

James L. Hamner Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 by Phil Seyfried.

Those in attendance were Jill Hames, Phil Seyfried, Tom Hayghe, Ruth Ashton, Virginia Whitaker, Carol Hix, Jennifer Jones, Mary Ann Griles, Gail Geraghty, and Shaun Weyant, representing the Board of Supervisors.

Minutes - Phil asked for questions about the minutes, but there were none. Carol moved the minutes be accepted and Mary Ann seconded.

Corresponding Secretary - Carol said she has not sent out any cards since our last meeting, but said she would send one to Liz Carson, thanking her for her service.

Treasurer's Report - Karen was not present.

Friends' Report - No FOL member was present, so Jill read aloud the Friends' report that was forwarded to her.

Director's Report - Jill spoke about freedom of access, which she defined as "the unrestricted ability to interact with any idea that one wishes". She said that intellectual freedom requires freedom of access, and the library's role is to collect a wide variety of viewpoints and make them available. Barriers to access include age, physical ability, lack of technology, public opinion, etc. Learn more at ALA.org>Issues and Advocacy>Intellectual Freedom>Access

Jill said she had nothing further to add to the January report.

Phil reported to the board that he will be resigning his position later this year, as he will be moving out of the county, and said that we should begin considering a replacement. Jennifer said she'll send out an email asking board members to think about filling this vacancy and to let us know by next meeting.

Evaluation Committee - Tom said that we will come back to this later in a closed session.

Budget Committee - Carol said that the library is scheduled for a budget hearing on March 27 at around 10:30 a.m. We are asking for personnel money to add a third part-time circulation assistant. She said that trustees are not required to attend, but may.

Facilities Committee - Jennifer said she is unsure of when a CIP decision will be made, and Shaun said he believes in April or May. Shaun also said that in February they voted to approve the budget as it stood.

Old Business - Jill addressed the Memorandum of Understanding which she has prepared to define the library's relationship with the Friends. She said that at their last meeting they reviewed it and acknowledged receipt of it, but did not sign it.

New Business - Jennifer said that we will need to discuss how to replace the vacancy left by Phil's resignation, and also how to reduce the current board size. She said the executive committee recently discussed this and wants the board members opinions. Carol said that dropping members may mean fewer people attending and making decisions. Jennifer said some board members may not be attending because they don't feel their input is needed. Jill said that the average size for a board of directors in Virginia is eight members, and suggested an odd number for voting reasons. Carol and Virginia both suggested we stop replacing members who leave their positions on the board. Jennifer said she thinks we need to keep one from each district, and maybe 4 floating for a total of nine. Phil said we should draft a proposal.

Jill spoke about closing the library due to the COVID-19 situation. She shared that the ALA recommended public libraries close for public safety, and she has cancelled all library sponsored activities, and no new passports are being processed until April 11. Phil said we do need to keep people apart. Tom agreed and said that keyboards, etc. could carry germs. Jill said that her staff is uncomfortable about remaining open. They would like to continue working, but maybe implement a curbside service. The board discussed concerns involved. Carol said this would help parents get materials for schooling at home. Tom said that if the staff is comfortable then we should consider this proposal. Jill said that patrons could order materials by phone. Phil suggested we put a notice on the door explaining how to access materials. Jill asked the board to allow her to make necessary adjustments through March 31 such as closing or opening the library, then afterward the will board will need to revisit the situation. She said she would like to keep the library open from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on weekdays and closed on weekends. Also, Jill asked the board about allowing scheduled meetings to take place in the boardroom. Tom said if we have no way of enforcing the ten-person limit, we should close access for meetings. Phil said that we could send groups to the county's meeting room across the street if they still planned to meet. Tom moved to accept this proposal regarding the library's current operations, Ruth seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

Phil moved that the board move into a closed session for the sole purpose of discussing the library director's evaluation report. Gail seconded.

The next two executive committee meetings will be held on April 13 and May 11 at 4:30. All board members, as always, are welcome to attend.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Tom moved we adjourn, Carol seconded and the meeting ended at 8:20.