

**Pamunkey Regional Library
Planning and Operations Committee Meeting
Finance Committee Meeting
March 10, 2021**

The Pamunkey Regional Library (PRL) Planning and Operations Committee met on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at the Ashland Branch Library.

This meeting segwayed into the Finance Committee Meeting around 11:00 a.m.

Attendees

Attending were Trustees:

Lisa Newman, Ron Hachey, Julie May and Mike Smith - Hanover County.

Unable to attend were Trustees:

Barbara Young - Goochland County and
David Litchfield- King and Queen County.

Library staff present included:

Tom Shepley - Library Director.

Call to Order

Chair L. Newman called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

The Board members reviewed the proposed agenda and R. Hachey asked that they discuss the Board approved "Staff Realignment Plan" now that some time has passed to ensure that it was still meeting PRL's needs.

Citizen's Time

There were no citizens present at the meeting.

Discussion of PRL's Long Range Plan

T. Shepley projected the survey instrument on the overhead screen that will be used by library patrons to let us know what services they benefit from and want the library system to offer. Library Board members and library staff provided input to a draft of this survey and it is now almost in its final form.

Once completed, it will be emailed to PRL patrons that have provided the library with their email addresses and it will be on the PRL website in an attempt to gather as much input as possible.

Administrative Facility Update

T. Shepley is finalizing the lease arrangements for the new administrative staff offices at the Clocktower Building in Mechanicsville. The lease rate will be around \$14.00 per square foot and the building renovation costs are currently estimated at around \$255,000.

T. Shepley and the building owner’s representatives will engage in a conference call this afternoon to see if any value engineering products/changes can lower the renovations costs.

If all goes according to plan, it is anticipated that the administrative staff could be in the new offices this coming June or July.

New Montpelier Library Update

As T. Shepley previously announced to the Board, there are 2 possible locations for the new joint library/parks and recreation building on the same county-owned property. The initial location was on an existing ballfield and the alternative location is nearby and fronts along the Route 33 portion of the property.

The final location still needs to be determined by the Hanover County Board of Supervisor members and most notably by the 2 Board members that serve residents in the Montpelier area.

COVID-19 Update

T. Shepley noted that library staff are being vaccinated against COVID-19 and that some staff are working at the Hanover County/Virginia Health Department vaccination clinic in Ashland.

Staffing Update

T. Shepley noted that current library vacancies are being advertised.

The Committee members then had a lengthy discussion about how the newly enacted minimum wage increases and incremental implementation schedule as adopted by the Virginia General Assembly will affect the PRL system.

It was noted that our supporting jurisdictions have not provided any additional money to implement "benchmarking" increases or the new paraprofessional positions that are part of the library's adopted "Staff Realignment Plan."

Board Trustee Julie May arrived to participate in the meeting.

A summary of additional comments included the following:

- The library has around 100 employees that the increasing minimum wage would affect and it would cost the library around an additional \$400,000 per year to get the current employees to the \$15.00 per hour level.
- It was mentioned that the hours of operations at the branches could be reviewed - as we come out of the pandemic - to see if adjustments to the hours could help with our increasing wage costs.
- T. Shepley noted that the idea of labor unions has been discussed by state elected officials and if allowed, this could have considerable impacts for library operations.

M. Smith arrived to participate in our deliberations.

The ongoing discussion included the following points of interest:

- T. Shepley noted that 2 of the Supervising Librarians could be considered as Deputy Library Directors based on their current roles and responsibilities within the system.
- M. Smith noted that the cost increases to fund the needed changes could initially be funded jointly by new money from the 4 supporting jurisdictions as well as the library's Reserve Fund.
- M. Smith suggested that current employee's length of service could be used as a factor to boost their wages to help alleviate some of the wage compression issues that will result when implementing the mandated minimum wage increases.
- A budget plan dealing with staff compensation issues will need to be developed by October 2021 in order to include increases in the FY 2023 budget requests submitted to our 4 supporting jurisdictions.
- J. May expressed the need to review what is happening in the market to assist us in our compensation decisions especially in regards to Branch Manager salaries which appear to her to be too low.
- M. Smith expressed the need to have figures in place by October 2021 including future year-by-year calculations as we attempt to implement the necessary increases.

- J. May noted that PRL may want to consider giving part-time employees a stipend that could be used by them to purchase health insurance.
- T. Shepley noted that when the "Staff Realignment Plan" was adopted, the cost to implement the changes would increase the library's annual operating costs by around \$831,000.
- T. Shepley noted that he plans to implement the benchmarking increases this June that were put on hold last June. Then, the 2.5% to 3% raises would go into effect for all library employees starting July 1, 2021.
- M. Smith noted that the \$400,000 noted earlier to raise wages to meet the incremental increases in the minimum wage enacted by the Virginia General Assembly would increase the overall PRL budget by around 10%.

A quick review of items discussed earlier during the Planning/Operations Committee portion of the meeting included the following:

- The final decision for the placement of the new Montpelier Library building on the 2 available locations still needs to be determined by the County's elected officials.
- T. Shepley will be talking with the representatives of the Clocktower Building to finalize the lease agreement this afternoon and the expected cost will be around \$14.00 per square foot.
- It is anticipated that the administrative offices will be in the new offices around July 2021 if all goes according to plan.

J. May thanked T. Shepley for his good work negotiating a favorable lease agreement for the new PRL offices.

Adjournment

Having completed their business, the meetings were adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Hachey - Member
PRL Board of Trustees'