

MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MARY RILEY STYLES PUBLIC LIBRARY
Held in the Mary Riley Styles Public Library
120 N. Virginia Avenue Falls Church, VA 22046
March 16, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Stephanie Oppenheimer called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The following Board members attended the meeting:

Stephanie Oppenheimer (Tardy)
Jeff Peterson
Chrystie Swiney
Janice Johnson
Patrick Cronin
Molly Novotny (Participated electronically)
Bizzy Bracken

Others present for the meeting included: City Council member Marybeth Connelly, School Board Liaison Sue Dimock, Library Director Jenny Carroll and Administrative Assistant Claudia Gutierrez.

Ms. Molly Novotny participated in the meeting via cell phone and stated that she was in her car driving to a meeting for her job.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Peterson and seconded by Ms. Swiney, the Library Board unanimously moved to allow Ms. Novotny to participate at tonight's Board meeting by conference call under the resolution adopting the policy for electronic participation in meetings.

Ms. Oppenheimer welcomed new Board Member Bizzy Bracken who was sworn in today and will be serving out the remainder of Ms. Kathleen Tysse's term. Ms. Bracken introduced herself to the Board.

3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 9, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Swiney and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Library Board approved the February 9, 2022 Meeting Minutes with a minor change.

4. LIBRARY REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEED PLAQUE FEEDBACK

Ms. Carroll presented different options of materials and sizes for the LEED plaque. She also presented placement options. After a long discussion, the Board expressed their preference for the small size LEED plaque, the black granite material, and having it located on the outside front wall next to the building dedication plaque in line with the land dedication plaque.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- National Library Week will be from April 3 through April 9 and Library Workers Day is on April 5. The Proclamation was sent to the City Clerk and will be submitted to Council for approval on March 28.
- Regarding Equity in the library, Collection HQ assessment tool is being implemented and will be up and running in FY2023. This software will provide assessments of the library collection including DEI (Diversity Equity and Inclusion) assessments.
- In June, Ms. Oppenheimer and Ms. Swiney terms will end. If there is any applicant for the Library Board, Ms. Swiney won't apply and step down; if not, she will stay.
- In July/August the library business meeting will occur. The meeting will include the elections for Library Chair and Vice Chair, the adoption of the library Bylaws including the electronic participation policy, and the approval of the annual schedule for calendar year 2023. Ms. Oppenheimer intends to step down as the Chairperson since she has served two terms.

LIBRARY PROJECT UPDATE

- Centennial is completing remaining punch list items.
- The City of Falls Church released \$350K of Centennial total retainage. \$60K will be withheld until the last few items are complete.
- Expected final payment to Centennial will be in March 2022.
- Will begin working with The Matthews Group (TMG) for additional items in March 2022.
- There is no additional space for shrubs at the library. Planters will start blooming this spring and additional plants can be considered. Library staff are working to implement a volunteer group to help with regular landscaping maintenance.
- Exterior lighting fixture will be replaced due to damage.
- The new dumpster enclosure and the cabinets for the staff lounge will be installed.
- Director will follow-up on the banners for the street poles.

LIBRARY HOURS

The library has been operating on the new 54-hour schedule for a week. Ms. Carroll informed the Board that she received 3 emails from the public regarding the new library hours. One was anonymous asking for hours to be restored once COVID is done. Another one was from a Fairfax County patron advocating for the library to receive more funding, and another one from Mr. Gross who preferred to reinstate the afternoon Sunday hours. According to the data, last Saturday, the library had slow attendance, perhaps due to the inclement weather. Sunday morning 44 patrons came between 10:00am-11:00am, with a total of 390 patrons in the building throughout the day. The peak attendance was at 2:00pm. Reaction from patrons toward the new hours was one of a surprise, but with no complaints.

Ms. Carroll reviewed the decision for reducing hours and the current schedule including the staffing analysis, review of other jurisdictions, consistency, and providing relief to staff. The Board had endorsed the decision to reduce to 54 hours based on the information presented in February. Feedback from staff has been positive and Management Team have reported relief in terms of scheduling the service desks. There was discussion regarding options to present to Council to increase staffing.

Ms. Carroll stated that she wouldn't recommend reducing library programs. Programs are essential to promote the library collection and provide equity. Ms. Carroll explained the importance of all programming and services, and emphasized the time that staff dedicates to collection development,

cataloging, administration, volunteer training, and many other library operations is necessary.

Ms. Carroll stated that the budget narrative and video are complete using the library budget as proposed by the City Manager. This includes funding of a Technology Librarian which was a request from FY2022 and is included in the FY2024 future planning. A Technology Librarian would consolidate responsibilities that are currently divided amongst the library management team. The position would also serve as a liaison or business partner to the IT department. Having a Technology Librarian would provide relief to staff.

The FY2023 budget that City Manager Wyatt Shields will present to Council on March 28th is completed. It is under Council's discretion to decide where the unmet needs budget will be distributed among City departments.

5.- COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Connelly stated that Council was surprised about the new library hours and the way it was announced. Council would have appreciated if they were informed beforehand. Ms. Connelly stated that it would be important to communicate the importance of programs and how the community is using the library. Ms. Carroll mentioned that if hours were added back into the schedule, they would be used for the weekend, to follow what the data reflects.

Ms. Connelly suggested presenting to Council a list of concise points about adding hours to the schedule. This should include all the data that supports the additional hours needed, information about the importance of programming, how equity is being addressed, and also the funding that is needed to make this possible.

The Board feels that Council should trust the library staff and their data, as they are the experts. The library is unique and different from other departments in the City in that the Board approves a budget and works with the director on policy and operational items.

All other items of the agenda were suspended due to the duration of the discussions of the items above.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, upon a motion duly made by Ms. Tysse and seconded by Mr. Cronin, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Carroll
Library Director

Approved:

Stephanie Oppenheimer Chairperson

Copies: Board of Trustees, City Manager, Library Reference Desk, Staff Bulletin Board, City Clerk,
Library Web Page

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