

CHARLESTON COUNTY LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2016

The Charleston County Library Board of Trustees met for a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 5:15p.m. at the Main Library, 68 Calhoun Street.

Board members present were Ms. Segal, Ms. Reider, Ms. Strunk, Ms. Hollinshead, Mr. Clem, Mr. Brack, Mr. Fava, Mr. Norris, and Mr. Strother. Mr. McKellar and Ms. Manigault were unable to attend. Staff members present were Cynthia Bledsoe, Darlene Jackson, Perry Litchfield, and Susan Parsons. Ms. Brittany Mathis, representing the Friends of the Library, was also in attendance, as were Janette Alexander and Bryan Whitley, representing the County.

Ms. Segal called the meeting to order and stated that the media had been informed of the meeting and its agenda.

Public Comment

Ms. Segal asked whether there was any public comment. There was none.

Board Comment

Ms. Segal asked whether there was any Board comment.

Mr. Brack stated that there are a lot of events going on at the library branches every month, and currently Board members are not attending them. Mr. Brack suggested that everyone attend at least one library program every month. He noted that as an example, the Charleston Tells event will be held in March, and it is an outstanding festival.

Mr. Brack said that the Friends are also hosting a book sale next month at the Otranto Regional Library, as well as a number of history programs at various branches. He asked that all the Trustees support the library by attending some of the programs that are offered.

Mr. Strother strongly agreed with Mr. Brack noted that all of the Trustees should make a commitment to attend at least one event per month.

Mr. Norris stated that he teaches at the Citadel and specializes in Latin-American studies. He noted that when he has given book assignments, some of his students have claimed never to have been to the Daniel Library.

Mr. Norris said that there are also a lot of requests from students to switch books, because they cannot get them through Interlibrary Loan fast enough. He added that he has been given feedback from students about the county libraries, and they have said that library staff are a great resource.

Deletions or Additions to Agenda

Ms. Segal asked whether there were any deletions or additions to the minutes.

Ms. Segal noted that there were none, but that the order of some agenda items would be switched around.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the January 26, 2016 meeting were reviewed.

Ms. Segal noted that Mr. Brack's name was spelled incorrectly.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

Friends of the Library

Ms. Mathis reported that the Friends of the Library will be hosting their first book sale of the year at the Otranto Regional Library on March 4th and 5th. She added that sales are instrumental in helping with fundraising efforts, so she stated that if the Trustees know of anyone or any group that might have an interest in attending, please share the book sale information with them.

Ms. Mathis invited all of the Trustees to the upcoming Friends Members' event on Thursday, March 3rd in the evening. She noted that this event gives you the chance to have early access to the books before the sale opens to the general public, and you can become a member of the Friends at the door that very evening.

Ms. Mathis stated that this year, the Friends are working hard to accumulate new members, and to increase their presence in the community, so they will be participating in a number of community outreach events, including the DIY Festival, Charleston Tells, Earth Day Fair, *Plantasia*, and the Community Resource Volunteer Fair.

Executive Search: Recommendation from Committee for Search Firm

Mr. Brack noted that the committee to hire a search firm for a new Library Director would like to make a motion this evening recommending the Bradbury Associates firm.

Mr. Brack stated that the firm will charge us a flat fee of \$24,000, and this amount was the middle of the fees that we were given by various firms.

Mr. Brack noted that in December, following the resignation of the Executive Director, the Trustees developed a Request for Proposal for major search firms to help us look for a new Director. The RFP was posted at the end of 2015 and sent to firms that we thought were the best in the country. Mr. Brack noted that Ms. Nancy Sullivan, Procurement and Facilities Manager for the library system, did a great job with that.

Mr. Brack noted that three proposals from firms were received and Mr. Fava, Ms. Manigault and he evaluated them. They were each read over and then each firm was spoken with via telephone. Mr. Brack stated that at the end the committee came to the conclusion that Bradbury and Associates would be the best firm to hire. They have an enormous amount of experience, but Mr. Brack added, all three firms would do a good job.

Mr. Brack noted that Bradbury and Associates were chosen for a number of reasons. He stated that Ms. Manigault interviewed Mr. Bradbury.

Mr. Brack stated that they will work with us on a job description and visit here four times, including visiting during job interviews.

Mr. Brack noted that five different library references were called and three discussions were held with three of the library systems. Mr. Brack discussed how Bradbury was spoken very highly of, and all of the systems had great things to say about them, including how satisfied they were with their services.

Mr. Fava noted that he is very comfortable with the choice of Bradbury and Associates.

Mr. Brack stated that the contract could be signed tonight. Ms. Segal noted that she has been in touch with several of the County Attorneys and they all said that the contract is good.

Ms. Strunk said that she is pleased with the result because she is very familiar with the firm from the candidate's perspective. They have an excellent reputation in the library world and she would absolutely endorse them.

Mr. Brack said that if the contract is signed by March 1st, 2016, they can be here within the first two weeks of March. Then it should take three to five months to winnow down the Director choices to one candidate.

Mr. Clem noted that Mr. Brack said it was a hard choice between the three firms who applied, and he wondered what made Bradbury and Associates rise to the top. Mr. Brack responded that the deciding factor was the fixed cost. He added that the firm stating that they would visit here four times also helped because that was the most a firm offered.

Mr. Strother commended the committee. He added that he hasn't read the whole document yet, and a diversified pool is important. He asked whether the full Board will be a part of the Director interviews.

Mr. Brack replied that at this point it will only be the Search Committee. The firm envisions us sitting with them on Skype and narrowing them down.

Ms. Reider noted that last time a new Director was hired, library staff were involved and she thinks that should be done again.

Mr. Norris asked whether the County has any role in hiring the new Director. Mr. Brack replied that it is solely the decision of the Library Board. Mr. Fava added that we will keep the County apprised as a courtesy. He added that according to state law it is the Library Board who hires the Director.

Ms. Segal moved to hire Bradbury and Associates to act as the Executive Director Search Guide at a flat fee of \$24,000. Mr. Fava seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ms. Segal stated that when we meet as a group with the firm we can then discuss whether the Search Committee, or the Board as a whole should be a part of the winnowing down selection for a new Director. Discussion will also take place as to whether we need library staff to be a part of the Search Committee.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that it would be useful to know whether the firm will need to speak to staff at a variety of locations and levels. Should staff be prepared?

Ms. Reider noted again that she would like a couple of library staff to be on the Search Committee. They were during the last search and she thinks that was a good process.

Ms. Jackson noted that a staff member was chosen last time by voting among branches, and the person with the most votes was on the Committee. She added that it was her.

Mr. Clem said that it would be good to have Ms. Bledsoe or Ms. Jackson on the committee, but it would be great to have a staff member who interacts with the public more.

Mr. Brack suggested that the Trustees, not library staff, vote on the Director position. He noted that he did not think that staff should vote, but that a committee with Trustees and library staff could be formed and recommendations made to the full Board. He added that an alternative could be the Board of Trustees as the committee as a whole.

Mr. Fava noted that the library could pick two people to be on the committee and the Board could pick three people.

Mr. Clem stated that he really likes the idea of as many Trustees as possible involved, but library staff advisory as well.

Ms. Strunk noted that there are a number of different approaches. The role of the firm is to guide us, and they would screen candidates so that the Board doesn't have to see everyone who applies. She added that we are paying them to screen for us and as far as staff involvement goes, sometimes they will meet with staff to answer questions.

Ms. Segal recommended that we think about what kind of committee we want to form after the first meeting with Bradbury and Associates.

Ms. Reider noted that she feels it is vital that library staff be involved as much as possible in the process.

Mr. Norris stated that the Board should consider including someone from the County on the committee as a non-voting person, as we could benefit from their experience.

Mr. Brack noted that when Bradbury and Associates lets us know the dates they will be in town, a meeting will be called, and hopefully this will be about the middle of March.

Capital Plan Update

Ms. Alexander distributed a project update to everyone.

Ms. Alexander stated that the County advertised for design and construction services in December 2015, and part one proposals were received on Friday, January 29, 2016, with technical qualifications from Design/Builders. She added that the Selection team met February 23, 2016, to evaluate the proposals and short-list the teams for advancement to part two. The selected teams will submit their fee proposals, design schedules and financial information.

Ms. Alexander stated that oral interviews will take place with short-listed teams on March 18, 2016. The selection will be recommended to County Council in April of this year for negotiation and award.

Ms. Alexander reported that the library and County staff have developed a Request for Proposal for the opening day collection. This RFP will be issued in February 2016 for the selection of a vendor to provide approximately 270,000 new books and other media for the five new libraries.

Ms. Alexander gave a property acquisition update. She noted that the Pinehaven and Mount Pleasant North locations are county owned.

Ms. Alexander stated that the County and Charleston County School District staff met to finalize the terms of the Land Transfer Agreement for the James Island location, including the details for the two new tennis courts to be constructed.

Ms. Alexander noted that a Land Transfer Agreement was executed between the Town of Hollywood and County Council for the St. Paul's location. The Masterplan was presented to Town Council for approval.

Ms. Alexander stated that the four-acre site for West Ashley is to be determined after the School District solidifies master plans for the West Ashley campus. This is anticipated to start in the Fall of 2016.

Ms. Alexander gave an update on the property pre-design issues. She noted that due diligence is completed for the James Island location, and the West Ashley location will commence after the School District's master planning of the West Ashley Campus. The other three locations are nearly complete.

Director's Report

Ms. Bledsoe introduced Ms. Darlene Jackson to those Trustees that have not met her. She noted that Ms. Jackson is the Acting Deputy Director and is currently doing the bulk of the work that Ms. Bledsoe herself did as Deputy Director.

Ms. Hollinshead asked whether Ms. Jackson would be in charge of staff at the Main Library as well as the branches while she is the Acting Deputy Director. Ms. Bledsoe responded affirmatively.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that Ms. Jackson will be at the next Board meeting in her place because she will be out of town.

Ms. Bledsoe reported that there will possibly be a water station erected outside of the John's Island Regional Library. She added that the County approached her because they had heard some concerns of citizens from Wadmalaw regarding the water. Ms. Bledsoe noted that the County will be voting on that tonight.

Ms. Bledsoe reported that R. Robot, the artist painting the mural on the outside of the Dart Library, is moving quickly. She added that all local television stations were there today so it has gotten good publicity.

Ms. Bledsoe reported that there is a problem with bats at the Main Library. One of our staff members was struck in the face by a bat, and the Post and Courier called Ms. Jamie Thomas, Public Relations Manager, to discuss it.

Mr. Fava stated that he met with the County Administrator regarding the Search Firm for a new Director. He said that he told them of our desire to have Ms. Bledsoe as the Acting Director in the interim.

Mr. Fava noted that he also discussed with the County Administrator the position of Project Manager for our capital plan. The County Administrator stated that Ms. Alexander is paid out of bond money, and he said that we should pursue that for a project manager as a counterpart of sorts for Ms. Alexander.

Mr. Fava stated that Ms. Bledsoe is writing a job description for that position now. He added that Ms. Sullivan is currently doing a full time job already, so Ms. Bledsoe should move forward to make that happen.

Mr. Norris said that he would like to see the job description that Ms. Bledsoe is working on. Ms. Bledsoe noted that it is not complete, but she stated that the person who is hired would be working with the Human Resources staff, the library collection staff, and really, the position is a master calendar of everything.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that Ms. Sullivan has done an outstanding job with so many duties, and she thanked her for all of her work. She noted that Ms. Sullivan is a superb facilities person, and knows everything about facilities, but this person should know all areas.

Mr. Clem asked whether we are looking locally or nationally for someone to fill this position. Ms. Bledsoe stated that it will be posted, and the main thing is that this person should be able to coordinate all activities regarding the building plan and it would be great if it were someone local.

Mr. Fava noted that in the best of all worlds it should be a person who has got five or six years left to work, since it is temporary.

Financial Report

Mr. Litchfield reported that the financial report distributed to the Board is virtually the same as the budget presentation that was given last month. He noted that the bottom line is that we are doing pretty well for the first half of the fiscal year.

Mr. Fava noted that parking garage receipts are down and asked if there was a reason. Mr. Litchfield noted that there were a number of days that patrons received free parking due to various reasons.

Mr. Litchfield noted that a letter was written to the Director of the County Budget Department as the Board previously requested. This letter discusses the concerns about the Budget Department's decision to cease allocating Facilities and Risk Management costs to the library.

Core Values

Ms. Bledsoe reported that in our Strategic Plan, October 27, 2011, we had a list of our core values.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that library staff are working on those right now, and she added that our public service managers came up with standards of performance. These are concrete examples of how you see these core values being enacted.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that they are very specific, so we know what to expect from each other. Currently, she added, she has asked all Managers to come up with ways to enforce customer service.

Mr. Brack asked whether anything is missing from the list. He wondered whether things have changed so much that things need to be added.

Ms. Strunk noted that there are twenty-five to thirty different literacies that people need to possess today. Technology is intertwined in everything.

Mr. Brack noted that more is expected from libraries in the future; there may be some holes we need to fill. He added, though, that there should be no added strategic planning until a new Director is hired.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that we could define our mission in a more broad sense.

Ms. Segal stated that the Trustees are not asking for massive changes, but the definition of literacy is broader and changing and we need to meet those challenges.

Mr. Clem noted that one time a library meant one thing, but he said that now he would like to see the Board continually evaluate these values and see how we are approaching them.

Mr. Norris stated that he endorses the concept of expanding literacies, but the concept of books is important to the library.

Ms. Reider stated that she is happy that we are talking about innovations and expanding the mission. She asked that Ms. Bledsoe come back to the Board and share with them what is going on so that they can better understand the mission.

Ms. Bledsoe responded that she would be happy to update the Board and noted that library staff have been working long-term with these values and how to “live” them.

Ms. Segal adjourned the meeting at 6:45p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maya Hollinshead, Secretary