

Putnam County Library
Board of Trustees Agenda

March 9, 2021

4:30 p.m.

Board of Trustees members attending: Kristy Herr, Harry Ingle, Patricia Phillips, Daniel Rader IV, Alicia Senn

Putnam County Library staff attending: Shannon Chaney, Doylene Farley, Matt Knieling, Matthew Krist, Brian Page, Phil Schaller

Falling Water River Regional Library staff attending: Matt Kirby

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairperson Harry Ingle called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
- II. **Determination of making Board of Trustees meeting electronic due to COVID-19 pandemic as permitted by Executive Order No. 78:** Alicia Senn motioned to make the Board of Trustees meeting electronic due to the COVID-19 pandemic as permitted by Executive Order No. 78. Daniel Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Daniel Rader motioned to approve the minutes for the January meeting. Alicia Senn seconded the motion. The motion carried.
Patricia Phillips motioned to approve the minutes for the February called meeting. Alicia Senn seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- IV. **Approval of Treasurer's Report:** Phil Schaller explained that the Book budget lines tend to fluctuate depending on what is being spent where and that the Insurance line was high, which is usually the case until the end of the year when the Library gets reimbursed by Putnam County. He also explained that the Facilities/Maintenance budget line was over budget due to the glass wall at the downstairs circulation desk being paid for by the Library rather than by the County as originally anticipated; he noted that this should balance out at the end of the year due to overages in other lines and that money could also be moved from the fund balance. Daniel Rader motioned to approve the Treasurer's report. Alicia Senn seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- V. **Public Comment:** N/A
- VI. **Old Business**

- a. **Continued discussion of library re-open plan in light of COVID-19:** Phil Schaller suggested that Phase IV be altered to allow the Library to continue quarantining materials while reopening the study rooms. Daniel Rader suggested that the Library eliminate the Phased Reopening Plan. The Board discussed the feasibility of lifting the Library's meeting room capacity restrictions as part of a transition to fully reopening. Phil Schaller recommended that the meeting room capacity limit and mask mandate remain and that the Library resume normal hours without fully reopening.

Daniel Rader motioned to resume the Library's pre-COVID-19 hours, reopen the study rooms and meeting rooms, allow quarantining of materials at the Director's discretion, and continue the mask mandate for sixty days.

The Board discussed the safety of removing the ten-person limit on meetings in the meeting rooms, and Matt Knieling provided context about the current usage levels of the meeting rooms. Kristy Herr mentioned that any patrons using the meeting rooms should wear masks in accordance with the Library's mask mandate, while Mr. Knieling pointed out that the mask mandate dictates that employees should only require mask compliance when a patron requests one-on-one assistance. Kristy Herr seconded Daniel Rader's motion. The motion carried.

Matt Knieling proposed that the Library change its regular hours to 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays with five open hours on Saturdays, making the Library's hours more consistent throughout the week and allowing the Library to staff Saturday hours more efficiently. Matt Kirby confirmed that these changes would not impact maintenance of effort, since they would involve rearranging hours rather than decreasing their number. Kristy Herr asked about the most popular hours on Saturdays, and Matt Knieling said that patrons continued visiting the Library on Saturdays regardless of its opening time. Kristy Herr and Harry Ingle stated their belief that Library administrators knew best what Saturday hours would be ideal, and Patricia Phillips recommended that the Library staff be permitted to choose Saturday hours. Kristy Herr asked what Saturday hours would work best, and Matt Knieling suggested either 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. or 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Kristy Herr motioned to change the Library's regular hours to 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Alicia Senn seconded the motion. Brian Page inquired about the start date for these new hours. Matt Knieling noted that staff had already been scheduled through March 31st, making it easiest to begin the new hours on April 1st. Daniel Rader suggested the new hours begin on March 15th, while Mr. Knieling proposed that the new hours begin on March 29th to prevent staff scheduling difficulties. Kristy Herr noted the difficulties associated with changing staff schedules with limited notice and suggested that the new hours begin on April 1st. Phil Schaller said that the Library could begin the planned service changes the following Monday.

Kristy Herr reiterated her motion with an added start date of April 1st. Daniel Rader asked whether it would be easier to start the new hours on a Monday or on the first of a month, and Matt Knieling said that either one would work. Kristy Herr altered her motion to include a start date of March 29th rather than April 1st. Alicia Senn seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VII. New Business

- a. **Review and approval of annual budget for fiscal year 2021-2022:** Phil Schaller stated that the differences between last year's budget and the current year's budget included, for the County, employee step raises and longevity pay, employee health benefits, and full-time positions at the Algood and Baxter Branches. He noted that health benefits constituted a large increase, which should be consistent across County departments, and that the costs for the Algood and Baxter Branches' full-time positions were split between the cities and the County: The Cities of Algood and Baxter each paid the salary of their town's respective branch manager, while the County paid for both employees' benefits packages. He stated that the Library would again use that model to request funds for a new full-time Communications Librarian position, asking the City of Cookeville to pay for the Communications Librarian's salary and the County to pay for their benefits package. Mr. Schaller stated that the budget increase to the County was \$38,568 and that the budget increase to the City of Cookeville was \$37,300. He

noted that this budget increase for the City would cover the salary of a librarian with an ALA-accredited MLIS degree, as the new Communications Librarian would ideally fit that profile, and that there would be no budget increases for Algood, Baxter, or Monterey.

Daniel Rader asked whether an increase in the fund balance for next year was expected, and Phil Schaller said that there probably would be such an increase and typically was, often due to payroll changes such as one employee replacing another or the Library not spending all of the Supplies budget. Mr. Rader also inquired about whether reduced Library-generated revenue due to COVID-19 would have to be compensated for by the fund balance or whether expenses would also be lower. Mr. Schaller stated that he did not know but could ask the Bookkeeper. Matt Knieling noted that copies were way down, and the Library does not always break even on those. Mr. Schaller said that the Travel budget was greatly decreased due to COVID-19, and that there would likely be other such budget decreases that would supplement reduced revenue, although exact details would remain unknown until the Bookkeeper squared the budget at the end of the fiscal year.

Daniel Rader motioned to approve the budget. Patricia Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- b. **Review audit report for fiscal year 2020-2021:** Phil Schaller stated that the audit did not reveal any problems, noting that the Library had worked to correct the issue concerning separation of duties that was found in the previous year's audit, and this improvement was reflected in the current year's audit report.

Kristy Herr inquired about the report's mention of required supplemental information, which the auditor noted was not required but that the state might suggest for it to be there. Phil Schaller said he would have the Bookkeeper ask the auditor about this.

Daniel Rader asked how long the Library had used this auditor, noting the value of getting a fresh pair of eyes to examine things every so often. Phil Schaller stated that he did not know how long the Library had used this auditor,

but it had been longer than the three years he has spent as Director. Mr. Rader and Kristy Herr suggested that the Library use a different auditor the next year.

- VIII. **PCLS Director Report:** Phil Schaller described the Library's new website and new logo. Kristy Herr inquired about the search engine optimization used by W.D. Stone in the website's creation.

Mr. Schaller provided information about the Library Foundation's first meeting, noting that the Foundation was not an official organization yet but that the meeting allowed members of the prospective Foundation to gather the information necessary for the involved lawyers to file the paperwork (with entities such as the IRS) required to create the Foundation. He stated that the next step, once the paperwork was completed, would be to hold a meeting to discuss the bylaws, mission, and structure of the Foundation.

He provided an update regarding Project IV, saying that the awarded bidder for the outdoor signs (Martin Signs) had begun obtaining the required permits and designing the digital marquee and that the Library was preparing to present a mock-up design for the banner to Martin Signs. He also stated that the electrical had been established for the floodlights and that the Library was waiting for County Maintenance to disclose the costs of the path lighting before they install them.

He asked Matt Knieling about the art bench. Mr. Knieling noted that the bench was still in the works but the status remained roughly the same as discussed in the previous meeting, with the involved parties still in the process of talking with artists.

Mr. Schaller introduced the Upper Cumberland LEAN Initiative, through which the Library planned to partner with local schools, churches, charities, and other community entities to promote literacy, wellness, nutrition, and environmental awareness and activism. He explained that the Library's primary form of involvement would be through offering programs that support the LEAN Initiative, with Earth Day and the Summer Reading Program being two instances where the Library planned to incorporate the initiative.

He also noted that UC LEAN would dovetail with the State of Tennessee's Reading360 literacy initiative, which the Library hopes to promote. Alicia Senn offered

to help by providing a list of individuals in the Putnam County School System who are involved with Reading360.

Mr. Schaller stated that annual employee evaluations had begun and would soon be completed, and the Board needed to form a personnel committee to conduct his own evaluation. The Board determined that Kristy Herr, Daniel Rader, and Kathryn Wisinger would form the committee.

- IX. Review of Branch Reports:** Matthew Krist reported that the Baxter Branch partnered with the Baxter Depot to create a display about the history of Baxter.

Phil Schaller reported that the Monterey Branch was staying busy providing tax help to patrons.

Mr. Schaller also reported that Rochelle Turner at the Algood Branch was the first in the PCLS to become involved with the UC LEAN Initiative, and she worked to involve the rest of the library system. He also noted that the Algood Branch was providing book clubs and outdoor activities for seniors and that Ms. Turner obtained the First Book Marketplace titles that were distributed system-wide and throughout the local communities.

Harry Ingle inquired about whether Mr. Schaller has received responses from the County Commissioners regarding the Library updates he (Mr. Schaller) sends them via email each month, and Mr. Schaller replied that one County Commissioner joined the Library Foundation as a result of seeing his update email, while other Commissioners had expressed their appreciation for the updates. Mr. Ingle commended Mr. Schaller for sending these monthly updates to the County Commissioners.

- X. Falling Water River Regional Library Report:** Matt Kirby reported that, at a previous Directors' Round Table Meeting presented by the Regional Library, Putnam County Commissioner and County Technical Assistance Service employee Ben Rodgers cited Phil Schaller's communications with the County Commissioners as a model for other library directors to follow.

Mr. Kirby said that Tennessee State Library and Archives staff had spent the last several weeks transitioning to the new building in Nashville and that multiple outdoor grand openings were planned for April 12th. He noted that employees were still not

permitted to travel outside their regions and that Falling Water had begun making tentative plans for in-person events to occur in the fall and winter, including the trustee workshop, which was not held in 2020, and the Level V summit, which is typically held every other year. He stated that Regional was also preparing to move these events online if necessary.

Mr. Kirby explained that the state's Regional libraries were established as quasi-governmental entities with governing boards; when the state absorbed the Regional libraries about twenty years ago, those governing boards became advisory boards and lost many of their responsibilities, although the Regional Boards have continued to meet over the years to network and to share information. There is pending legislation, he said, that would remove the Regional Boards. If passed by Tennessee legislature, he stated, this would go into effect in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. He said that the Regional Boards will continue to meet until then and that he notified Regional Board members a couple of weeks prior and sent a follow-up email to the Region's library directors soon afterward.

He explained that library boards like the PCL's, which include Regional Board members who are *ex officio* members of their local board, would need to take action to keep their Regional Board members. Falling Water will provide guidance on how to potentially transition those trustees onto the local board, he stated; options for local boards include using Regional trustees to fill any vacancies on the local board or increasing the number of members of the local board to absorb the members currently serving on the Regional Board. Mr. Kirby promised to provide updates on the situation.

Daniel Rader asked whether Mr. Kirby thought the legislation was likely to pass and whether the Board could make changes to the interlocal agreement to prepare for that eventuality by reconstituting Bryan Payne and Alicia Senn, the Board's two Regional representatives, as official Board members. Mr. Kirby suggested that the Board look into making those changes. Mr. Rader said he would raise the issue at the next City Council meeting. Mr. Kirby said that he had seen no indication that the legislation to eliminate Regional Boards would not pass.

- XI. **Friends of the Putnam County Library Report:** Patricia Phillips reported that the Friends were holding a membership drive and had received a grant from the Tennessee

State Library and Archives to support their efforts. She also noted that Phil and the operator of the Twice-Told Tales Book Sale had been discussing when and how to resume the Book Sale.

- XII. **Adjournment:** Daniel Rader motioned to adjourn the meeting. Patricia Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 p.m.