



Library Board of Trustees
Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Via Zoom
Monday, May 17, 2021, 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Trustees Present

Jennifer Appleby
Rob Harrington
Joe Helweg, Chair
Gloria Kelley
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Brandon Neal
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson
Charles Thomas
Ed Williams
Dr. Ricky Woods

Absent

Ailen Arreaza

Staff Present

Karen Beach
Kevin Bittle
Shelley Book
Barbara Cantisano
David Dillard
Michael Engelbrecht
Seth Ervin
Jenni Gaisbauer
Meryle Leonard
Pamela McCarter
Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Emily Nanney
John O'Connor
Amy Richard
Elesha Roupp
Ann Stawski
Holly Summers-Gil
Kim Sykes-Joseph
Tony Tallent
Marcellus Turner
Martha Yesowitch

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Leslie Johnson
Thomas Reddig, Little Diversified
Rob Cullin, ReThinking Libraries
Shannon Crane, Little Diversified
Marcus Thomas, KEi

Joe Helweg welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time.

Absence with Cause

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve Alien Arreaza's absence with cause. On a motion by Jennifer Appleby and seconded by Brandon Neal, the Trustees unanimously approved the absence with cause.

Minutes

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on April 19, 2021. On a motion by Brandon Neal and seconded by Charles Thomas, the Trustees unanimously approved the April 19, 2021, meeting minutes.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Angie Myers provided the following updates:

Budget Adjustments

- \$950 from Fund Balance & Reserves to Professional Services
- \$3,500 from Other to Miscellaneous General Operating
- \$100,000 from Foundation Contribution to Technology Related
- \$1,000 from Other to Miscellaneous to General Operating

Budget Transfers

- \$70,000 from Miscellaneous General Operating to Library Collections
- \$25,000 from Foundation Contribution to Fund Balance & Reserves

On a motion by the Finance Committee, seconded by Charles Thomas, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Budget Adjustments and Transfers.

Proposed Action Item

Approve eCycleSecure as the sole source for the library's MeckTech Digital Divide project funded via the Merancas Foundation

Policy Background

Formal bids are typically required by the Library's Procurement Policy for goods, supplies, materials, services or equipment with a cost equal to or over \$90,000.

A sole source situation occurs when procuring goods either with informal or formal bidding and

- 1) performance or price competition for the product is not available.
- 2) a needed product is available from only one source of supply; or
- 3) standardization of compatibility is the overriding consideration.

Sole source procurements in excess of \$90,000 must be approved by the Library Board of Trustees.

Vendor Background (eCycleSecure)

eCycleSecure is a 25-year-old IT Asset Disposition firm that regularly receives hundreds of laptops and desktop computers from customers. Each piece is evaluated, tested, vetted, upgraded as needed, and set for resale. On a daily basis, the firm sells individual retail units, boxed, and shipped all over the country, as well as packaging large volumes for wholesale distribution. Preparing, packaging, and selling 100-200 or more computers at once happens on a regular basis at eCycleSecure.

- Delivering a tailored, open-source operating system that is designed for non-digital natives providing a dedicated office suite, internet browser, and teleconferencing software. In addition, this OS allows the ability to include Library specific guides and resources directly onto the system.
- The equipment would all be fully tested and come with a 30-day warranty. This would allow ample time for a customer to verify the functionality and quality of the hardware. In order to ensure delivery, the equipment will range in price and hardware specs, but will all meet the minimum requirements, and will be as fast as a Chromebook (at a minimum).
- Promotes a local, circular green economy –eCycleSecure is a local business,

committed to creating sustainable and equitable opportunities within our community.

On a motion by the Finance Committee and seconded by Dr. Ricky Woods, the Board unanimously approved using eCycleSecure as the sole source for the library's MeckTech Digital Divide project funded via the Merancas Foundation (\$100,000)

Dr. Ricky Wood's brought up that he was on a call with the State Library Board, and it was announced that multi-billion dollar grants would be given to school systems in NC to work with local community partnerships for summer learning.

Martha Yesowitch replied that we were in discussion with CMS, and we would work in partnership with them but that the Library was not in-line to receive any direct monies from them at this time.

Caitlin Moen offered to follow up with our CMS partners and with Timothy Owens, the State Library Director and report back on the CARES Act money.

Real Estate Committee

David Dillard provided the following updates:

- University City Regional:
 - The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners will receive an update on the RFQ. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is engaging in a Public Private Partnership to develop a new 40,000 sf University City Regional Branch library. The process will be initiated with a statutorily required public advertisement of a Request for Qualification (RFQ) for responses by interested development teams
- Pineville:
 - The project is progressing well and is slated for completion in October of 2022
- Main Library:
 - AFM is leading a Budget Alignment process that is taking a little longer than originally expected
 - 2 Temporary uptown locations have been identified to serve the needs of the uptown area while ML is closed. 1 will be more of a check out station and the other will be a satellite location at a local non-profit that will serve as a programmatic pop-up and access point for internet and job help services. .
- Support Services Center:
 - Construction is proceeding according to schedule
 - 2 major pieces of equipment will not be received as scheduled and may be pushed out 30 days

Library Director Report

Caitlin Moen provided the following updates:

Story of Impact

- A Muslim mother was looking for books for her daughters to read and was able to locate and check out 3 great books that were exactly what she was looking for. She was amazed at the selection we provided.

Library Services During COVID-19

- Level Two
 - Browsing
 - Self-Service Checkout
 - Express Computer Usage
 - Virtual Programming

- Looking Ahead – Level 3
 - Limited Seating Available
 - Extended Computer Sessions
 - Expansion of Print Services (Copy/Fax/Scan)
 - Some In-Person Programming
- Pilots and Tests
 - Piloting outdoor programming with the mushroom exhibit at ImagineOn
 - Science programming at Matthews
 - We attended the University Wine Festival and that gave us some lessons learned for library staff participation at external events
 - Other programming pilots rolling out over the next few weeks
 - We are still requiring staff and customers to wear masks, aligning with County owned facilities

CEO Report

Marcellus Turner updated the Board on his meetings with community and staff members. Also doing a deep dive into our Real Estate issues and understanding how the Library works with the County.

Library Foundation Update

Jenni Gaisbauer gave the following updates:

- The CommonSpark Campaign tipped the \$100 MM mark, and we are almost at \$101 MM
- The press release on the Honeywell gift sparked interest from other community members
- The next few months are pivotal for the campaign

Chair Report

Mr. Helweg gave the following updates:

- Thanked the board for completing the Racial Equity Task Force questionnaire. We had 100% participation
- Thanked the board for providing feedback on the cadence and logistics of Board meetings for FY 2022
- Thanked the staff, board, and county partners on the recommended budget for FY 2022. We did a good job of starting earlier and organized our work for advocating for fine free
- Other wins were our participation in the Classification & Compensation review and the approval to fill one of the project manager positions
- FY 2022 Board of Trustees meeting schedule will continue on Zoom for June but hopefully we will be able to hold some future meetings in person. We will not have a meeting in July.

Library Impact Topic

Facilities Master Plan (FMP) Update and Discussion

David Dillard explained that this plan will give the Library a road map for the next 12-15 years on our facilities related topics. We have contracted with a group of consultants, Little Diversified, ReThinking Libraries and KEi Architects. One request is that after the presentation we want to incorporate your feedback on the plan but do not feel that your feedback today is the end of the conversation, it is only the beginning. We have another 18 months to define our plan. Share your thoughts and ideas and they will incorporate them into the plan moving forward.

Shannon Crane reviewed the following:

Data Collection/Initial Meetings

- Kick off December 4, 2020
- Collected County Demographic data
- Received AFM reports December – January

Site Review & Analysis

- SurveyMonkey and Paper Surveys- January- May
- 3 staff engagement sessions- February
- 5 community engagement sessions- February

Concept Planning & Refinements

- Benchmarking - March- April
- Interior Facility Assessments- March- April
- Survey data processing - April- May

Preliminary Master Plan Preparation

- Kick off after Board of Trustees meeting- May 17th
- 8 weeks

Final Master Plan Presentation/Delivery

- Deliver final document - late June-July
- 3 weeks

Understanding Demographics

The Arc & the Wedge

- Population Growth
- Population Density
- Median Age
- Diversity Index
- Household Income
- Home Values
- Transportation Access
- Proximity to Community Services
- High School Locations in Relation to Libraries

Sessions & Attendance

- 5 Community & leadership sessions
- 3 Library staff and & leadership sessions
- 188 Total attendees

Potential New Locations Ranked

1. Freedom/Thomasboro
2. NE/Prosperity Village
3. Nations Ford
4. Paw Creek
5. Eastland
6. Henderson Circle
7. Ponderosa-Wingate
8. Near NW

9. Hickory Ridge
10. Ballantyne

Criteria for New Locations Ranked

1. Access
2. Needs
3. Equity
4. Community Resources
5. Population
6. Transportation
7. Deserts
8. Vulnerable customer
9. Economic disparities
10. 15 min. walkability
11. Lower socio-economic groups
12. Gap in service
13. Proximity to existing libraries
14. Staff & customer safety
15. Awareness
16. Convenience
17. Near under-performing school
18. Operating hours
19. Viability
20. Visibility

Results

1,976 total participants (paper and online)

- 84% of the participants visit the library regularly
 - 43% of those who do not visit regularly want a branch closer to home
 - 34% are virtual users
- 87% of the participants visit to find books and magazines
- 93% of the participants agree the Library is important to the community
 - 60% agreed, 18% disagreed that their library had adequate space
 - 68% agreed, 25% disagreed that their library location was convenient for them
 - 43% did not know if their library was on a transportation route

Top areas considered most in need of a new branch (respondents could select up to 4 locations):

1. 39% NE/Prosperity Village
2. 20% Eastland
3. 18% Freedom/Thomasboro
4. 15% Henderson Circle, Near NW, Ballantyne

Most important library facility features:

- 97% readily accessible materials

- 86% accessible parking
- 84% good pedestrian/bicycle access
- 80% interactive children's spaces ages 0-12
- 79% interactive spaces for teens ages 13-18
- 79% close to transportation corridors

On Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Buildings/Locations scored the lowest:

- 45% agree, 16% disagree that issues are being addressed in this area

Benchmarking

Comparable Communities

National

- Seattle, WA
- Columbus, OH
- Baltimore, MD
- Indianapolis, IN

Regional

- Wake County, NC
- Richland County, SC
- Nashville, TN

Data

- Activity by location type
- Total activity per square foot & per full-time employee
- Deep dive of peer comparisons
- Map of library locations and 5-minute drive time

The Board asked questions and delved deeper into the breadth of community input obtained to date. The top questions on this topic and corresponding answers from the consultants were as follows:

- How did you reach out to get responses to the more underserved populations in our community?
 - We reached out to non-profits serving these populations
 - We ran media ads including radio and print ads geared to our Spanish population
 - We used social media to reach a more diverse demographic
- Did you move the needle on getting more responses from the underserved communities?
 - We did move the needle some but not as much as we would have hoped
 - We did have representation from across the county
- How can you get more information from the underserved communities including non-mainstream techniques?

Due to time constraints, it was decided that a follow-up email from David Dillard to the board to answer the questions of how we can get more data from underserved populations was in order.

Additional Board discussion on FMP topics included:

- How do you create a balanced FMP taking in to account the many different need of the community?

- What are other ways can we serve the community other than library locations? What is happening from an innovation standpoint and are we thinking creatively about solving for multiple challenges around facilities?
- Because of the timeline once we understand what the needs are we will take a deeper dive into alternatives that can fill in the gaps. These solutions could be both short term and long-term solutions.
- Bringing the library to the people is one popular topic and how we can do that.
- Balancing needs and access. Obviously serving the needs of underserved populations is important but also “building a destination library” such as an ImaginOn or Main Library and building support for our system as a whole is also important.
- We need to ensure that our “standard” should not change when looking to problem solve for our underserved communities. If library buildings/facilities have been our standard in the more affluent areas, we should not look to serve our less affluent areas differently. Perception in these communities is part of their reality.
- Specialty libraries could also be an option for some areas depending on their needs.
- Receiving community input on their needs is incredibly important. This also leads to community buy-in.
- Community’s memories of inequities in schools will play out in our FMP.
- Approach to fewer but larger locations. Is this the right approach moving forward?
- We need to be opportunistic where we can but also ensuring we bring full-service locations to needed areas.
- Is there a minimum square footage in each location to fulfill the Public Commons promise? We need to consider this as we move forward.
- We need to ensure we are not so over-concerned with equity that service to underserved areas suffer. We cannot become paralyzed by the fact that we will be criticized.

Mr. Helweg adjourned the meeting adjourned 5:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Helweg
Chair, Board of Trustees