

Farmington Libraries
Library Board Minutes
September 16, 2020

Attendees: Lori Yu, Jorie Andrews, Chris Lindquist, Andy Baron, JoAnn Cephas, Caroline Ford, Jadwiga Goclowski, Matthew Sweeney, Lisa Warner, Terry Roberts, Gary Palumbo, Alex Thomas, Maureen Bittner, John Teahan, Harry Trider

Quorum: A quorum was determined. The ZOOM meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of June 17, 2020 were reviewed. Andy Baron moved and Matt Sweeney seconded the motion to approve the minutes.

Chair's Report:

An appeal was made for someone to fill the vacant Secretary position. Lisa Warner volunteered following the meeting.

We had a very challenging last year which Lori Yu led us through. Richard was a great interim director and struck just the right balance with taking care of necessary items but not trying to make major changes and also keeping us operational during the start of the pandemic. Jorie thanked Lori for her efforts in finding Richard. Jorie thanked Caroline Ford and all the senior staff for working with both Richard and Chris and getting them up to speed. Caroline has been invaluable and Monique Kucia has been extremely helpful as business manager. Jorie has been impressed with all of the department heads and looks forward to getting to know them better. Everyone has pitched in to do what is needed. The library staff is exceptional.

Jorie has asked Chris to brief us on a number of topics including repairs and the re-opening of the library, and establishment of committees, including , technology and capital improvement/building maintenance committees. A Board member will head each committee.

In subsequent meetings, Jorie would like to invite others to speak to the Board on various topics. We may want to ask Warren Hua to provide an overview of our finances and relationship with FVGLA or have some of the librarians explain some of the systems that they use.

Jorie turned the meeting over to Chris for the director's report.

Director's Report:

Operations and Proposed Phased-In Reopening Plan:

Chris provided an update on what has happened since we closed on March 13. Phases 1 and 2 were in the planning before he started in July. Credit was given to Richard, Caroline and staff for pivoting in a matter of weeks from in-person to remote services. We are currently in a hybrid situation, allowing curbside pick-up, grab and go, and limited access to library, with appointments for computer use. Programs have been primarily on-line and Zoom-based. All summer programs were on-line. Chris thanked the Children's, Teen and Adult Services staff for their amazing work to keep things running. We plan to continue in alignment with the Governor's recommendations. It was noted that most libraries are doing about the same, with the exception of Canton and Windsor, which are open.

We want to monitor the number of people in the library and rooms. Chris referred the Board to the Proposed Phase-In Plan to Reopen (September – December 2020) provided in the packet. In discussion with the management team, we have decided to add Wednesday evening hours. As part of an

incremental opening, Chris is proposing that patrons can come into the library by appointment for 15 minutes at a time to browse new books and materials. They will keep a log of visitors at both libraries. They have appropriate PPE for staff and plexiglass barriers at service desks. The other incremental increase in usage is for the meeting rooms and study rooms. The Governor is allowing 50% capacity in libraries and similar institutions. Chris is proposing 20%. Chris referred the Board to the report that compares normal capacity and 20% capacity. He is not proposing we open the community room at the Main library or Hoppin Gallery at Barney. Study rooms can be reserved for 4 hours at a time and will be cleaned by staff between usages. Andy Baron asked about the Farmington Room. Chris would like the Farmington Room committee to discuss reopening at their upcoming committee meeting. Chris and staff think it is reasonable to have a maximum of 6 using the Teen space. There are many students that will not be attending class in-person and the staff wants to support them. They will create safe zones, no gaming will be allowed and the area will be monitored by Teen Librarian and Adult Services staff.

The larger study room (#4) can accommodate 2 people – tutor and student. Ericka has been consulting with her peers at other libraries to see how they are handling in-person visits for families.

The plan is for Passport services and Notary services to resume January 1, 2020. No in-person programming. Maker Space and studio lab will be pushed out to January.

Chris explained the cleaning and disinfecting expectations. We are looking to hire a part-time maintenance assistant to work 25 hours a week to work with Greg. Patrons are asked to use hand sanitizer and wipe down computers.

Jorie asked for feedback regarding the re-opening plan. Board was supportive of Chris' detailed and well-thought out approach.

Calendar and Recommended Closure Dates:

Chris reviewed the recommended 2021 closing dates and Sunday openings. Chris has proposed 3 delayed openings to allow for quarterly staff meetings. The current plan is that these will be Zoom meetings. Once approved, the dates will be published on the website and made available on Facebook so that the public is aware. Jorie advised that a formal vote was not needed and commended Chris on making time for staff meetings and making it a priority.

Facilities Update:

Soffit work at the main library was completed on-time and Scope Construction did a great job. Greg is getting quotes for HVAC issues including preventative maintenance.

We need to replace the boiler at the Main Library. Current boiler is obsolete and at the end of its life. Greg is getting quotes on installing 2 boilers so that they can cycle on and off and extend the life of the units. It would be typical to have 2 boilers in a building of this size.

Painting at Barney is complete and came in \$7,000 under budget. Carpeting for Hoppin Gallery is pending. It will be less than \$10,000 for installation and expected to be completed in October.

Water penetration issues at the Main Library were discussed. Chris and Greg have been consulting with Russ Arnold, the Town engineer. We have a proposal out for 2 contractors to create a curtain drain at rear of the building. Other details are being explored, and work will need to wait until spring.

Jorie stated that Greg has done a commendable job of getting familiar with and making recommendations for the buildings. She reminded the Board we do have Town and FVGLA funding remaining to perform certain improvements. Once the Capital Planning/Building Committee is up and running that they can have more detailed discussions and bring that information to the Board.

We currently have a part-time temp cleaning person that we have hired through a temp agency. The contract is limited, and that person is not allowed to perform any maintenance work that requires a ladder and is not allowed to drive between the 2 buildings because the insurance policy does not cover that liability. Chris feels the best solution is to have a part-time maintenance person on staff. The cost would be about the same. Chris is proposing this position would be an hourly wage for 25 hours a week.

Annual Usage Statistics:

Usage statistics were discussed. Electronic usage has seen a spike. We are really pushing our electronic databases and online resources. Caroline advised that we have a lot more new users on a monthly basis. Staff is working exceptionally hard, and must clean every book between usages. As we are not able to allow in-person visits, the staff has been providing very personalized customer service. And although the numbers are low, the staff has answered hundreds of phone calls and hundreds of emails throughout every department.

We have been getting new people from other communities because of the quality of our on-line programming. Jorie commended Chris and the staff for their flexibility in continuing to provide as many services as we can during these unusual times.

Personnel:

Chris stated that he is recruiting for a full time Marketing/Publicity position and a part-time Lending Services position. One of the priorities for the Marketing/Publicity position will be to re-design the website. Chris will provide more information about the new hires at the next meeting.

Budget:

The budget year to date was reviewed. To date, our funding has not been adversely affected by COVID but we need to be sensitive that we don't know what might happen in the future and we will need to keep a close eye on it. We are not seeing normal revenue. We have suspended fines temporarily and we have not been providing passport or otherservices.

Report for FVGLA Annual Meeting:

Jorie will present the Library report and introduce Chris. The draft report was included in the packet.

Special projects:

As to new committees, we would like a trustee to lead each committee. Chris and Jorie have identified 3 to move forward on – Technology, Personnel and Capital Planning. Lori Yu volunteered to serve on Personnel committee. Alex Thomas also volunteered to serve on that committee or the Technology committee. Chris recommended that we look to the community for additional volunteers. Jorie asked that Board members send her suggestions of people who might be interested.

Special Committees:

Farmington Room - No update today.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Lori asked if Harry could provide more detail about the bullet point about the printing of facial frames for UConn Health Center and Trinity Health that was listed in the Annual report under Technology Services. 300 or more frames were printed using the 3D printer. Lori stated that it filled a great need in the community and would like to see that bullet point expanded on. There was an article in The Hartford Courant.

Lori asked if anything was being done for staff appreciation given the extraordinary effort that everyone is giving. Chris has just started a monthly birthday recognition with a cake and coffee celebration. Caroline stated that Chris has also started sending out emails to the staff after the weekly department head meetings to keep everyone in the loop.

Chris also met with each staff person individually when he first started. They also sent a survey to the staff asking for feedback and got positive suggestions for how often to meet, decision making approaches, proposed reopening plan, and programs to sponsor in the future. Chris will continue to ask staff for input as much as he can and make them part of the decision-making process as appropriate.

Adjournment:

The ZOOM meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm. Jadwiga moved and Matt seconded the adjournment.

Next meeting = October 21, 2020 at 7 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Lisa Warner, Secretary