



The Board of Trustees Minutes

Regular Meeting

Date: January 20, 2021

Attendees:	<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Guests</i>
	Jeffrey Armstrong	Andrew Mangels	
	Jennifer Darling	Jana Nassif	
	Kate Maver	CJ Lynce	
	Jason Nolde	Pam Linger	
	Will Perry	Karen Hunt	
	Robert Plantz	Guy Turner	
	Elizabeth Sheehe		

The Board met via Zoom. Elizabeth Sheehe called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes

Jeff Armstrong moved to approve the minutes from the Records Commission Meeting of December 16, 2020. Bob Plantz seconded the motion. Roll call vote followed: Jeffrey Armstrong – yes, Jennifer Darling – yes, Kate Maver – yes, Jason Nolde – yes, Will Perry – yes, Bob Plantz – yes, Elizabeth Sheehe – yes.

Bob Plantz moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting of December 16, 2020. Will Perry seconded the motion. Roll call vote followed: Jeffrey Armstrong – yes, Jennifer Darling – yes, Kate Maver – yes, Jason Nolde – yes, Will Perry – yes, Bob Plantz – yes, Elizabeth Sheehe – yes.

Communications

There were no Communications delivered with the agenda. However, the Director shared two emails from patrons that were unhappy the library was still closed for browsing. He also shared he has received many comments from patrons that are appreciative of our services during this time.

Public Comments

Ms. Sheehe welcomed the staff members who may be watching on Zoom.

Administrative Reports

Manager's Report

Guy Turner, Safety and Security Manager, expressed his extreme gratitude to the Board and Administration for investing in the new camera system.

Mr. Turner reported on 2020 Security Incidents by type. There were 106 incidents; 43 of which concerned masks. Of those 43, nine were from one female. There were also 20 Disruptive Behavior incidents—four of those from the same female.

Mr. Turner reported on the theft of items from early in 2020. Earlier this month, the County Prosecutor brought serious charges against those responsible. The person will be indicted tomorrow for theft of materials across northeast Ohio.

The Assistant Director reported Mr. Turner has stepped up and helped Circulation with curbside and throughout the building as needed.

Bob Plantz asked if Mr. Turner will handle things differently in the building with the new security cameras. Mr. Turner explained you can't manage security from your office so he will still be walking the building and grounds regularly.

Kate Maver thanked Guy for handling people with sensitivity and good judgement as that is a real skill.

Ms. Sheehe thanked Guy for being with us. Mr. Turner left the meeting at 6:44 pm.

Human Resources Report

The Human Resources Report for January was delivered with the agenda.

Pam Linger, Human Resource Manager reported the EAC is planning an event around Valentines Day to lift spirits of staff at a time when spirits may be low.

Ms. Linger has sourced training from a variety of places as we are expecting to continue meeting virtually throughout 2021.

The EAC will continue to meet (virtually) on the second Wednesday but has changed the time to 1 pm.

Bob Plantz asked about staffing at this time and if we have any open positions.

CJ Lynce reported they have just finished interviews for a part time supervisor position in Circulation and hope to have someone in place in two to six weeks. There is also an open sixteen hour position they are not currently planning to fill. An Adult Services twenty-hour position was recently filled. Part time in this area is useful for flexibility.

A year and half ago we had close to 100 employees. We are now down to 80 employees. The Director explained we have consolidated positions where possible. He believes we have a great track record of right-sizing the organization. It is not about the number of people but how we deploy them.

Jason Nolde asked if there has been any feedback on the new medical insurance plan. Pam Linger responded, while there have been a few hiccups, overall response has been favorable.

Assistant Director's Report

The Assistant Director's Report for January was delivered with the agenda.

CJ Lynce, Assistant Director, reported we have seen a serious uptick in demand for computer services. With the stay-at-home advisory, we went from twelve computers to eight to limit the number of people in a room. With more demand recently, we have expanded to ten computers in a room.

The building automation system has been completed and LED emergency lights have been installed.

In December Circulation started lending out Puzzles from the Drive-Up window, a service they had planned to launch earlier in 2020 but was delayed due to COVID-19. They are being lent on an honor-system and the initial batch were from patron and staff donations. All 60 Puzzles were lent out and patrons have started to return puzzles they have finished and have also donated more puzzles to the service. Feedback has been very positive.

Youth Services has been partnering with the schools and particularly the PTA. Rebecca attends all their meetings to hear their needs and offer library services.

YS has been participating in the Storyteller Program and have recorded several chapters that they are also using for Library@11.

We are preparing for the possibility of reopening and ensuring we can do so safely for both staff and the public.

Ms. Sheehe shared that after hearing about the story stacks, she ordered several for different age groups and they were a huge success.

Financial Reports

The Financial Reports for January were delivered with the agenda.

The Fiscal Officer reported 2020 revenue was only one percent lower than 2019. Our carryover was four million dollars, so we are in a good position as we move forward.

We received refunds from the Bureau of Workers Compensation that have been helpful.

Jason Nolde asked if there is any feedback on the switchover to Ohio Digital Library.

Ms. Nassif explained there were a few instances of people having difficulty accessing the ODL on the first day. The issues were resolved in a few days.

Jane Kirkland, Collection Development and Technical Services Manager, has reported joining the ODL is a big positive and has already saved a significant amount of money for patron requests with the expanded reach of ODL. We can then redirect those savings to popular materials our patrons want.

Director's Report

Thanked the Board for their incredible support through 2020.

We are about to go live on a new initiative, The Myrna Chelko Early Literacy Program. Rich Chelko, Myrna's son, was very happy with the way we handled his donation. We wanted to pay tribute to Myrna for all she has done for this library.

The kids will participate in a reading challenge to be completed by the time they are five years old. Upon completion, they will receive a mini Suma the Puma with a branded bandana made by Elizabeth Sheehe.

The Director has looked at how other area libraries handle transparency of records. Most libraries are posting their agenda and minutes of their meetings.

The Director is working on two main projects. The landscaping in the Reading Garden is in need of a refresh. He is working with a landscape architect and hopes to have plans for the February Board Meeting. The plants have all aged out and are rough around the edges. This plan will refurbish the area.

In addition, he is working with Duane VanDyke to fix the front door area, which lets in too much cold air in the winter. Mr. VanDyke is finishing up drawings for a set of double doors for temperature control. There is hope the project would not be as costly as originally thought.

We have received over 700 responses to our on-line strategic plan survey with a fairly high completion rate. An initial observation was concern over the wait in line to drop off materials because the drop off is so close to the pick-up window. Mr. Mangels reminded the Board they will discuss the strategic plan at a meeting on Monday, January 25.

Jason Nolde commented he was glad to see he was wrong about the public survey response and he is happy to move forward with strategic planning.

Bob Plantz asked about the patron who takes public transportation from Euclid to come here and where we stand on the bus stop. The Director explained it had been put on hold for a variety of reasons, but he will reach out to RTA to get back on track. The Friends may be willing to help with the costs.

Jeff Armstrong thanked the Director for gathering the information on Board transparency. The Director commented posting the agenda and minutes is a fairly reasonable course of action. Kate Maver commented posting is the gold standard of transparency and is in favor of doing so. Also, there is no good reason not to. The Director commented we could certainly begin. Elizabeth Sheehe believes it is a good idea.

Jeff Armstrong moved to accept the Human Resource, Assistant Director, Financial, and Director's Reports. Jennifer Darling seconded the motion. Roll call vote followed: Jeffrey Armstrong – yes, Jennifer Darling – yes, Kate Maver – yes, Jason Nolde – yes, Will Perry – yes, Bob Plantz – yes, Elizabeth Sheehe – yes.

Board Reports

Board President's Report

Bob Plantz reported for the Foundation.

They have done work on a revised communications piece that holds promise.

They were fortunate to receive another substantial donation.

At the next meeting, they will work on having tangible evidence of work they have done and will be able to identify some of the tangible projects the Foundation has been involved in to use as a recruitment tool, such as funding the walk between the library and school.

Elizabeth Sheehe reported she has been in close contact with the Administration about re-opening. She was very disappointed in the extension of the stay-at-home advisory. While she certainly understands the Governor's intent—he wanted people to stop partying—she doesn't think he was thinking a quick trip to the library would be a problem. We would not be bringing people in to sit at tables. They would move through much like a grocery store—get your things and go.

The Director has looked at other libraries like Rocky River and Lakewood, which have remained open during this stay-at-home advisory.

The Director is proposing we open for browsing with no tables and chairs. We would allow people to browse and go with mandatory masks, physical distance, plexiglass and self-checks. We would reduce capacity from fifty people to forty people at any one time. The Director feels this is the right thing to do and we would not be contributing to virus spread with these precautions.

Bob Plantz shared what bothers him most is being compared to Rocky River, who is open. The Director explained we opened before Rocky River in the spring.

The Director explained the library is not considered a source of community spread. Spread is coming from not wearing a mask in a group for extended periods. The library fits more into a store category than a restaurant. There has not been a spike in Rocky River or Lakewood with those libraries open. Libraries that have been closed are beginning to open for computer use.

With the precautions of mandatory masks and plexiglass in place and following our precautions, we are protecting the staff.

Bob Plantz thinks opening is the right thing to do.

Kate Maver feels we know more now than in March. She is hesitant because of the new strains which are easier to catch—but feels it is probably okay to open.

Jennifer Darling asked if the forty people includes staff. The Director explained it does not but does include computer lab patrons. This does drive down the number of people directly in the library because they are in their own wing.

Jennifer Darling asked if Rocky River and Lakewood have a pickup window. The Director believes they do. She agrees with opening.

Elizabeth Sheehe thinks the number in the building should be forty people, plus the number in the computer lab.

Jeff Armstrong felt he needed to express some dissent. He believes we should not go against the advisory and we should not make judgements against the Health Department.

Will Perry asked if the process of counting of people is automated and what happens if you are the next person to get in but we are at the reduced capacity. The Director explained the system is automated and updated in real time. If we were to get close to the limit, we would be notified and someone would go to the front doors.

Will Perry believes more discussion is required based on Jeff Armstrong's comments. The Board made a recommendation based on a set of facts that have not changed. We are also getting closer to a vaccine so what would we lose by continuing with drive-up window and computer services only. Also, staff would be exposed to a bunch of people, adding to their risk with new strains that are smaller and easier to contract.

The Director made it clear it is only an advisory and asked what is essential? Given the precautions in place, allowing people to use the building they are paying for is the same as going to other businesses.

Will Perry asked when the Director is proposing we open. The Director explained our plan would be to open Friday and staff have been notified this is a possibility.

Elizabeth Sheehe noted this is an administrative call that does not require a vote, but the administration was looking for input. The Director would like everyone on the same page but acknowledged that may not be possible.

Jennifer Darling appreciates Mr. Armstrong's concerns but based on her use of the library, feels like the risk is low and that the library is an essential service. She understands the concerns raised but thinks we should open for browsing. Ms. Darling asked about staff concerns. The Director explained he knows we have staff that think we should open but also believes there are just as many that think we should not. He likes to think the staff has trust in the administration and Board's decisions.

CJ Lynce commented he thinks staff feel strongly at both ends but with the precautions in place, they feel safe.

Bob Plantz asked Pam Linger what the policy is for employees who do not feel they are safe in the building with it open. The Director explained if we open, staff can choose to report to work, use personal time or remain unpaid.

Jason Nolde asked if library workers were considered part of Ohio's Phase 1B to receive the vaccine, in line with teachers k-12. The Director does not believe so but will check with OLC.

Will Perry commented it is obvious that the actual risk is negligible and what we are really talking about is perception. He does not know but given no change in the Department of Health advisory, believes erring on the side of caution and safety makes sense; maybe this is not the time to open the building for browsing and there is the option for drive up.

The Director stated we should not be deciding for people how they can use their public libraries that they pay for given the way people interact at other places.

Kate Maver commented she can see it both ways. Her main concern is staff because they have the most exposure to a viral load. People do all these other things and we are not allowing them to browse but it is a public health crisis.

Elizabeth Sheehe shared she is in favor of opening given every possible precaution has been implemented to protect both staff and the public. She thinks sooner is better since we have to open eventually.

Bob Plantz asked how it would be announced to the public.

The Director explained we would provide the opportunity for opening the doors and allowing people to enter in a soft opening.

Will Perry commented the Rec Center has been opened most of this time.

Elizabeth Sheehe commented we could continue with on-line programming but open only for browsing.

New Business

Add Section 8: Information Security Policy to the Public Policy and Procedures Manual

The Fiscal Officer explained the library's credit card processor changed the vendor it uses for PCI Compliance. The new company has different requirements for compliance, one of which requires the library to have an Information Security Policy in place that states what our PCI network can be used for. This policy ensures we meet this requirement and we also think it's a good policy to have in place.

Bob Plantz moved to add Section 8 Information Security Policy to the Public Policy and Procedures Manual. Will Perry seconded the motion. Roll call vote followed: Jeffrey Armstrong – yes, Jennifer Darling – yes, Kate Maver - yes, Jason Nolde – yes, Will Perry – yes, Bob Plantz – yes, Elizabeth Sheehe – yes.

Elizabeth Sheehe asked if it was the Board's pleasure to vote on reopening for browsing?

The Director commented it is a tricky issue and people feel strongly on both sides. He wants to make sure he is adhering to the wishes of the Board and would like the Board's input. What the administration is looking at very carefully are falling numbers at the end of the day.

CJ Lynce commented the numbers are continuing to fall after the Holidays. He monitors the stats daily along with what is issued by the county and state.

Jeff Armstrong thinks there is value in holding a vote.

Stay at Home Advisory

Jeff Armstrong moved to remain closed in line with the County Board of Health through the next Board meeting or as the County Board would advise. Bob Plantz seconded the motion.

Jeff Armstrong wanted to be clear the Advisory encourages Cuyahoga County residents to stay home to the greatest extent possible due to the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the county. Residents are advised to only leave their home to go to work or school, or for essential needs such as seeking medical care, purchasing essential items from a grocery store or pharmacy, picking up prepared food, or receiving deliveries.

Roll call vote followed: Jeffrey Armstrong – yes, Jennifer Darling – no, Kate Maver - yes, Jason Nolde – no, Will Perry – no, Bob Plantz – no, Elizabeth Sheehe – no.

Jana Nassif reported the motion does not pass.

Elizabeth Sheehe thanked the Board and looks forward to a safe opening.

The Director thanked the Board for their thoughtful deliberation on the matter.

The Director reported the upcoming committee meeting to discuss strategic planning will be set up as a hybrid meeting in the Porter Room.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Recorded by: Karen Hunt, WPPL Sr. Administrative Associate

Attested by:

Elizabeth Sheehe, WPPL Board President

Jason Nolde, WPPL Board Secretary