



Library Board of Trustees

Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Via Zoom

Monday, September 21, 2020, 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Trustees Present

Jennifer Appleby
Ailen Arreaza
Rob Harrington, Chair
Joe Helweg
Gloria Kelley
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Brandon Neal
Charles Thomas
Ed Williams
Dr. Ricky Woods

Absent

Brandon Neal

Staff Present

Elyse Berrier
Kevin Bittle
Shelley Book
Barbara Cantisano
David Dillard
Seth Ervin
Jenni Gasibauer
Saul Hernandez
Lee Keesler
Julia Lanham
Meryle Leonard
Pamela McCarter
Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Chantez Neymoss
John O'Connor
Amy Richard
Ann Stawski

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Susan Patterson
Gary Schwab
Alessandro Morante

Joe Helweg welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time. He recognized the Library staff for the passion and creativity they have displayed during this difficult time. He thanked Rob Harrington and Jennifer Appleby for their dedication to the Board. He also welcomed Amy Hawn Nelson to her first Board meeting.

Absence with Cause

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve absence with cause for Brandon Neal. On a motion by Jennifer Appleby and seconded by Charles Thomas, the Trustees unanimously approved absence with cause for Brandon Neal.

Minutes

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on June 22, 2020. On a motion by Charles Thomas and seconded by Ailen Areazza, the Trustees unanimously approved the June 22, 2020 meeting minutes.

Chair Report

Library Area of Impact

Lee Keesler and Pamela McCarter reported out on advancing racial equity in the Library. Highlights include:

- Shared disparity data from Mecklenburg County
- Presented CM Library's organizational commitment to racial equity
- Reviewed the activities the Library is actively engaged in
 - Legacy audit of namings, commemorations, physical images, etc.
 - Equity added as a key component of our operational plan
 - Written commitment to support the Black Lives Matter
 - Staff training ("Advancing Racial Equity Training" conducted along with Mecklenburg County employees
 - Creation of the Diversity and Equity Action Team
 - Identification of barriers that exist at the Library that keep us from advancing equity in our community
 - Black Lives Matter programming
 - Expanding library materials related to racial equity

Lee Keesler presented an action item requesting that the Board authorize the Library Board Chair and CEO to convene a comprehensive Equity planning initiative for the organization that will expand Equity, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the organization, and remove the effects of systemic racism and social injustice within the organization. A work group consisting of current and former trustees, staff and community members, and led by trustee and staff co-chairs, will deliver a work product consisting of clear long-term direction for the organization and specific, tangible recommendations to achieve the desired future state. The final report will be delivered to the Library Board of Trustees in May 2021 for its review, consideration and ultimate approval at the June 2021 Board of Trustees meeting.

After some Board discussion, Mr. Helweg made a motion to authorize Library Board Chair and CEO to convene a comprehensive Equity planning initiative for the organization that will expand Equity, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the organization, and remove the effects of systemic racism and social injustice within the organization. A work group consisting of trustees, staff and community members, and led by trustee and staff co-chairs, will deliver a work product consisting of clear long-term direction for the organization and specific, tangible recommendations to achieve the desired future state. The final report will be delivered to the Library Board of Trustees in May 2021 for its review, consideration and ultimate approval at the June 2021 Board of Trustees meeting. On a motion by Joe Helweg, seconded by Charles Thomas, the Board approved the motion.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Dr. Ricky Woods proposed beginning the Library's budget planning earlier, in September and October, so that trustees and staff can educate county commissioners on those needs and opportunities. Angie Myers reported that by the October Board meeting Library staff should have a good idea of initial FY 2022 budget priorities.

Angie Myers provided the following updates:

FY 2021 YTD Update

- Projection data is based on 2 months of activity. In building the budget the Library significantly reduced internal revenue generation for the first 6 months of the year due to COVID 19. We will continue to monitor if impact is expected to more significantly impact calendar year 2021.

- The Library’s annual financial audit is currently underway and should be complete in October. No material or significant findings have been noted.

Budget Adjustments

- \$15,000 from Foundation Contribution to Programming and Misc. General Operating for DPLA Engage 2020 Award
- \$25,000 from Foundation Contribution to Professional Services Equity Team Facilitation
- \$4,000 from Reserves Available to Personnel Related for Staff Day
- \$2,000 from Other to Programming for Grow with Google Digital Skills Grant

On a motion from the Finance Committee, seconded by Dr. Ricky Woods, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Budget Adjustments.

Facilities Master Plan Update

Angie Myers stated that staff had hoped to bring the Board a vendor recommendation for the Facilities Master Plan. However, due to the overwhelming response to the RFP staff will need another month to review. Special thanks go to Gloria Kelley, Kevin Bittle, Pamela McCarter, Debra Sharp and David Dillard for serving on the selection committee. This group will present a recommendation at the October Board meeting.

HR Policy Updates

Julia Lanham provided the following updates:

In an ongoing effort to address employee concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of County Commissioners approved several temporary enhancements to employee benefits. Below is a summary of the recently approved items:

- Approval of Two Additional Vacation Days
 - All full-time employees, who were employed as of July 1, 2020 will be awarded two personal days, which must be used by June 30, 2021. The two personal days will not be paid out if an employee separates from the Library prior to June 30, 2021 and will not be paid out in the Vacation Cash-Out Program, nor will they be used as any accrued benefit time. The two personal days cannot be used to add to creditable service time in the Local Governmental Employees’ Retirement System.
- Amendment of Sick Leave Policy
 - Temporary amendment of the Sick Leave policy allows employees to use sick leave to care for their child or children because their school or place of care is “closed” due to COVID-19. Employees who use sick leave for childcare purposes must submit documentation to the Employee Services Center for review prior to taking sick leave.
 - Temporary amendment of the Donation of Sick Leave policy allows employees who are using sick leave for childcare purposes to request and receive donated sick time for leave.
 - Temporary amendment to the Leave of Absence policy allows employees to take an unpaid leave of absence when they are unable to work because they are caring for a child(ren) whose school or place of care is closed; called “Extended Leave Childcare” due to COVID-19.
 - The Temporary Leave Policies described above and below will expire upon the termination of the March 14, 2020 Joint Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency (in Mecklenburg County) in response to COVID-19.
- South Carolina Telework Policy

- In addition to the enhanced benefits described above, the South Carolina Telework Policy is recommended for extension. The current modified telework policy allowing South Carolina employees to telework expires on Sept. 30. The policy is now extended through Dec. 31, 2020.

On a motion by the Finance Committee, seconded by Joe Helweg, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the adoption of the temporary human resource policies described above.

Real Estate Committee

David Dillard provided the following Real Estate updates:

- New Main Library – starting final phase of design
 - Spirit Square – County Commission approved our preferred plan
- Support Services Center – permit in hand, ready to commence renovation
- South County Regional renovation – completion is within sight!
- Pineville – design complete; finalizing documents
- University City Regional – working with our County partners on funding sources (and implications from that)

CEO Report

Re-Opening Phase 2

Caitlin Moen provided the Board the following updates:

- Phase 1
 - Began June 1
 - Uninterrupted service at all locations
- Preparing for Phase 2
 - Equipment, Supplies, Procedures
 - Testing and Piloting
- Phase 2
 - Library will move to Phase 2 on September 30th at all locations
 - Grocery Store Model
 - Public announcement on September 28th
 - Soft moves complete by September 24th

Meck Tech Home Computer Kits

We are leveraging 1.75 million dollars of CARES funds in partnership with Mecklenburg County to help those in our community without dedicated computer access. We are working with Informative Technologies, Inc to manage the logistics behind the sourcing and securing of hardware (minority-owned business promoting dedicated to green and sustainable solutions to combat the digital divide) We also recently hired a project manager and are fine tuning the workflows for both staff and partners.

- The Library, in partnership with Mecklenburg County, has secured funding for 5,000 refurbished devices for households affected by COVID-19
- The Library will work with partner agencies to fulfill this need and are in talks with Goodwill, HHS, and Parks and Recreation. The Library will also distribute these PCs to qualified customers.
- The Library will begin deployment October 5th, beginning with Goodwill

Circulating Chromebooks

There is a new collection of 39 circulating Chromebooks to support workforce development that was made possible through support from the COVID-19 Response Fund, administered by Foundation For The Carolinas and United Way of Central Carolinas.

Carolina Room Leader

John O'Connor is coming to Charlotte from Boston College, where he gained significant experience in special collections, digital infrastructure, and project management. Most recently he served as the Scholarly Communications Librarian. In addition, John has served since 2009 as the President for the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies Foundation, devoted to a portrait and artifact collection related to North Carolina's history and founders.

John was born and raised in North Carolina with family roots in Raleigh and Charlotte. He has a passion for North Carolina history and for telling the stories of all the diverse people in a community. He credits his reading of North Carolina ghost stories by Judge Whedbee for instilling a love of North Carolina history in his life. He is excited to be relocating to Charlotte for this position.

Black Lives Matter Program Initiative

Last week staff officially launched a new BLM programming initiative. These are a group of programs that support the conversation about racial equity. Thanks to Chantez Neymoss and Jasmine McNeill for their dedication to this project.

Support for Students and Educators

Martha Yesowitch provided the following updates:

- One Access
 - 15,000 students have taken advantage of their One Access accounts
- Curriculum Support
 - Library resources are embedded in CMS learning modules. Students are directed to Library resources to complete assignments
 - CMS provided Library employees training on CMS frequently used software and learning platforms. We are helping students and families navigate Canvas and Google Classroom
 - One-on-one help to students. 359 sessions for one-on-one tutoring and 560 "Reading Buddy" sessions.
 - Weekly "Lunch and Learn" for parents to connect with each other
 - Spanish language support
- Social and Emotional Support
 - These are opportunities to connect people outside of school hours through things such as book discussions, creative expression, and those mentor/mentee relationships our staff have with students.
- Equity and Access
 - Building culturally rich collections
 - Coordinated school participation in Community Read
 - Continued work on closing the digital divide along with our partners

Dr. Ricky Woods recommended working with the Pre-K schools to help identify households that may be eligible for the Meck Tech program.

Library Foundation Activities

Approve new Library Foundation board member

Jenni Gaisbauer introduced the Board to Allesandro Morante. Mr. Morante is a Managing Director at Wells Fargo Securities, currently in charge of Commercial Mortgage Backed Security (“CMBS”) trading. Prior to his current role at the bank, Alessandro was based in his hometown of London where he led the European expansion of a lending division within Wells Fargo’s Asset-Backed Finance group. Alessandro has a Bachelor of Science in Economics and Political Science from Duke University and is CFA® charterholder.

On a motion from the Foundation Board, seconded by Charles Thomas, the Board unanimously approved Allesandro Morante to serve on the Library Foundation Board.

Ms. Gaisbauer thanked Charles Thomas for moderating an interview with Susan Orlean who wrote *The Library Book* for our Carnegie Circle program this year.

Common Spark Campaign Update

- Lee Keesler received news today that The Dickson Foundation committed \$500,000 to the Common Spark Campaign
- There currently are \$50M in outstanding requests
- Campaign total is at \$30,597,000 of our \$70M private fundraising goal

Verse & Vino

- November 5, 2020
- Authors include India Hicks, Megan Miranda, Chris Paolini, Alice Randall and Christina Baker Kline
- Ticket sales and dinner packages are selling well

Approval of Executive Committee

Joe Helweg asked the Board to approve the Executive Committee which consists of:

- Joe Helweg
- Jennifer Appleby
- Rob Harrington
- Brandon Neal
- Charles Thomas
- Lee Keesler

On a motion by Joe Helweg, seconded by Charles Thomas, the Board unanimously approved the Executive Committee.

CEO Search Process

Joe Helweg provided the following updates:

- Coleman Lew Canny Bowen is managing the nation wide search process
- They have spoken to 120 stakeholders in the community
- We will share the position description at our October Board meeting along with places where it will be posted

Advocacy Activity

Mr. Helweg thanked Dr. Woods for his commitment to ensuring the Library is connecting the dots between the Library and potential partners in the community.

Mr. Helweg endorsed the Library's work on and commitment to equity and bridging the digital divide in our community and requested staff and trustees to tell this story outside the Library. Mr. Helweg will be presenting to the Board of County Commissioners on October 6 and will present all this great work the Library is doing.

On a motion by Mr. Helweg, seconded by Dr. Ricky Woods, the meeting adjourned at 5:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lenoir C. Keesler, Jr.
CEO