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Library Trustee Minutes 10/09/12

Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, October 9, 2012

Call to Order

Chairman Katherine Fennelly called the meeting to order at 7:15. In attendance were trustees Heather Calvin, Diane Gordon, Joyce Radochia, and Barbara Muldoon. Also attending were library director Ryan Livergood and assistant director Andrea Nicolay.

Approval of Minutes

The trustees reviewed the minutes from the September 11 meeting. Ms. Muldoon asked for clarification with regard to the Trust Fund Allocations Timeline for FY 14, and it was explained that the requests will be communicated to the Trustees and prioritized as early as possible, not necessarily in August as was suggested in the minutes. The allocations will then be decided in September according to normal procedure. The minutes were approved (Ms. Gordon/Ms. Radochia).

Communications

A thank-you card from Pam Watts-Flavin, Laura Lintz, and Sophia Sayigh was acknowledged. They were grateful for having had the opportunity to attend the Horn Book Award festivities. A thank-you card from Brigid Kennedy-Pfister was acknowledged with appreciation as well.

Community Time

No members of the community were present.

Director's Report

The board are impressed with the number of programs being offered by the library. The staff wiki currently in development was also acknowledged by the Trustees and explained by Mr. Livergood. The Lapsafe vending machine was acknowledged and explained, and distinctions were made between eReaders, laptops, and netbooks. There was a brief discussion of challenges surrounding the circulation of new technology. The increasing Overdrive circulation activity was noted. The drop in circulation of print materials (Sept 2011 vs. Sept 2012) was noted and briefly discussed. Sunday service started after Labor Day weekend in 2011; this is one factor that could account for the drop.

Budget Preparation

Budget preparation strategies were discussed at length. The Trustees recommend creating a profile of Robbins Library to compare and contrast with other MLN libraries that serve similar populations and have similar circulation. Mr. Livergood pointed out that Robbins Library is among the 10 busiest libraries serving the Commonwealth. It was suggested that a chart or bar graph would go a long way to illustrating our needs in terms of budget and staff. Ms. Fennelly suggested adding further detail to the picture, illustrating budget and staffing in relationship to the complexity of materials/programming/digital holdings that we now offer (in contrast to what we offered 5 or 10 years ago). For example, one line showing tech changes that have put demands on staff, one line showing demand for materials and services, and a line showing expenses rising commensurately. Questions we should look to answer in our budget preparation materials: how does Robbins Library rank with comparable libraries? What's the total operating budget for the library vs. total operating budgets for other libraries?

The Board discussed Mr. Livergood's drafted letter to Mr. Chapelaine (Potential Additions to FY 2014 Budget). Mr. Livergood is preparing this letter because he is meeting with Mr. Chapelaine on October 22 to discuss a number of things including the FY 13 budget, the initial FY 14 budget, and potentially the Board of Trustees vacancy. It was suggested that the word "overburdened" be replaced with logic for the restoration of appropriate staffing levels. The Trustees suggest augmenting the letter with a couple of takeaways that are more illustrative. Requests for additional staffing could be separated out and the case could be reinforced with accompanying charts. Trustees and Mr. Livergood agreed that we are in a strong position to advocate for Sundays. Furthermore, as we make the case for Sunday Service, we must also illustrate the case for redirecting the fundraising energy that has historically gone to Sunday Service to other exciting materials and services for our users. Reviewing the RFID item, Mr. Livergood

pointed out that RFID is getting cheaper and cheaper, MLN is looking into a global change, and these are strong reasons to include the item in budget talks. RFID has many merits including the potential to reduce theft. The Trustees and Mr. Livergood agreed to look at ways to get RFID back into the capital budget plans.

Ms. Muldoon suggested reformatting the letter so that the priorities are clear. It was agreed that some reformatting is needed. The ranking of priorities in the Potential Additions to FY 2014 Budget letter was discussed, and a basic consensus was formed. Mr. Livergood will draft a second letter for Mr. Chapdelaine and share it with the Board via e-mail before his October 22 meeting with Mr. Chapdelaine.

Friends Appreciation

The Friends of the Library celebration details were shared with the Board.

Arlington Library Card Sign-Up Challenge

In February we are challenging other communities to a sign-up challenge. We will look at ways to incentivize the sign-up by approaching local businesses. There is potential for partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to promote this project. The Board fully supports this initiative. It was suggested that staff think of something creative to do with social media to boost the effort.

Trustee Vacancy

In the trustee job description, cross off "fundraising." Add to "skills desired" legal background and/or financial background. A notice in the Advocate will advertise the vacancy.

Fundraising

The Friends have agreed to do the solicitation letter.

Policies Update

Mr. Livergood wishes to form a Policies Committee to review policies and revise/formulate the Library's numerous policies. The Collection Development policy will be the biggest and most complex of all.

Community Read

Mr. Livergood provided a brief update on the Community Read and shared the schedule. The writing contest was discussed, and how the entries will be graded.

Friends Update

A Friends of the Library Week display will go up at the end of October. The goal for the number of Friends is 1000.

Unanticipated Items

Ms. Radochia nominated Heather Calvin for Vice Chair, and Ms. Muldoon seconded. She was unanimously elected. Mr. Livergood encouraged the Board to look at the Russell Fund Report and get back to him with recommendations.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 13, 2012.

Adjournment

Ms. Radochia moved to adjourn, Ms. Muldoon seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07.

Documents Provided

- October 9 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes from the September 11, 2012 Meeting of the Robbins Library Board of Trustees
- Director's Report for October 2012
- Potential Additions to FY 2014 Budget Draft Memo
- Arlington Library Card Sign-Up Challenge Example Flyers

- Friends Appreciation Party Invitation
- Arlington Reads Together Event Schedule