

CUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MINUTES LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Grimes called the regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees to order at 9:05 a.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2022 in the Boardroom at the Headquarters library.

Trustees Present: Chair Irene Grimes, Vice Chair Ann McRae, Trustees Bart Fiser and Daniel Montoya

Trustees Absent: Dennis Cedzo, Jeremy Fiebig and Pamela Story

Present from the Library: Library Director Faith Phillips, Community Engagement Division Manager Nora Armstrong, Collection Development Division Manager Pamela Kource, Division Manager for Programs Carla Brooks, Librarian I for Programs Marissa Mace, newly hired staff (see table below), service award recipient (see table below) and Admin. Coordinator to the Director Marili Melchionne

Others Present: Assistant County Manager Sally Shutt and Friends of the Library Vice President Gail Riddle

A. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST: Chair Grimes introduced Friends of the Library Vice President Gail Riddle. Riddle gave the following report on behalf of the Friends of the Library Board:

- ✓ There are now 419 Friends members – for 2022/2023 – people who join after the August book sales will be able to go to the November 2022 sale and all 2023 sales.
- ✓ The successful August book sales brought in \$11,242 with \$303 from bargain book sales and we served 680 customers.
- ✓ Friends T-Shirt Sales: \$210 – the cost is \$15 each.
- ✓ There were 31 tickets sold for the 7/29/22 Friends Nonprofit Night @ Segra Stadium – and the Friends received \$155.00 (\$5 per ticket).
- ✓ The Friends annual renewal mailing will be sent to members and former members around November 15th.
- ✓ Giving Tuesday this year falls on 11/29/22 – a link will be emailed out at some point for online donations. This is a global giving day through the Cumberland Community Foundation (CCF) and the Friends did quite well last year. The donations (and matching funds) received from the Giving Tuesday campaign go directly to the Friends of the Library and ultimately to the library for programming.

II. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Trustee Fiser moved to approve today's meeting agenda.

SECOND: Trustee Montoya seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 25, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Vice Chair McRae moved to approve the August 25, 2022 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Trustee Fiser seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

IV. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A. Introduction of staff: Director Phillips introduced the following newly promoted and newly hired staff members:

Name	Title	Branch Location
Kohnee Harmon	Promoted to Branch Manager	North Regional
Sierra Moore	Promoted to Branch Manager	Spring Lake
Jaren Buckson	YS Librarian I	Headquarters
Zoe Bergmire-Sweat	YS Librarian I	Spring Lake

B. Service Award Recipient: Director Phillips recognized and honored the following staff member for her years of service with the library:

Name	Title	Branch Location	Years of Svc.
Leslie Lowder	Page	Headquarters	10

C. Library Director’s Update – Director Faith Phillips
 Phillips gave the following report:

1. Door Count Statistics:

At the last meeting, the board asked for door count statistics. Phillips showed a spreadsheet depicting the door counts for all branches from July 2021 through August 2022. The specific question that was asked is if we could see a direct correlation in our door counts and Covid. The red area shows where the door counts are low during the Delta and Omicron variants. When there was a new variant or significant upticks in Covid, there is a direct correlation to library door counts. It is clear that the door counts rebound after each variant and after vaccines/boosters were administered.

We are working on getting more accurate door counts. These statistics are before the new gates were installed. Phillips showed the spreadsheet with all of the new data from the new gates. With the new gates, we can see down to the hour of what is happening at the branches. For example, staff are checking the book drop – to check the book drop they might be going in and out of the gates. If our custodian team is cleaning they will go through the gates. We have an hour-by-hour breakdown and we can see after a number of months what the average amount of staff through the door is per hour and remove that amount from the total door count to get an accurate count. With accurate door counts, we will be better equipped to do evidence-based budgeting.

2. Library’s Strategic Plan – 2022-2025:

Phillips presented the draft of the strategic plan to the group. Once all of the feedback has been received and updates made, the plan will be submitted to the Public Information Office for styling purposes. She went through each part of the plan and explained the different components. The plan’s goals and objectives are listed below:

Goal 1: Support Our Community

Objective 1: Reduce language barriers during the plan period by increasing language diversity in programs by 10% and by increasing materials and publications in the three most common languages spoken in Cumberland County.

Objective 2: Improve greater digital equity and access and reduce the digital divide through innovative, purposeful and specific partnerships, programs and services. Increase access to and programming dedicated to removing digital barriers by 10% during the plan period.

Objective 3: Create an informed, knowledgeable customer and staff base during the plan period by promoting awareness of library services and programs by increasing use of services (databases, etc.) by 5% each fiscal year.

Goal 2: Engage Our Residents

Objective 1: Continually update and improve datasets on active and engaged library users and card holders with the goal of achieving a 95% accurate dataset by the end of the plan period.

Objective 2: Using collected data, identify populations and areas that are underserved by the library and develop and implement strategies to promote library engagement to those citizens with the goal of increasing engaged library users by 5% during the planning period.

Objective 3: Expand capacity for serving the community through enhanced programs, services and facilities, with the goal of a 5% increase in program participation and door count each fiscal year.

Goal 3: Encourage diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging

Objective 1: On a yearly basis, review all library policies and procedures to ensure relevancy and consistency of enforcement with the goal of equitable, relevant, and understandable policies and procedures.

Objective 2: Maintain libraries as safe, inclusive, welcoming locations for all members of the community.

Objective 3: Foster a diverse, visionary, accountable and collaborative staff environment.

Phillips let the group know that the draft strategic plan will be emailed to all of them and they are invited to help with wordsmithing and to include their questions and concerns in the document.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. By-Law Changes tabled at the 8/25/22 meeting: By-Law Committee Chair Bart Fiser

Fiser mentioned the recent suggested changes to the By-Laws and the intent is to identify the role of the trustees as it impacts the important job of the library. The emphasis is about accountability to be present at meetings and how the process works with vacancies. We've expanded the number of meetings and there are some questions that he had for the group to talk about.

Grimes said she likes the changes and wonders if it would be a good idea for those retired staff members to have a "cooling off" period so that someone doesn't retire on July 1 and then they are appointed to the board on August 1. Would it be a good idea to have staff be out of the library system for a certain amount of time (6 months/a year) to create some distance. It may be that the staff member had a great experience and their judgment may be tainted by that or you weren't and your experience would be tainted in that way. Should we put something in the By-Laws about that?

Vice Chair McRae shared that she would want the nominating committee to discuss as something to consider. However, she said she would hate to put that in the By-Laws and then we have a year when we don't have many applicants but there is someone who just recently retired that we know would be great and then not be able to get them on the board.

Grimes expressed that McRae makes a good argument. The one thing that is really important in this is the notice if someone can't make it to a meeting. If a person is going on vacation, they would know and be able to notify someone that they are going on vacation.

Fiser agreed and noted that what the trustees do is critical but noted that there may be times when he would be unable to give a 48 hour notice because of his job. He would not like to be removed from the board because of his inability to give 48 hours notice.

Fiser expressed that a Board Member can't serve a 3 year term if they only show up 5 times. Director Phillips reiterated that the intent for the 48 hour notification is that you want board members to be cognizant of things that come up in their lives but we want to have people who are dedicated to the board. She agrees that it would be an important discussion during the nominating process to make sure that potential board members are committed and understand the expectations. But if you wanted to put something in the By-Laws, Phillips would tweak the wording just a bit to be cognizant of what is being said about people getting sick or have something unexpected come up. Her suggestion is to give people two options:

1. For purposes of planning the meetings, it is requested that board members supply at least a 48 hour notice to board chair and library administration of their absence, or,
2. For purposes of planning the meetings, it is required that board members supply at least a 48 hour notice to the board chair and library administration of their absence when possible.

Grimes: I like required when possible.

Fiser: Ok, I'll add that.

Grimes: I think the other major point was the meetings.

Fiser: That was the number of meetings that we have, we are changing that because we took off, "(except the months of July and August when there is no scheduled meetings and the December meeting..."

Grimes: Wasn't there a motion a few months ago that we were going to meet every month except for December?

Fiser: That's correct but the By-Laws needed to be changed.

McRae: Didn't we also say that there was an exception with that if there was nothing on the agenda?

Grimes: Yes, if there is nothing on the agenda then the meeting would be canceled.

Phillips: I have a couple of By-Law changes to add: Back in 2019 the name of the library was changed from Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center to Cumberland County Public Library so we want to remove "& Information Center" from the name in the By-Laws. Then in Article II, Officers, the last paragraph, remove "County Manager" and add "notify the Deputy Clerk to the BOCC."

Fiser: I'll get those changes added and sent back out to everyone. We'll make the changes and bring it back to the board in October for approval.

MOTION: Chair Grimes made a motion to table the By-Law changes until the October 20, 2022 Trustee meeting.

SECOND: Vice Chair McRae seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Unanimous

Meeting Extension:

- MOTION:** At 10:20 a.m., noting the time, Chair Grimes moved to extend the meeting as needed.
SECOND: Trustee Montoya seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE: Unanimous

B. 2022 Post Summer Reading Program Report: Division Manager for Programs Carla Brooks
Brooks reported that there were 1,744 participants in the children’s program. One thousand four hundred fourteen children completed the program which was 81% of the total participants. In total, the children read 1,399,163 minutes.

There were 323 participants in the teen program and 256 teens completed the program which was 79% of the total participants. In total, the teens read 368,051 minutes.

For the adult program, program, 531 public participants turn in initial reading records with 1,130 second chance records submitted. A total of 6,045 titles were read or watched.

Eighty-four library staff participated and 445 second chance records were submitted. A total of 1,555 titles were read or watched.

Combining both public and staff, there were 608 participants with 7,800 titles read or watched.

On our survey, we asked “What did you like most about the program?” The answers from children/caregivers were:

- The fact that they can read and get a free book.
- Finding new books to read and realizing he knows bigger words. Which proved to him that he is definitely smarter and knows much more than he thinks he does.
- Chance to meet new people.
- The ability to borrow books virtually was very helpful.

One teen replied, “The summer reading program inspired me to pick up a book for the first time in a while. It gave me an opportunity to get back into reading.”

One adult commented, “The program reminds me of summers as a kid! I have been reading more this year and this has made it more fun this summer!”

We offered many more programs this summer. There were 241 in-library programs for children with 6,590 attending; and 41 children’s outside programs with 952 attending. The total is 282 children’s programs with a total attendance of 7,542. Seven virtual programs were offered for children with a total attendance of 1,717; and 17 teen programs with 159 attending.

There was a slight decrease in participation for children and teens, however, the number of programs and attendance increased drastically from last year. We did have a decrease in the amount of minutes read by around 30% and we believe it might be due to us not having the 20-hour amount for the children’s program.

We also had a decrease in the number of adult participants; however, there was an increase in the amount of titles read.

C. Trustee Annual Donation to the Library Endowment Fund – Director Faith Phillips

Phillips shared the history of the funds. 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. Checks will need to be made out to CCF (Cumberland Community Foundation) with LEF in the memo line.

Each person is asked to submit a sealed donation to library admin staff by the October trustee meeting or mail directly to CCF. The sealed donations will be forwarded to CCF by Library Administration staff.

To Donate online to the LEF, you can follow the link below which goes directly to the CCF website:
https://cumberlandcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create?funit_id=1535

Vice Chair McRae: There was a year that I waited to submit my LEF donation for Giving Tuesday because it did more if I waited until then, should I wait again?

Friends Vice President (and former Trustee) Gail Riddle let the group know that the LEF is not on the list for donations from Giving Tuesday donors. She suggests that individuals give to the LEF separately. Then on Giving Tuesday, give to the Friends.

Grimes: There's a couple things I want to add. This board is not expected to give a monetary donation to the LEF. They can if they want to but it is not expected. I will not ask for a report that shows that every person on the board made a donation so that we can be a 100% giving board. Some people may be able to donate less than others and the work that you do either on this board, by going to outreach events, or volunteering at the Friends Book Sales, that time is considered a donation.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed 2023 Schedule of dates the Libraries will be closed: Library Director Faith Phillips

Phillips went over and explained the proposed list of dates the libraries will be closed in 2023.

MOTION: Chair Grimes made a motion to approve the proposed 2023 Schedule of dates the libraries will be closed.

SECOND: Trustee Fiser seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

B. Discuss Annual Trustee Award: Director Faith Phillips

During last month's trustee meeting Phillips let the group know that there is an annual Trustee Award. She wants to put this on the board members' radar and ask if there is interest she will explore the recommendation process and have some draft criteria to you for your consideration at the next meeting.

The group consensus is that it would be a great idea and Phillips will put together a proposal for the October meeting.

C. Other Business: Discuss continuation with the Board & Administrator Journal: Library Director Faith Phillips

Phillips shared that the library purchases an annual subscription to the Board & Administrator for the Trustees. She asked to confirm that they are interested in continuing to receive the journal. The reason is because there are some difficulties in accessing the journal online each year after the subscription is renewed. The subscription cost is \$181 per year.

Grimes: I admit that I just scan it and I get more information from other sources.

Faith: Return on investment is really important which is why we wanted to bring this up.

Montoya: I used to read it when I was previously on the board. I wonder if there is something similar that would be easier to access.

Kource: Unfortunately there is nothing else out there like it.

Grimes: Given the fact that we've already paid the invoice, let's continue with it and before it is paid next year we can discuss it. We can use this year to evaluate the value of it.

MOTION: Vice Chair McRae made a motion to evaluate the journal over the next year to determine the value and discuss it at the August 17, 2023 trustee meeting.

SECOND: Trustee Fiser seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Chair Grimes adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m.