

**Pamunkey Regional Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 24, 2021**

The Pamunkey Regional Library (PRL) Board of Trustees met at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at the Atlee Branch Library.

Attendees

Attending were Trustees:

Ron Hachey, Julie May and Lisa Newman – Hanover County

Mary Montague Sikes and Mary Shipman – King William County.

Unable to attend were Trustees:

David Litchfield – King and Queen County,

Mike Smith – Hanover County and

Barbara Young – Goochland County.

Library staff present included:

Tom Shepley – PRL Director.

Call to Order

Chair R. Hachey called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Recognizing some unavoidable absences from the Board of Trustees, Chair R. Hachey acknowledged that the Board would not be able to take any official action on the agenda items, but the members could discuss and provide valuable input on the numerous agenda items.

Consideration of Agenda Amendments

No amendments to the agenda as presented were made.

Citizens' Time

There were no citizens present at this meeting.

Consent Agenda

Board members were invited to discuss the following consent agenda items:

1. the Minutes of the February 2021 Board Meeting,
2. the February 2021 Financial Report,

3. the February 2021 Warrants and
4. the Minutes of the March 10th Planning/Operations and Finance Committee Meetings.

Chair R. Hachey asked Director T. Shepley if there was a problem with the quarterly payments from King and Queen County, as it lagged behind at the end of February 2021. T. Shepley noted that a simple reminder had solved the problem and that the county was no longer in arrears.

J. May inquired about the source of the "Expenditure Refund" listed in the Income section. T. Shepley explained that public library telephone and Internet utility costs are subsidized by a tax/fee that is charged to all phone and Internet subscribers. He went on to say that he manages the PRL telephone and Internet contracts with the guidance of a Virginia library consultant (with statewide expertise) and applies for refunds which are returned to the PRL after processing by the telephone and Internet provider(s).

As noted above, no official action could be taken to approve the consent items at this time due to a lack of a quorum.

Old Business

Long Range Plan Update

The PRL Long-Range Plan will be updated this spring - in May and June. The survey organization, *OrangeBoy*, is working with library staff to survey the PRL library users with an on-line instrument that will be available by the end of March 2021. Results will be tabulated and analyzed to help develop the 2021 Long Range Plan for the Pamunkey Regional Library.

Administrative Center Update

T. Shepley reported that he has received a 33-page proposed lease agreement for the Clocktower offices that will be used for PRL's administrative staff and services from the *Cushman & Wakefield Thalhimer* property management team. He has forwarded a copy of the lease agreement to the Hanover County attorney for review and comments.

T. Shepley pointed out that the lease agreement will need to be revised to include the proper wording for the building renovations that the building owner will contract to have done, but which will be paid for by the PRL.

Montpelier Branch Library Update

The planned new branch library in Montpelier is on hold until the Hanover County Board of Supervisors reaches an agreement on a building location. In response to a question about the expiration date for the current lease for the present library, T. Shepley stated that the current lease ends in December 2021 and the lease will need to be extended in order to accommodate the delay with the design/building process.

New Business

CARES Act Funded Projects

T. Shepley updated the Board on two federally funded CARES Act grants. The smaller of the two grants amounted to \$7,000, which was awarded to the PRL by the Library of Virginia, for the branch serving the citizens of King and Queen County. The funds have been designated for new content materials for the King and Queen Branch Library, which will be purchased before the end of June 2021.

The second grant was awarded by Hanover County to the PRL and totaled \$147,000. These funds have been used to purchase storage lockers for contactless pickup of library materials by patrons, hotspot devices to broaden the availability of PRL's Wi-fi services, additional content materials to enhance on-line learning by school age children as well as the purchase of additional Personal Protection Equipment to help promote patron and staff safety.

Approximately \$100,000 of the grant funds noted above were used to pay for the X-11 interactive kiosks which have been installed and are nearly fully operational at each of the library branches. Because of the generous grants, PRL was able to purchase an additional two units for the Mechanicsville Branch Library and two for the Ashland Branch Library.

All of the CARE Act grant funded projects will be completed by June 30, 2021.

Post-pandemic Operations

Chair R. Hachey led a discussion about planning for PRL operations once the pandemic restrictions begin to lift.

The Board members discussed the possibility of revising the post-pandemic operating hours to something less than the 60 hours per week that was normal for some branches before the pandemic lockdowns and safety policies.

M. Shipman described the frequent use of the Upper King William Library by students and their tutors working together and using the Internet connections. She went on to say that the library is also used by career and project coaches meeting with clients. M. M. Sikes agreed with her observations and comments since they also pertained to the West Point Branch Library.

The operating hours discussion was coupled with the need to increase minimum wages for some staff as per the recently passed VA Statute 40.1; 2020. These wage increases will require new funds for the payroll in the next three fiscal years and there will be other payroll funds needed to decompress the salaries of some staff positions. It was noted that there should be an extra wage consideration given for staff for their longevity, seniority and experience.

T. Shepley noted that the Fair Labor Standards Act put a floor for salary levels last year for full-time employees exempt for overtime pay that had a fiscal impact on the PRL.

A summary of related comments included the following:

1. Benchmark raises for Library staff are scheduled for June 15th.
2. Merit raises for staff will be paid beginning in July 2021.
3. PRL has a plan to bring more of the part-time employees to full-time employees. The current PRL workforce consists of about 65% part-time workers.
4. T. Shepley will present a recommendation to the Board about adding back more operating hours at our next meeting.
5. T. Shepley noted that many PRL staff will be fully vaccinated by mid-April.
6. It was stated that optimizing both operating hours and payroll management matters may help to identify new opportunities.
7. T. Shepley reminded Trustees that it can be difficult to bring patrons back into the branches when operating hours are extended since habits of library visitors and awareness of schedule changes are slow to develop.
8. It was mentioned that other library systems that have installed new external lockers are not seeing strong locker usage at this time.
9. In response to a question from R. Hachey about FY 2022 funding from the four Counties served by PRL, T. Shepley noted that Goochland County plans to bring their budget to a vote in April and that he hasn't heard any news about lowering funding below FY 2021 levels.

PRL Board Vacancies

Chair R. Hachey noted that three of our current Trustees have terms expiring at the end of June 2021 which include:

1. Lisa Newman of Hanover County who has served her two full terms.
2. Mary Montague Sikes of King William County who is finishing her first four-year term.
3. David Litchfield of King and Queen County who is coming to the end of the term begun by Gwynn Litchfield.

It was also noted that there is a vacant Trustee position representing King and Queen County that Joy Harvey filled through the autumn of 2020 as well as a vacancy from Goochland County since Linda Moore needed to resign.

It was stressed the importance of having these positions filled by capable and willing volunteers in order to conduct library business in the approaching Fiscal Year.

Library Director's Report

Director Shepley touched upon the topic of Diversity, mentioning the widespread Black Lives Matter movement, plus the violence and disrespect being shown toward Asian Americans. He went on to say that he attended a Richmond Forum presentation recently

about discrimination and its large impact on populations and he recently participated in an on-line Equity program run by the Library of Virginia for Library Directors.

L. Newman mentioned a church that is providing a weekly program discussing the diversity/inclusiveness issues.

Questions to consider included the following:

1. Should the PRL provide opportunities for thoughtful, peaceful discussions about diversity and inclusion at its branches?
2. Should the PRL Board of Trustees have more diversity among its members?
3. Is diversity seen as a goal by our County leaders or our citizens for the library?

These questions will be the basis for on-going discussions by Board members and library staff as we move forward.

Adjournment

Having concluded their business, Chair R. Hachey adjourned the meeting at 11:20

a.m. Respectfully co-submitted,

Julie A. May

Ron Hachey