

CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MINUTES LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

In compliance with the N. C. Governor's Executive Order 121, Section 3.A.a., this meeting was streamed live on the County's website. The meeting is also available to the public on YouTube. Assistant County Manager Sally Shutt, the County Broadcast Team and Communications & Outreach Coordinator Loren Bymer attended this meeting in person at the County Courthouse in room 564. Everyone else attended this virtual meeting from their individual locations via GoToMeeting video conference in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order.

Trustees present via GoToMeeting: Dennis Cedzo, Vice Chair Irene Grimes, Pamela Story and Katrina Tiffany

Trustee absent: Jeremy Fiebig

Library Staff and Trustees present in person at the County Courthouse in room 564: Library Director Faith Phillips, Programs & Services Division Manager Nora Armstrong, Trustee Chair Belinda Wilkerson and Trustee Ann McRae.

Library staff present via GoToMeeting: **Collection Development** Division Manager Pamela Kource and Admin. Coordinator to the Director Marili Melchionne

Others present via GoToMeeting: Friends of the Library East Regional Representative Marty Williams

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilkerson called the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees to order at 9:05 a.m. on Thursday, September 16, 2021 from room 564 at the County Courthouse.

A. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST(S):

Chair Wilkerson welcomed and introduced Friends of the Library East Regional Branch Representative Marty Williams and he gave the following report on behalf of the Friends Executive Board:

- ✓ There are now 190 Friends members.
- ✓ The next Friends board meeting will be Wednesday, November 3, 2021 and Trustee Jeremy Fiebig is scheduled to attend on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- ✓ Book Sale Chair Barbara Kiser is planning bargain book sales during the week of October 11 for members and then the following week will be for the public. Volunteers will be needed in several areas to help support the effort.

At 9:09 Trustee Pamela Story left the meeting. Any votes taken will include Ms. Story and will be in the affirmative.

II. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson moved to approve today's meeting agenda.

SECOND: Trustee McRae seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

III. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 17, 2021 REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson moved to approve the June 17, 2021 minutes.

SECOND: Vice Chair Irene Grimes seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Introduction of new staff: Phillips introduced the following new staff members:

Name	Title	Branch Location
Andrea Gehringer	Branch Manager	West Regional
Joseph Westendorf	IS Librarian I	Headquarters
Marilia Wimberly	YS Librarian II	East Regional

B. Director's Update – Director Faith Phillips

Phillips shared the following report:

1. Staff Service Award:

Mary Campbell, who is the Branch Manager at North Regional Library, has been with the library for 30 years.

2. No Fines/No Fees. – Start A New Chapter:

Phillips shared that at the Board of County Commissioners' meeting on August 16th the board approved the library to go late fee and fine free for lost and damaged books and AV materials. This does not apply to the technology that is circulated like Play A Ways or Hot Spots or any other technology.

This is an excellent way for the library to break down barriers to our community. While doing the research Phillips found that there are approximately 149,000 library cards and almost a quarter of those cards are inactive. She also found that the fines and fee structure that was in place put more barriers for those who are under served and under represented.

In the short time this has been implemented, library staff have received many stories and positive reactions from customers. Phillips shared the following story from East Regional Circulation Manager Wendy Olsen: "I wanted to share an experience I had with a customer. The customer called and said they had gotten the notification for lost materials. She had lost her job due to COVID-19 and she finally found a new job. Olsen told the customer that she did not have to pay for the lost materials and the customer said she was trying to make things right and is very grateful. The customer said that she would be coming back to the library and she wanted to let everyone know how thankful she was that she was welcomed back to use the library and not having to pay the fines or fees." There have been multiple responses like this where customers have cried on the phone because they are so grateful.

3. Strategic Review of Recruitment:

Phillips is in the process of conducting a comprehensive review of the library's recruitment practices. The county has a goal of recruitment and retention. The library wants to cultivate internal candidates and talent and have our current team members grow in their professional careers. There is also an emphasis on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Phillips has been sitting in on interviews, not to make the decision of the candidate, but to review the process. For example, what is the process of the question, what is the interviewer asking and how does the candidate respond so that we can be more efficient and effective in the interview process. We are transitioning to a behavioral based interviewing process which will give us a better indicator of how candidates will act and perform on the job.

We are also changing our interview panel structure. We have opened it up to all staff across the system. The hiring manager can select their panel from different locations which has added a lot of diverse opinions.

Between County HR and internal HR we advertise our employment opportunities throughout the state but Phillips wants to make sure that when there is a posting that schools are included, as well as different organizations like North Carolina Library Association, and we will have them push the posting out to their lists. Phillips has been emailing the heads of different library related organizations as well.

4. Review & Divisions and Organizational Structure:

A review of the divisions and our organizational structure was conducted and Phillips wants to work to equip the library strategically with how we want to move forward. We will be working to create a Community Engagement Division and that Division Manager will be Nora Armstrong. She will be over Mobile Outreach Services, the digital navigators for the grants so we can think strategically going forward with how we can get out into the community and how we can best serve our community.

We will be consolidating the Programming & Services and Youth Services Division Manager Position and Carla Brooks will be the Division Manager for Programs. We are working through the HR process right now.

When the new Deputy Director is hired all location managers will report directly to that person. We're working on things that will help improve communication.

At 9:25 Trustee Pamela Story returned to the meeting.

5. Grants and American Rescue Plan Funding:

We are working to get the digital navigator positions ready to roll and the timeline for recruitment is October. We've been working to get the job descriptions ready. Phillips is working with Assistant County Manager Sally Shutt to explore American Rescue Plan funding for library initiatives in an effort to help strengthen community engagement and provide educational assistance.

A funding request has been submitted to the Federal Communication Commission's Emergency Connectivity Fund for continuing hotspot service. We are also seeking other grants and funding opportunities.

6. Programming & Staff Day:

The library is providing programs as much as possible, given the rise in COVID-19 numbers. We reduced the number of people in programs from 25 to 15 and that has been working well at all locations. Safety is our top priority. Staff are still providing virtual programs.

We are hoping to still have Staff Day in person at the Crown. Phillips met with Learning & Innovation Manager Heather Hall to explore how they could setup and still stay social distanced. Based upon the information Phillips has, she has reached out to Dr. Jennifer Green to get her opinion. We want to have it in some way whether it is in person or virtual but it will be based on what Dr. Green and County Management have to say.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Recommendations (3) from the Trustee Nominating Committee, Nominating Committee Chair Ann McRae:

McRae shared that Katrina Tiffany and Belinda Wilkerson will be completing their second terms on December 31, 2021 and are not eligible for reappointment. The trustee nominating committee met on July 27th and August 24th to interview candidates for the two vacant seats. The Nominating Committee unanimously agreed to recommend Joseph "Bart" Fiser and Ariel Matthews to fill the vacant seats for the 2022-2024 term.

Also, Irene Grimes completes her first term on December 31, 2021 and has agreed to a second term (2022-2024). The nominating committee supports the appointments and reappointment and with the approval of the full board, these recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration at their October 4, 2021 meeting.

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson made a motion to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendations.

SECOND: Trustee Cedzo seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

**B. 2021 Adult, Teen and Youth Summer Reading Program Reports, Programs & Services Division
Manager Nora Armstrong:**

Armstrong provided a report on the library's Summer Reading Programs. The children's program had 1,758 participants who recorded 1.8 million minutes read over the summer, while the 333 teen participants read 502,000 minutes. Just over 800 adults participated, including library staff. Armstrong mentioned several positive comments from participants that highlighted the library's vital role in the community over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. She concluded by thanking the Friends of the Library for their continued support of Summer Reading Programs and all library programs.

C. Approval of the FY 2022 Library Endowment Trust and Library Endowment Fund, Cumberland County, NC Disbursements, Chair Belinda Wilkerson:

Wilkerson shared that the Friends of the Cumberland County Library Board recommends the following grants from its agency endowment fund, a component fund of Cumberland Community Foundation, Inc. (CCF) according to the terms and conditions of the fund agreement. It is understood that approval of these disbursements are contingent upon the final approval of the Board of Directors of CCF. The disbursement from the Library Endowment Trust is \$35,710.00, and the disbursement from the Library Endowment Fund, CC, NC is \$5,720.00.

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson made a motion to approve the disbursements from the Library Endowment Trust and Library Endowment Fund, CC, NC.

SECOND: Trustee Story seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

D. Trustee Annual Donation to the Library Endowment Fund, Cumberland County, Chair Belinda Wilkerson:

Wilkerson shared that each year the Board of Trustees are asked to contribute to the Library Endowment Fund, CC, NC and she shared the following history. In 2013 the board voted to encourage each trustee to make annual individual donations to the Library Endowment Trust so that the board could demonstrate 100% participation as supporters.

In 2016, the Friends of the Library opened a new fund, the Library Endowment Fund, Cumberland County, North Carolina. This fund is now the primary tool for donor giving.

For calendar year 2021, all LEF donations will be matched by the Friends of the library up to \$25,000.

Each Trustee will be mailed a brochure and envelope. We're encouraging all board members to contribute to the Library Endowment Fund so that we can have 100% participation.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed Policy Changes – Circulation Policy to remove fine and fee information and to remove “& Information Center” from the name of the library, Library Director Faith Phillips:

Phillips referenced the document sent out regarding the policy revisions. The revisions primarily have to do with the changes to the library going fine and late fee free. She went page-by-page and explained the different revisions to the policy. Regarding the return of materials, once a customer has materials out over 42 days, a block will be put on their account until the materials are returned. The library is also no longer charging for damage to materials.

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson made a motion to approve the revised Circulation Policy submitted by the Library.

SECOND: Trustee Cedzo seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

B. Proposed 2022 Schedule of Dates the Libraries will be Closed, Library Director Faith Phillips:

Phillips noted the schedule of date the libraries will be closed in 2022 that was given to each board member and asked if there are any questions.

MOTION: Chair Wilkerson made a motion to approve the 2022 schedule of dates the libraries will be closed.

SECOND: Vice Chair Grimes seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

C. Other Business: None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Chair Wilkerson adjourned the meeting at 9:54 a.m.