

**Pamunkey Regional Library
Board of Trustees Special Meeting
November 8, 2023 – 9am**

The Pamunkey Regional Library (PRL) Board of Trustees (BOT) met on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at the Ashland Branch Library.

Attendees

Trustees:

Goochland County: Barb Young

Hanover County: Bob Johnson, Joe O'Connor, Christy Schumacher

King and Queen County: Tricia Simpkins

King William County: John Edwards, Mary Shipman

Trustees unable to attend:

Goochland County: Barbara Slone

Hanover County: Ryan Martin

Guests:

Jim Taylor – Hanover County, Deputy County Administrator

Dennis Walter – Hanover County, County Attorney

Library Staff:

Tom Shepley - PRL Director

Sherida Bradby – PRL Deputy Director

Jamie Stoops – PRL Deputy Director

Jeff Huff – Collection Strategy Librarian

1. Call to Order/ Welcome

Chair B. Young called the meeting to order and stated that the purpose for this special meeting is to determine the items that need to be part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PRL and King & Queen County, regarding their departure from the library system.

2. Discussion of Departure of King and Queen County from the Pamunkey Regional Library

B. Young created a document called “LIST OF ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PRL AND KING AND QUEEN COUNTY FOR K&Q DEPARTURE FROM PRL”, which was sent to all PRL Board Members prior to the meeting. This list of items is a draft proposal and was reviewed extensively throughout the meeting.

D. Walter stated that localities have the option to leave the regional library system with two years' notice. K&Q asked earlier this year to be released immediately, but the other localities did not agree to that. The two-year clock began with K&Q sending the letter indicating their desire to leave. There is an unwritten understanding that as of July 1, 2024, a new regional agreement will be in place between the remaining three localities, effectively signaling the time that K&Q will leave the system. The PRL Library Board today is discussing the closure of a branch in K&Q.

T. Shepley highlights that some of the key pieces of information are missing in this process. We have a verbal agreement that K&Q will fund their quarterly amounts and that they will remain a member until June 30, 2024, but we don't have concrete numbers from them. Recently T. Shepley met with the newly hired K&Q Tourism official, who asked that the K&Q branch remain open until December 31, 2023. PRL will need time to make this shift happen - either the branch needs to close earlier (i.e. December 1) to allow time for this or K&Q needs to fully fund into January for a period of shutdown to occur. K&Q has publicly said they do want to shift the financial burden of the branch closing on to other localities.

All PRL Staff will be retained after the K&Q closure if desired, assigned to other PRL locations.

B. Young walked through point 3. Overall timeline for the closure:

- i. Close the physical K&Q Branch Library on Dec. 1, 2023, so that PRL staff has time to assist with the physical move while still employed at K&Q branch until Dec. 31.
- ii. Complete the move of all PRL owned items by Dec. 20, 2023, to not infringe on holidays.
- iii. K&Q change labeling on any PRL items purchased or left in January 2024.
- iv. K&Q Community Library would like to open by February 1, 2024.
- v. K&Q citizens would continue to have use of other PRL libraries until June 30, 2024.
- vi. Closeout of all PRL library cards held by K&Q citizens on June 30, 2024.
- vii. All ties severed between King and Queen County and PRL – June 30, 2024.

T. Shepley addressed point 7. Reciprocal Agreement. Most services presently received by K&Q citizens are received outside of their county's branch. The proposal is to institute a period of 18 months, from July 1, 2024, to December 31, 2025, when K&Q citizens are not eligible to receive services from PRL. PRL's longstanding policy is that library usage is automatically reciprocated with any other library in Virginia. Other models exist for public libraries where reciprocation is conducted on a contractual basis or out of area services are not provided. After 18 months, K&Q citizens would be eligible again to use PRL services when their community library is up and running.

PRL's present services fee for out of service area policy is \$25 annually. This option would not be available to K&Q citizens in the 18-month period.

Regarding point 4. Ownership of Items at the PRL Branch, the Library's Collection is the more significant workload which could determine a closing date of December 1 or December 31. K&Q has not indicated whether they are interested in purchasing the collection but are expecting PRL to propose a price.

K&Q owns desks, chairs, tables, and bookshelves. K&Q does not have an inventory of items purchased around 2012 in the renovation, but general furnishings are usually purchased by the county.

PRL owns:

- i. Collection of books, videos, etc.
- ii. All IT equipment and licensing on the IT equipment – IT equipment needs to stay with PRL because of the licensing. PRL can use these items as backup for other branches.
- iii. All magazine and newspaper subscriptions – All annual subscriptions for K&Q were purchased in September/October 2023.
- iv. Presentation equipment for meeting room
- v. Tables in meeting room
- vi. Licensed software
- vii. All office supplies

Regarding the Collection, there are approximately 8,700 items housed at the K&Q branch. Average book price is \$23, as majority are hardback items. K&Q has asked for an inventory with an assessment of the age of the items. PRL manages collection based on usage. Estimated value of collection is \$195,000. If PRL takes the collection, K&Q will have nothing on the shelf for the start of their library and building a collection will be expensive.

J. Edwards used the \$195,000 estimate of collection value. K&Q represents 5% of PRL's budget. Let's be generous and offer K&Q 10% off the collection value – crediting what K&Q has put into it vs. what the other localities have put into it. PRL will throw in the subscriptions until they run out. Need to be conscious that whatever standard we set for K&Q would need to be used for other regional entities if they would decide to withdraw from the library system.

Consensus that a timeline needs to be set for K&Q to respond to the collection offer to continue moving forward in the tight timeline. The timeline is also contingent on whether K&Q purchases the collection or not.

If K&Q does not purchase the collection, PRL would have to pack and process books and decide if there is space in another branch for an item or if it would be handed over to a surplus vendor to

sell on the second hand market/ dispose of/recycle. The new Montpelier and West Point branches will not have additional capacity for materials.

Regarding point 6. PRL K&Q Staff after the close of the PRL K&Q Branch

- a. PRL K&Q staff will be offered other positions within the PRL network. K&Q Branch Manager is already working at and will be able to move into the open position at the Upper King William branch. PRL is trying to retain anyone who wishes to stay. K&Q employs 4 Associates, but there is only one open Associate position at the UKW branch. Not everyone is going to receive their preferred branch of choice from the beginning, but the hope is within 6 months to a year those changes will happen organically.
- b. If PRL K&Q staff do not get another job, unemployment benefits will be paid by K&Q. PRL would be billed for this and would need to be reimbursed by K&Q.
- c. PRL K&Q staff can be hired after Dec. 31, 2023, by K&Q. One employee has indicated a desire to stay at K&Q. T. Shepley would prefer that K&Q operate their own hiring process, rather than addressing this issue in the MOU.

Regarding point 7. Reciprocal Agreement

- a. From Jan. 2, 2024 – June 30, 2024, K&Q citizens may use other PRL Branch libraries, as they are still members of PRL.
- b. All PRL library card held by K&Q citizens will be disabled on July 1, 2024.
- c. No citizens of K&Q may use any of the other PRL Branch libraries from July 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025.
- d. After December 31, 2025, if K&Q has a community library which is recognized by the State of Virginia, the citizens can have use of PRL through the reciprocal agreement.

T. Shepley describes the separation of K&Q from PRL as a divorce. A majority of services that PRL provides K&Q citizens are delivered at UKW and West Point branches, due to the fact that K&Q is approximately 67 miles long. If individual memberships are offered, then the county has shifted the cost on to their citizens and PRL continues to offer K&Q a good benefit without having to pay for membership in PRL. The part of the population that can afford to pay this amount will continue to receive services.

King William representatives agree with the 18-month block on K&Q citizens using the PRL system and not offering the \$25 annual option. Circulation in UKW and WP will likely drop for a period. Assuming K&Q has a successful library in January 2026, citizens will be able to return to using the PRL system. K&Q desires to keep the lowest tax rates in the region and has calculated that they can do that by not providing certain services. Whatever we are deciding here is setting a precedent for the future.

T. Shepley clarifies that K&Q can use materials on the library shelves during the 18 month pause, but they will not be able to check it out. This moratorium also allows the K&Q Community Library to build their customer base and establish their services, in a timeframe when PRL is not competing for their customers.

Public libraries have different reciprocal service agreement policies. PRL might want to reevaluate their policy on this in the future.

The PRL Board is working towards closure of the K&Q library branch as requested on December 31, 2023. If they decide to purchase the collection, then we can work with that date. If they decide not to purchase the collection, then we will need to close earlier to facilitate a move. Any expenses incurred by PRL after the close of the branch but related to K&Q will need to be reimbursed to PRL.

D. Walter reminds the board that K&Q has asked PRL to close the branch, but there is no requirement to accede to their terms. It might be beneficial to develop more than one decision tree. Other jurisdictions need to understand the financial side.

J. Taylor has been involved in discussions where the other localities, including Hanover, agree with K&Q leaving the regional entity on June 30, 2024. At a minimum we would expect K&Q to pay their portion of the PRL Shared Services. It makes sense to provide K&Q with a sliding scale of dates based on their decision regarding purchasing the collection. PRL should direct K&Q to understand what this transition will look like. The value of materials should be fair and reasonable, and it would be helpful to have more of K&Q's perspective. He would suggest encouraging K&Q to offer an amount for the collection, so that the Library Board is in a position to respond to an offer.

B. Young walked the Board through the following three sections.

Review of PRL Responsibilities:

- Make a comprehensive list of all we are giving them and the monetary value of each item or collection of items.
- Physical movement of PRL items.
- If K&Q does not purchase the collection, PRL will need time to box and move it. K&Q would need to finance the move.
- Items PRL will offer to leave at no cost to K&Q:
 - o Newspaper and magazine year-long subscriptions
 - o The Ricoh copier lease runs through 8/31/2025 and could be transferred to K&Q to lease.
 - o K&Q staff have indicated that they would like to retain the PRL Branch phone number; it seems that this should be possible.
 - o K&Q staff may be taking over the PRL fiber connection for the Branch; this transition will need to be worked out.

Review of King and Queen Responsibilities:

- Payment of Quarterly Installments on time. D. Walter clarifies that it is the localities who would be responsible for addressing any payments that are not made by a county.
- Pay for any moving expenses.
- Pay for any unemployment of current PRL K&Q Branch staff.
- Changing the PRL ownership and labeling of materials on any items given or purchased by K&Q from PRL. K&Q will need to add the brand of the new K&Q Community Library.
- Create K&Q library cards and a system for patrons to use the items in the new K&Q Community Library.

Review of Other Items Related to the Closeout

1. K&Q has stated that it is not their intention to create any burden to the other partners in the regional library. To satisfy this, PRL intends to use the current PRL branch staff at K&Q Branch to pack library property and move as many items from the library as possible prior to Dec. 31. PRL will likely need to hire commercial movers to do some of this work.
2. Current PRL K&Q staff status was addressed earlier.
3. Reason given for K&Q leaving PRL is that they do not have the funds needed to stay. K&Q has hired a new Director of Community Programming and Tourism who started on Oct. 9, 2023, to oversee the new K&Q Community Library. The county is also hiring an assistant for her.
4. We have already discussed the question as to whether we have permission from the other three counties in PRL.

Regarding point 1. Budget

T. Shepley stated that PRL's budget request for K&Q for FY2024 was \$236,540. K&Q did not fully fund this request and started going in the direction of withdrawing from PRL. K&Q budgeted \$227,135 with a line that says public library, not PRL. Most likely K&Q wants to use this money to start their new system, as well as their involvement in PRL. Proposed payments of \$59,135 for 1st and 2nd quarters when the K&Q branch is open, and \$23,421 for 3rd and 4th for Shared Services only. K&Q has paid the first quarter payment, and it is expected they will pay the second quarter payment. These payments do not include moving expenses, unemployment, cost of collection, copier, etc.

K&Q Administrator, Ms. Seay, has indicated that she might have opportunity to obtain more funding to pay for the collection.

PRL Board and Staff are prepared to work towards closure of the K&Q library branch as requested on December 31, 2023.

J. Edwards suggests that he accompany T. Shepley to meet with the K&Q representatives in order to honor K&Q's request to close their branch on December 31, 2023. They will work to agree on an MOU to bring back to the Library Board at the December regular meeting, including negotiations on a collection price close to \$195,000 minus 10%, if they want to purchase it.

D. Walter suggests calling another special meeting in November to approve a MOU.

MOTION: J. Edwards and T. Simpkins will accompany T. Shepley to meet with Ms. Seay (K&Q County Administrator) to draft a Memorandum of Understanding reflective of the Board's discussions today.

B. Johnson moved the above motion. J. O'Connor seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees.

3. Adjournment

C. Schumacher praised the staff at the Atlee Library for their assistance during Election Day yesterday and it was great to see people checking out the library after voting. The Atlee Branch Manager confirmed that over 2000 people entered the Atlee Library throughout the day.

J. O'Connor thanked everyone for attending and making the meeting possible today.

The meeting was adjourned unanimously after a motion from J. Edwards, and a second from B. Johnson.

Respectfully submitted,

Christy Schumacher
PRL Board of Trustees' Secretary