

Staunton Public Library
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
August 19, 2021

Call to Order, Attendance, and Presiding Officer's Remarks:

The meeting, held at Staunton Public library, was called to order at 4:30 pm by Josh.

Roll was called:

Board Members Present – Randolph Bertin, Virginia Trovato, Josh Howard, Cass Cannon, Mark Peterson

Others Present – Library Director Sarah Skrobis, Friends of Staunton Library representative Kennon Bowen, City Council Liaison Steve Claffey

Absent – None

A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes:

Virginia made a motion to approve the minutes of the 17 June Meeting, which was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Talking Book Center report

Virginia presented an update on the TBC, highlighting the following items:

- Planning continues for the October 23 eighties-themed 5k fun run, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the TBC. They are looking for volunteers!
- Reader advisor Shannon Meyer resigned for a move. A new employee, Sarah White, is starting at month end.
- Three new board members have been appointed and a new slate of officers elected.

Friends of Staunton Public Library report

Kennon provided an update on the Friends, highlighting the following items:

- There was no meeting in July.
- The book sale will take place Oct 12 – 15 at the Gypsy Hill park gym. So many books have been collected – filling two storage units, some overflow space at the library, and a private garage – they are not accepting any more material at this time.

Director's Report

Sarah recapped the past month's activities at the library:

General

- The library is hiring a 10 hr/week page position (to replace a sudden departure).
- Technology specialist Kayla Payne has resigned to take another job (formerly vacated by Josh Howard!). The position has already been posted and a hire will be made as soon as possible.
- There was a mechanical systems emergency with a leaking ceiling, due to the backup of an HVAC drain line of a second floor unit. Federal funding for libraries passing could be a huge help in upgrading our systems.
- Due to increasing spread of the Covid-19 Delta variant, it isn't clear what the fall is going to look like in terms of service. Mask mandates are going back up on a local level, but operations have not been curtailed yet, at least in our area.
- Longer hours and more space allows patrons to spread out, but the library is also promoting curbside service which has been declining rapidly.
- Indoor programming is still on hold; outdoor programs will continue as weather permits.
- Meeting rooms will not be opened in the near term.
- The library is not expanding or contracting, but maintaining current services.
- An American Rescue Plan Act grant funding request has been completed (pro forma). The library would be looking to use funds received for computer hardware and software upgrades. We currently have four public computers plus chromebooks.
- Circulation data was presented and a comparison with prior years. Digital checkouts, hold requests, and (on-line) program attendance are way up, everything else is down. Registered card holders continue to increase.
- Collecting Library "success" is not yet on the front burner.

Additional Q&A regarding Library:

Virginia: Can library provide "virtual" meeting space? Sarah: We don't have a zoom subscription, though the Friends of SPL does so that might potentially be an option to consider.

Steve: How many computers were requested in the grant application? Sarah: 11 public computers, budgeted about \$1200 per setup. Some other peripherals (printer, etc.) are also needed.

Steve: Are there other physical infrastructure needs? Sarah: I've talked with Leslie Beauregard about some of our infrastructure issues: flooding issues, plaster bubbling, cabling, electric. It would be great to have some additional "infrastructure" to go along with new computers.

New Business

1) A Remote Member Participation Policy document was circulated, with language adopted from the planning commission, which follows state guidelines.

Virginia: What if a member of the public wants to attend virtually? Sarah: We don't have this option (technologically). Josh: members of the public can always contact any of us to lodge a comment. Virginia: Specificity of nature of "personal issue" seems intrusive. Steve: From a city side, it is a pretty gray area. This is the first bit of legalese. The city is working through these issues, trying to expand service, but it is a slow process. Sarah: Comments can come to me or Robin Wallace or John Blair. Steve: other boards are having to address these issues as well. Josh: If we agree to follow this document, it is just saying that we agree to follow the Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3). Cass: This seems to be forcing the issue in a way that is inconvenient. Sarah: I will act as primary contact point. Please send me your comments and questions by Monday at 5 pm (23 August). *Action on this item was tabled until next month, pending clarification.*

2) Request for Review (Reconsideration of library materials):

Sarah: libraries all buy things that some patrons don't agree with or find offensive and they want removed. This is an updated procedure document for the Staunton Public Library.

Cass: Have we received such requests in the past? Sarah: I have a folder of letters.

Cass: Is it normal for the advisory board to be the body for appeals. Sarah: Yes. Josh: This would happen about a dozen times a year in my library experience.

Mark: Has this come up regarding digital material? Sarah: Not yet, but it is in the procedure.

Virginia: Do requests automatically go to this Board? Josh: I think our Board should definitely address any appeals as we represent the community. Suggested language: board will be given at least 30 days to review and the matter can be taken up at the subsequent Board meeting.

Virginia moved to adopt the Request for Review Procedure, with the discussed modification to step 6 of having a 30 day review by the Advisory Board on appeal. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Programming Policy and Policy on Selection of Materials:

Sarah introduced the programming policy and the policy on selection of materials so that there would be an opportunity for board review and consideration for adoption at our next meeting.

No other new business was presented.

Adjournment:

Josh moved to adjourn the meeting, which concluded at 5:25 PM.

The next Library Board meeting is scheduled for 16 September at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Randolph Bertin