

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MARY RILEY STYLES PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
Held in City Hall East Wing 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor – Oak Conference Room.  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
**February 19, 2020**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Chairperson Stephanie Oppenheimer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Attendance:**

Stephanie Oppenheimer  
Chet DeLong  
Kathleen Tysse  
Molly Novotny  
Chrystie Swiney  
Jeff Peterson  
Don Camp

**Others in attendance:**

Director Jenny Carroll  
Administrative Assistant Claudia Gutierrez

**Guests:**

Councilwoman Liaison Marybeth Connelly  
Councilman Phil Duncan

**Non-in attendance:**

Planning Commission Liaison Rob Puentes  
Councilman Ross Litkenhous

Councilwoman Connelly announced to the Board that she will be the City Council liaison starting tonight.

**2. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS**

No petitions

**3. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 19, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

There was a discussion on whether to include in the first agenda item the names of library Board liaisons, who were not present at the meeting, or to only mention their names when attending the Board meeting. The Board decided to change the format in the next Board meeting minutes, but for now, they approved the January 19 minutes as presented.

**Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Library Board unanimously approved the January 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes with minor changes.**

#### **4. LIBRARY REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Council approved the Library project. The library started moving in earnest. Local History materials were moved to a conditioned storage space in Richmond, including IT equipment. The Technical Services and Administration Departments moved to Gage House. The library collection prepared to be moved to the temporary location and to storage.
- The Director expressed her appreciation to all the support given by the Superintendent of Public Works Robert Goff and his crew. They completed tasks to ensure the trailers will be operational including moving furniture to the temporary location. Tentatively, the opening for the temporary location is March 9. It has been posted on social media, brochures, flyers, schools announcements, and banners both at the trailers and at the current library at 120 N Virginia Ave. The Falls Church News Press had an article with information about it as well. The Director is very pleased with the moving company, Kloke and the supervisor, Pat King who is working on the logistics.. Kloke has commented that they are impressed with the organization of the library staff.

#### **5. LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORT**

On February 12, the Library Foundation development committee organized a successful open house at the library with activities such as mini golf, raffles, and prizes. The Foundation Board will be meeting on February 25 to discuss the next steps in supporting the library. The Director remarked that both the library Board and library staff are exceptional; she thanked the Board for their dedication to the library and their support in making this renovation happen.

#### **6. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

Ms. Connelly informed the Board that on Monday February 24 Council will approve an oversight committee for the library project. It will include two Council members, two Library members, a Planning Commission member, the Library Director, City Manager Wyatt Shields, and a Community member. Council will interview citizens that are interested in being part of this oversight committee. This committee will meet monthly to review the progress of the library project, the timing, budget, etc. The library Board will be asked to appoint two members to be part of the committee as well. Councilman Dan Sze will be a part of the committee and Council will decide who the second representative will be.

The Director added that Library Project Manager Lionel Millard will present a monthly report to the Board about the library project. Ms. Connelly suggested that the Director contact the Principal of Thomas Jefferson Elementary, Paul Swanson, to give him updates to inform parents about the logistics of the library moving process. The library will be opening at 9:30am after the school buses are gone. The library will open Wednesday at 1pm before early release. Story time will happen in the mornings except for Tuesdays, which will occur in the afternoon. Staff will evaluate the schedule moving forward.

## 7. ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL REPORT (CATCH)

Since Ms. Oppenheimer's term attending this meeting is coming to a close, she asked if another Board member could replace her on it and attend these meetings as a representative when necessary. Ms. Chrystie Swiney volunteered to attend. Ms. Oppenheimer will forward her name to Corey Janicelli, Arts and Humanities Council liaison.

## 8. DISCUSSION OF ELIMINATING FINES FOR OVERDUE ITEMS

The Director informed the Board that eliminating overdue fines had become a hot topic locally in Virginia and nationwide. The Director provided the document *Removing Barriers to Access* in the Board packet. This document is specific for children's materials, but it can be applied to all overdue fines. The research found that fines are a barrier to those who need access to the library the most. In addition, fines are not an incentive to return books, in fact libraries with no fines saw an increase in circulation. Dealing with fines can become a negative interaction between patrons and staff. In addition, the administrative and staff time spent collecting fines often costs more than is collected. Nationwide several large systems have eliminated overdue fines such as Chicago and San Francisco; and in Virginia, several systems have elected to eliminate all overdue fines or pilot eliminating fines on children's materials.

The Director informed the Board that the money collected for fines is allocated in the City's general fund. The total fines collected in Fiscal Year 2010 were \$63,000. By FY2018 they were at \$34,000, and in FY2019 they were down to \$29,000. So far, in FY2020, \$13,000 has been collected and the Director doesn't expect that the total will reach \$20,000 by the end of the fiscal year. Some of the reasons for the drop in fines could be the migration to Apollo, which is the new ILS (Integrated Library System). This added Gabbie, a new 2-way texting feature, that allows patrons and staff to communicate and for patrons to renew their books. Another reason could be auto-renewal which was implemented last year. Also, all fines were set to \$0.30 per item in 2018. The Director talked to Finance Director Kiran Bawa and City Manager Wyatt Shields about eliminating fines for the library and they approved it. If this policy gets approved by the Board, Mr. Shields will include it in his FY2021 budget presentation to Council.

The Director requested a motion from the Board to support the changes in the policy; she will bring it back to the Board for its first and second reading. She recommended eliminating overdue fines for all items except ILL materials. Patrons are billed for lost materials not returned 60 days after their due date.

**Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Library Board unanimously moved to accept the Director's recommendation to proceed with developing appropriate changes to the library's fine policy and have it ready for first and second reading in March and April. The policy would go into effect in FY 2021 on July 1, 2020.**

Mr. Peterson requested an annual report on the change in the fine policy, either to improve it or make any changes. She should provide the report to the Board by early FY2022. Mr. Peterson also asked if other libraries who have eliminated overdue fines present an option to patrons to donate money to the library when returning books late. He suggested having that practice at the library. The Director will look into it.

Board Member Molly Novotny left the meeting at 7:50 pm.

## **9. CBC STUDENT LIAISON DISCUSSION**

Ms. Oppenheimer informed the Board that she had a conversation with Nancy Brandon, Sally Ekfelt, and Hal Lippman from CBC (Citizens for a Better City). She informed them that the Library Board is interested in adding some structure to the student liaison experience to help the students learn more when they participate at the Library Board meeting instead of only being a resume builder. CBC were pleased that the Library Board is interested; they mentioned that some Boards give the students projects and ideas to work with. Ms. Oppenheimer asked the Board to think about what projects these students might do related to library subjects.

Spring is the time when the students apply to CBC. They start participating with Boards and Commissions in the fall. The Director suggested that one Board member partner with each student to help them get motivated and feel encouraged. The Board discussed having two students, so they can feel more comfortable and can work together on the projects. CBC extended an invitation to any Board member who wants to be included in the interviewing process to select student liaisons.

## **10. BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA**

The Contract with Centennial has been executed and construction will start on March 16. The Director will coordinate with Project Manager Millard and Centennial on when the groundbreaking will take place. Once the construction starts, there will be periods during the day when a lane from Virginia Avenue will be affected. There will be cranes when Centennial brings the steel in and when the RTU units are placed on the roof.

Ms. Connelly suggested painting a crosswalk across Virginia Ave near the north side exit of the Liberty Barbecue parking lot to accommodate the potential lack of sidewalk on the library's side while the building is under construction, or putting up a sign directing pedestrians to another crosswalk for safety purposes. The Director will mention that to Mr. Millard.

City's Green Space Manager, Jeremy Edwards, removed some of the plants from the library and they are being distributed around the City. The Director of Communication, Susan Finarelli, will put a note about it on the City's website. The memorials that were outside the library were taken to the property yard to be stored until the construction is over.

Mr. Camp asked how the e-Resources are performing, including Kanopy. The Director mentioned that she allotted \$8,000 in the library budget for Kanopy and so far, 70 % has been spent out. She will have a meeting with a Kanopy representative to evaluate their resources; deciding if they will drop the service or if they will add some limitations to it. Alexandria library dropped their Kanopy service due to the expense. The Director is monitoring all of the e-Resources and will decide which ones should be kept.

Mr. Chet DeLong started volunteering for the library in April 1994 and began serving and expired term for the library Board in October of 1994. This will be his 26th year working with the library.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

**There being no further business, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jenny Carroll  
Library Director

Approved:

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Stephanie Oppenheimer, Chairperson

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

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