

Staunton Public Library
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
November 19, 2020

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

The meeting, held via teleconference, was called to order at 4:30 pm by Josh Howard.
Roll was called:

Present – board members Josh Howard, Cass Cannon, Mark Peterson, Virginia Trovato, Randolph Bertin, Library Director Sarah Skrobis, City Council Liaison Steve Claffey

Josh Howard recited the City's "Presiding Officer's Introduction".

Approval of Minutes:

Randolph Bertin made a motion to approve the minutes of the 15 October Meeting, which was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Talking Book Center report:

Virginia provided an update on the TBC as follows:

- TBC met on 22 October.
- Financials reported, including donations.
- An audit was recommended and approved.
- A Christmas drawing was suggested for fundraising.
- Nov/Dec meetings to be combined.

Sarah added that Shannon Meyer had been brought on board as a new hire.

Friends of Staunton Public Library report:

Sarah Skrobis provided an update on the Friends of Staunton Public Library, noting that they have resumed activities including holding their annual meeting, organizing lunch music and holding a book sale at the rec center, the latter raising several thousand dollars.

Director's Report:

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

General

- Month over month report showed an increase in circulation and computer use, though the numbers are down considerably from prior year, due to ongoing pandemic.
- Activity has been fairly steady, but quiet.
- Computers are getting use.

- Library continues to push curbside services as a safe option for checking out materials.
- Working with Valley Libraries on a radio show.
- A food drive is being planned. This used to be organized around “can your fines”, but now that fines have been eliminated, a new focus is needed. There is an expectation for plenty of giving, and it will run through early January.
- Thanksgiving holiday closure was set to run through the whole weekend (rather than opening on Saturday as in the past).
- Lots of questions were coming in regarding new orders from the governor (additional measures being taken to control the spread of Covid-19 which is increasing noticeably). At present, the library is conducting business as usual, within the existing guidelines, but it is difficult to know what the future holds. The library is supportive of stocking up materials (the maximum checkout total is 100 items!).

Borrowing Policy Update:

Sarah requested feedback from the board on the updated borrowing policy and a vote for approval. Board members were generally comfortable affirming support but Randolph requested more time to examine the policy so a vote was delayed to the following meeting.

Budget Review:

Sarah pointed out that budget preparation was getting underway and represents a major undertaking. She presented an overview of the budgeting process, noting that it would be especially difficult this year due to the continuing emergency on account of the pandemic making it difficult to look ahead.

The budget would reflect notable increase in digital services, due to greater demand under the circumstances and new people using the services. Access and security were discussed.

Sarah requested Feedback from the board.

- Steve Claffey asked whether the library has contemplated having an outdoor venue for activities. Sarah replied that the library is fortunate to be close to Gypsy Hill park, and they were looking to have some outdoor activities in the spring with the return of warm weather.
- Randolph asked whether they library might consider budgeting for construction of some kind of more permanent outdoor facility (such as a covered seating area).
- Josh mentioned that JMRL has had chromebooks available for loan, that only work on library wifi (and thus useless away from the library and so would not be taken away). Sarah said she would follow up to get additional details and Josh mentioned it was fairly easy to work with state contract.
- Josh asked whether there was any consideration on hiring a digital librarian specialist. Sarah indicated that funding was not there, adding that the library would also like a marketing specialist, too.

- Virginia acknowledged the economic reality of the present situation, but suggested that there may be modest ways to improve staff skills through training and professional development.

New Business:

Josh opened the floor to new business. No additional issues were raised.

Adjournment:

Cass moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded; the meeting concluded at 5:10 pm.

The next Library Board meeting will be December 17 at 4:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Randolph Bertin