1C. The statute has been reviewed by Library legal counsel and is being reviewed by the Mecklenburg County attorney, and both have sought outside counsel for assurance that this structure is available for the Library to pursue and for Mecklenburg County to fund. The process includes but is not necessarily limited to creating and advertising a RFQ with the Library's criteria for a new 40,000 sf University City regional branch, receiving, reviewing, and assessing responses, selecting a developer, advertising a summary of the terms for 30 days as required by law, and negotiating and executing a Development Agreement (with the advice and guidance of Mecklenburg County AFM) and ultimate purchase of the property by the County for the Library once the construction is complete.

Mecklenburg County staff has approved the concept (subject to final review and legal approval) and agreed to provide funding for the acquisition of the completed building, \$4 million in capital required for the library's Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment (FF&E), and the annual operating budget increase for the additional staffing and facilities maintenance required for the expanded branch operation.

**Deal Structure:**

The RFQ will require a developer to provide all the financing for the total cost of the design of all aspects of the project, site preparation, construction of the building, interior improvements per the Library's specifications, and the required parking necessary to deliver the capital improvement project. The County is prepared to fund the acquisition of the property for the Library within six months of completion of the construction.

Since the Library will own the property, all costs to operate the building will become part of the Library's annual operating budget, including staff, program costs, utilities, and the services provided by the Interlocal Agreement with the County for facilities maintenance and security.

**On a motion by the Real Estate Committee, a roll call vote was taken, and the Board unanimously approved the University City action item.**

**Main Library Action Item**

**Action:**

Authorize Library CEO to direct the staff to identify locations and negotiate agreements on terms acceptable to the Library and Mecklenburg County to provide library services during the period that Main is under construction. Also, authorize the CEO to execute such agreements.

**Background**

Main Library will close in late 2021 for approximately three and one-half years to demolish the existing building and construct a new state of the art Library facility for the entire community. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is seeking locations in the uptown area and partners to provide library services during this time.

**Rationale**

To serve the public during the period when the Main Library is under construction, the Library desires to identify locations to provide services to the public. The optimal arrangement is to have two locations in uptown:

- One would preferably be a centrally located retail space so customers may utilize typical public library services, including but not limited to retrieval of materials that have been reserved (placed on "hold"), return of materials, issuance of library cards, checkout from a limited/curated collection, and access to the catalogue via computer. This location would not provide a broad collection, reference materials, government documents, tele-reference services, public access computers or Wi-Fi for onsite use, job help services, public printing/facsimile services, community meeting space, or individual/small group study space.
- The other location would provide services including, but not necessarily limited to, retrieval of materials that have been reserved (placed on "hold"), return of materials, issuance of library cards, checkout from a limited/curated collection, access to the catalogue via computer, a safe "third space", access to Wi-Fi, laptops,

technology assistance, job assistance programs, printing and facsimile services, study space indoors and outside if the location can accommodate it, space for virtual job interviews, online classes, space for a social worker to meet privately with library customers, and space for library staff to take breaks, make private phone calls, and secure certain materials. This location would not provide a broad collection, reference materials, government documents, or tele-reference services.

### **Deal Structure**

There is a small capital allocation for temporary locations included in the new Main budget, which should be adequate for what we anticipate. Each location will incur some ongoing operating expenses such as utilities, internet service, and program materials and some expenses associated with occupancy that would be provided by the Interlocal Agreement with Mecklenburg County such as janitorial services, hvac maintenance, general repairs and maintenance, and potentially security.

### **Staffing**

The temporary locations would be staffed utilizing existing customer facing staff from Main. It is anticipated that the temporary locations would operate Monday through Friday.

### **On a motion by the Real Estate Committee, a roll call vote was taken, and the Board unanimously approved the Main Library action item.**

### **Library Director Report**

Caitlin Moen provided the following updates:

#### **Stories of Impact**

1. Annemarie has been reading with Sophia regularly since last year when we began the Virtual Reading Buddies program. Sophia and her mom surprised her with a sweet card by visiting the Davidson Library branch! It was the first time these two had seen each other in person, although they had developed a great relationship online
2. Community Read, "Let's Talk About Race Workshop" Facilitated by Amrita Patel and former Library Employee Denise LaForce of the Outreach Dialogue Facilitation Team: A representative from CMS attended "How to Talk About Race" on Feb 10th and shared the following:

*"I will bring this into my work in CMS with our Anti-Racist Library Cohort. I really loved the strategies for "talking" about racism, and for diffusing polarizing comments. I got so much out of today and appreciate your thoughtful and well-organized presentation!"*

Superintendent, Earnest Winston will be reading the children's Community Read book, "You Matter" at Trillium Springs Montessori School. The Community Read program supports CMS core belief of embracing our community's diversity and using it to enhance the educational environment.

### **COVID Service Levels Status**

#### **Library Operations Update**

- Level 2 Service since March 1st
  - "Oh my, that was such a wonderful thing (coming out of the library), it felt like coming home."
- Vaccinations – Group 3 is active
  - No service or rule changes yet
- Hiring Process – resumption of business as usual
- Vacancy Rate

- Fulltime positions – Fairly standard vacancy rate
- Parttime positions – 24%

**Action Item: Seeking approval for the extension of No Sunday Hours for April-May**

**Background**

Normal Library hours include opening Sundays from 1-5pm at Regional locations between Labor Day and Memorial Day. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library Board of Trustees approved elimination of Sunday hours first from September – December 2020, then subsequently extended for January – March 2021. Library staff proposes continuing this altered schedule through May 2021, with resumption of Sunday hours in Fall 2021.

**Rationale**

An above average vacancy rate, particularly in part-time frontline Library Aide staff (24%), combined with staff moving back to newly reopened South County Regional Library, has stretched staff across the system, particularly for nights and weekends. Continuing to close on Sundays removes the burden of staffing eight of the system libraries for a 5-hour weekend day.

The Library COVID-19 Re-Opening is continuing to move through its levels, but foot traffic is down at locations and Sundays are not high-volume operating hours. The Library has been closed for Sundays throughout FY 2021; extending the closure through May will ensure a consistent experience for customers during the re-opening process.

Library Human Resources is now able to hire at a normal pace and anticipates the system will be staffed and ready to resume normal operating hours by September 2021 as usual.

**Proposed Hours (All Locations)**

Sunday: Closed

Monday: 9am – 8pm

Tuesday: 9am – 8pm

Wednesday: 9am – 8pm

Thursday: 9am – 8pm

Friday: 9am – 5pm

Saturday: 9am – 5pm

**After some Board discussion and on a motion by Joe Helweg, seconded by Charles Thomas, a roll call vote was taken the Board unanimously approved the extension of No Sunday Hours for April-May 2021.**

**Community Read**

Community Read is taking place in March and there is still time to pledge to read the book. There will be an author talk on March 24, 2021.

**Chair Report**

**Action Item: Approve Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Board of Trustees Resolution in recognition of retiring Chief Executive Officer, Lee Keesler**

Joe Helweg read the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, Lee Keesler, a Charlotte native, has demonstrated a passion for his hometown that is evidenced in over three decades of exemplary leadership in the corporate, nonprofit, and community service sectors of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County; and

**WHEREAS**, despite his profound humility and his assiduously avoiding the spotlight at all times, Lee has made significant contributions to our community in every phase of his career, improving lives and creating opportunities for those who live, work and play in Mecklenburg County; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee's crowning achievement in this storied career has been his nearly nine years of service as the Chief Executive Officer of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee initiated his tenure as CEO by leading the Library forward out of the destructive effects of the Great Recession of 2008-2009 with an unwavering commitment and vision to rebuild and reimagine CML's next chapter as a beloved and essential community resource; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee made it his and the Library's mission throughout his tenure to make sure everyone in our community has access and that the Library is a welcoming and inclusive space for all; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee has been successful in leading the Library to build stronger community relationships and engagement, fiscal responsibility, and 21<sup>st</sup> century access, innovation and excellence across the entire Library system; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee helped found, organize, and staff the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee led a long-term strategic planning process to envision the Library's future, resulting in the 2025 Essential Plan that continues to guide the Library's priorities: and

**WHEREAS**, Lee promoted economic opportunity via education and workforce development through a series of innovative programs and partnerships, including CMS - ONE Access, as well as championing shared professional development opportunities across the staff of both the Library and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee oversaw the rebranding of the Library and committed to strategic marketing and digital communications to better tell the compelling story of how libraries serve and are essential to all in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee strengthened the talent and advanced the organizational development of the Library, including spearheading the system-wide internal culture initiative called FORWARD, to enable better communication, collaboration, unity, and retention throughout the organization; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee helped develop a stronger, more diverse, engaged, and active board of trustees, better reflecting the voices and needs of our community; and

**WHEREAS**, when he retires as of March 31, 2021, Lee will complete a truly unique, lifelong journey from pulling his book-filled wagon home from the Myers Park Library branch as a child, to completing his tenure as Library CEO by leaving behind a revitalized and relevant library system that will soon break ground on a \$100 million, 115,000-square-foot Main Library in uptown Charlotte; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee's retirement presents an opportunity for him to regain the golfing form that made him the No. 1 player on the Golf team at Duke University, as well as the North Carolina Men's Amateur Golf Champion of 1975, and will enable Lee to refine his putting stroke on real greens rather than the thousands of putts Lee practiced on the floor during countless Library conference calls and Zoom meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, Lee's retirement will further enable additional time to enjoy with his wonderful family, including time at Grandfather Mountain, as well as time in future Post-COVID days to return to the sanctuary of his beloved First

Presbyterian Church and that other sanctuary known as Belk Gymnasium to cheer on the Davidson Wildcats Basketball team; and

**WHEREAS**, thanks to Lee’s leadership and strong support from the county, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library ably welcomes and serves a growing, ever-changing community while earning national recognition for its work.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Board and staff thank Lee Keesler for his exceptional contributions as Chief Executive Officer to the success, achievements and reputation of the Library, and wish him well in his retirement.

Several other Trustees expressed their thanks for the job Mr. Keesler has done for the Library and the community.

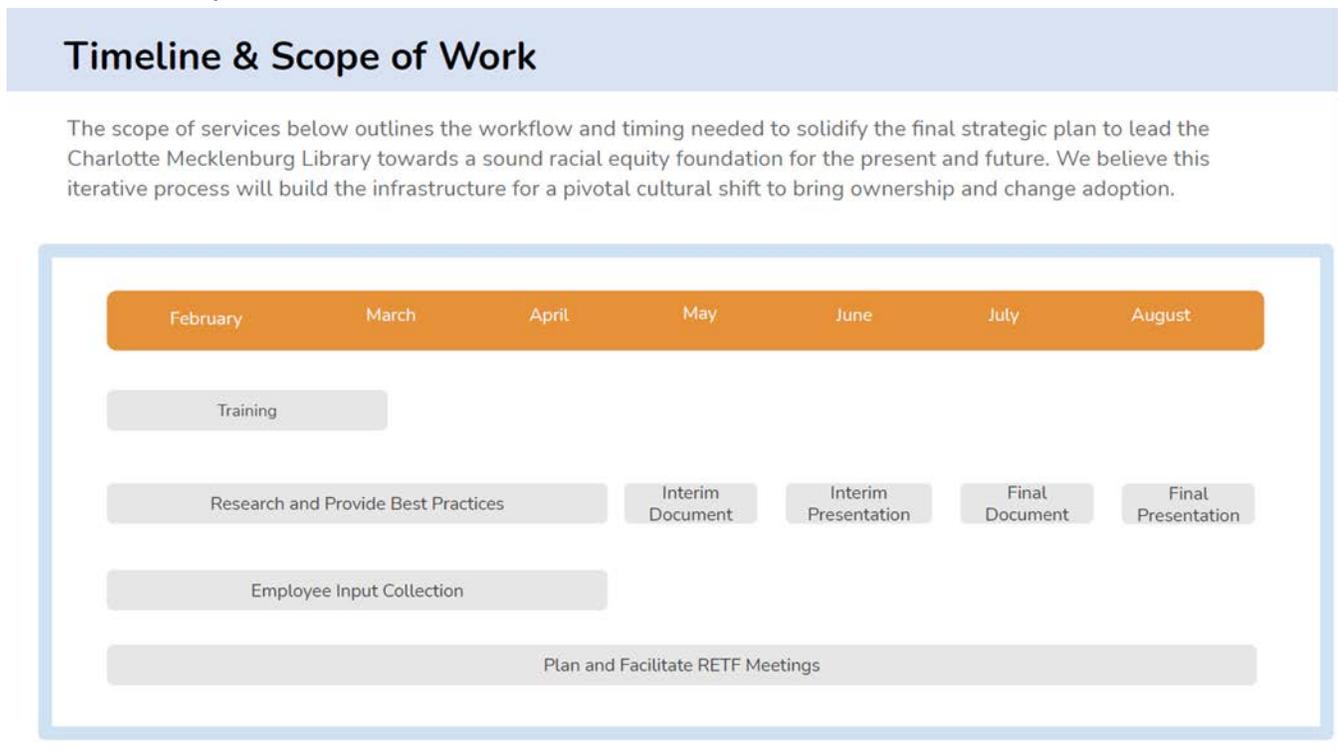
Lee Keesler thanked the Library team for all the accomplishments listed and wished everyone well.

### Racial Equity Task Force

Rob Harrington provided the following updates:

- The RETF had our first meeting 2 weeks ago
- The meeting was led by Gina Esquivel, Alexandra Arrington and Kate Flynn
- There are 3 training sessions to ensure everyone is level-set and have the same baseline of knowledge

### Timeline and Scope of Work



### Library Foundation Update

Jenni Gaisbauer announced that the Foundation tipped \$99MM mark of our \$135MM goal.

Karen Beach gave the following update:

- **Bookmark the Town Goals**
  - Raise \$50,000 net

- Expand donor base/build CommonSpark pipeline
- Raise awareness of Library/Foundation
- 5,000 households
- Coordinate with April's National Library Week/Library Giving Day
- Physical and virtual signs, \$15 per sign
- #bookmarkthetown
- **Goodbye Main Library**
  - Opportunity to honor and "say goodbye" to current facility; introduce and "welcome" new Main Library to the future
  - Kick off public grassroots phase of campaign
  - Activities over several weeks at Main Library, in branches and through community outreach
  - Coordinate planning with Verse & Vino
  - Special opportunity for staff/retirees
  - Includes production of documentary film capturing Library history for current and future use
  - Auction
  - Reflect public commons, engage people throughout the community in planning, delivery and as participants

**On a motion by Charles Thomas, seconded by Joe Helweg, the meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Helweg  
Chair, Board of Trustees