

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 8, 2019**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on May 8, 2019 at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick, Maryland.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Greenway, K. Kane, G. Laugelli, S. Manny, M. O’Leary, C. Smith, and Councilman, Jerry Donald.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: D. Kiser

STAFF PRESENT: J. Kelly, Director; S. McDuff, Associate Director; C. Hall, Associate Director; J. Vogel, Youth Services Coordinator; S. Lauchner, Coordinator – Library Collections; J. Marshall, Manager-Systems; J. El-Zeftawy, Development Officer; K. Martinez, Communications Manager; B. Hissong, Community Services Coordinator; B. McDermott, Finance Manager; B. Heltebride, Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; A. Whitney, Branch Administrator – Thurmont Regional Library; B. Bradley, Branch Administrator – Middletown Library; J. Diaz, Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; R. Frecker, Branch Administrator – Walkersville Library; T. Lebherz, Branch Administrator – Urbana Regional Library; M. Currens, Branch Administrator, Myersville Library; J. Muller, Library Associate – Walkersville; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary.

CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: S. Manny made a motion to approve the Minutes from April 3, 2019; seconded by G. Laugelli. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

CHAIR’S REPORT: None.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

a. FCPL – Update: Mr. Kelly reviewed impact fees. He noted that an article appeared in The Frederick News-Post last month about proposed changes to impact fees in Frederick County. Mr. Laugelli requested that a little more background be provided as well as potential implications for the library. Mr. Kelly noted that impact fees are one-time fees paid by developers county-wide to help support schools and libraries. In 2017, an independent consulting firm was hired by the county to conduct an impact fee study to ensure that the fees assessed were appropriate or whether adjustments needed to be made up or down.

Based on the consultant’s findings, the County Council passed a bill which adjusted these fees and led to the article in The Frederick News-Post which prompted this discussion. Under that bill, some fees were increased and others were reduced. Two fees for the library were reduced. For a single family detached house, the library impact fee decreased from \$768 to \$681 and for a townhouse or duplex, the library impact fee decreased from \$695 to \$627.

Mr. Kelly added that as the impact fees are collected, they are held by the County and they build up over the years between capital projects. If there is a longer time between building projects, the pot is allowed to grow. The Budget Office determines how much of the total cost of any given library capital project will be funded by impact fees and it varies from project-to-project.

Mr. Kelly thereafter used the Middletown Library as an example. The total cost for design and construction is currently budgeted at \$8.5 million and the amount currently projected to be funded by impact fees is \$3.2 million. He added that it is not always the same percentage of funds from project-to-project. Mr. Kelly noted that the Myersville Library was funded with a small percentage of impact fees and that determination was made by the Budget Office.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly stated that to answer Mr. Laugelli's question about the potential implications for the library, it is true that we rely on impact fees for current and future capital projects. When those fees are reduced, that revenue stream is building up at a slower rate. It is conceivable that construction projects could be pushed further out in the capital plan in order to build up that pot of impact fee money but impact fees are only one source of revenue that is used to pay for building projects. It is also possible that construction projects could proceed without any adjustments to the timelines.

Mr. Kelly noted that for our elected officials, as with all of their work, this becomes a question about balancing competing county priorities, however, he added that it is worth reiterating that in the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 CIP, which includes projects through Fiscal Year 25 and the out-years, all library projects are currently on track and no project timelines have been adjusted.

Mr. Donald stated that he is the person that put the legislation in. He noted that his intention in the Bill, was to use statistics that are generated by the State and Nationally. Tischler adjusts the impact fees every year and the intent was to take it off the political burner and make it something that is just regularly done. However, he noted that we hit a year when libraries actually went down instead of up. The Bill was to take some of the politics out of it. In the long run, libraries will be better off. In the short run, libraries are not. He added that it was not his intention for it to be that way but it is just the way the numbers worked out. Mr. Donald stated that he is very supportive of libraries and schools and we need to get things built. The Bill was approved unanimously so, hopefully, this will take it off the political burner, or as permanently as you can in politics. That was his goal. Mr. Donald stated that he understands everyone being upset that the money is going down but every year it should be adjusted. It can go up or down. It also decreased for single family homes because the number of people living in single family homes has dropped.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly reviewed the topic of onboarding, which is on the Agenda this evening. He noted that M. O'Leary spoke to him about this topic a couple of months ago after reflecting on his own experience. Mr. O'Leary noted that he sees an opportunity to review and re-establish a formal onboarding experience for new board members since we have three new Board Members potentially joining the Board in September.

Mr. Kelly provided a bit of history. He noted that under the previous Director, new Board Members were provided with a huge binder of items with details about the system. C. Hall is currently reviewing the items that were contained in those binders and many of the items previously contained in the binder are now available online. Board Members will be provided with an updated list of resources for the Board to use as the new onboarding module is developed. Mr. Kelly noted that over the past month, staff discovered a series of webinars provided by ALA's United for Libraries which covers trustee competencies, library budgeting, working with the Director, advocacy, etc. Access to these webinars is generously paid for by our State Library. Mr. Kelly noted that he and Mr. O'Leary took an opportunity to look at them. He added that they were in agreement that the content is pretty basic and noted that the target audience is community members who are potentially brand new to libraries and brand new to boards. To be fair, as two people with a combined 50+ years of experience in public and academic libraries as well as board experience, FCPL is not the target demographic for ALA's introductory webinars. In any event, if this is a resource that the Board would like to use as part of its new onboarding process, Mr. Kelly stated that he would be happy to arrange technology so that the webinars can be viewed as a group should the Board wish to do so. Mr. Kelly noted that the webinars do not cover anything related to the Maryland Code and public libraries or any County processes.

Mr. Kelly added that the attachment that was shared in the Board packet, at Mr. O'Leary's request, are pages from The Maryland Trustees Manual offering recommended elements of a trustee onboarding program. It is worth noting that the manual is over 10 years old. Mr. Kelly advised that the State Librarian, Irene Padilla, has selected FCPL's Sheila McDuff to coordinate the work of a state-wide team of library administrators to update the document. Mr. Kelly stated that it is his understanding that the goal is to produce an updated draft for review by the State Librarian and MAPLA (The Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators) by the end of the summer. The timing should be perfect.

Ms. Greenway noted that when she came on board, she spent over an hour with the previous administrator and that was a lot of time. She added that the previous administrator gave her a personal overview of previous administrations, history, etc. and it meant a lot to her and made her feel like a member of the team. She noted that she thinks it is important for Mr. Kelly to do some face time with new Board Members. Mr. Kelly totally agreed and he added that in the event there are any current Board Members that would like a refresher, he would be more than happy to meet with any Board Member.

Mr. Kelly also noted that the Strategic Plan is on tonight's Agenda and stated that he received some e-mails from members of the FCPL Board of Trustees about our next Strategic Plan. A formal report will be presented this evening from Kim Martinez where she will be updating the Board on the work of our team, reviewing the time-line and sharing the next steps. Mr. Kelly added that, he will be more than happy to answer any additional questions after her presentation. Mr. Kelly added that as a member of the FCPL Board of Trustees, it is your responsibility to ensure that FCPL has a plan and, as Director, he noted that he has the responsibility of recommending the plan and ensuring its implementation.

Mr. Kelly stated that as everyone will hear from Kim this evening, the team has worked diligently over the past several months to gather community input. I thank those members of the Board who attended community conversations or provided feedback via surveys. Our team also assessed community needs, looked at trends, and examined best practices of other organizations. All of this was in an effort to ensure that the recommendations we put forward for your consideration are well-informed and that they are meaningful to the people that we serve.

Mr. Kelly noted that while the plan does not require an official vote from the FCPL Board of Trustees, we are bringing tonight's proposal to the Board because we feel it is important for the Board, the staff, and the community to all be in agreement on our direction for the next 3 years.

Ms. Greenway stated that all of the things that were just referred to were not included in the plan that members of the Board of Trustees received. Mr. Kelly advised that the plan, as he stated in his prior e-mail, included the high level priorities. He added that the piece that you were missing, as stated in his e-mail, is the narrative that would be discussed tonight. Mr. Kelly stated that we want to remain responsive to requests from the Board and there was a request as to what the content would be but there is always a danger if you don't have all of the information up-front. Mr. Kelly advised that we will attempt to answer many of the questions that were raised. It was not our intent to send you the final, public document such as the ones sent to me by members of the FCPL Board of Trustees (one from Carroll and one from Anne Arundel). He noted that the PowerPoint documents that were sent are not the only documents.

Ms. Smith inquired whether tonight's report will be an interim report. Mr. Kelly stated that the three priorities that we would like to focus on for the next three years will be discussed. Ms. Smith further inquired whether there is a final report that is completed or is this a status update. Mr. Kelly advised that tonight everyone will be provided with a status update and we want to be sure members of the FCPL Board of Trustees concur with the vast community feedback and what we heard from staff and that these are the priorities we should focus on. Once that is complete, we will flush out the plan. The plan will be done by July 1st.

Ms. Greenway further noted that the Board does not have to vote on the plan. Mr. Kelly noted that we could have provided something similar to the documents that were provided by Carroll and Anne Arundel Counties or we could do what we are doing and try to share incrementally and make sure that we have the Board's "buy-in" before we proceed. Ms. Greenway stated that you don't necessarily need the Board's "buy-in". Mr. Kelly stated that at the end of the day that is correct but it wouldn't do us any good if we didn't have an agreement from the members of the FCPL Board of Trustees that this is the direction to go. Ms. Greenway inquired whether members of the FCPL Board of Trustees should wait until the actual presentation to inquire about anything further. Mr. Kelly agreed.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly noted that in his experience, public library strategic planning runs the gamut. Some systems have no strategic plan. Others write a beautiful public document but then make day-to-day decisions without regard for the priorities they set.

At FCPL, the Strategic Plan is a relevant and living document. We are intentional about setting priorities that are in alignment with our mission, vision and values and, further, we work to integrate these priorities into branch level planning, goalsetting for individual work plans, decisions about our training dollars, administrative budget decisions and in recommending policies in collaboration with our Board that evolve to best serve the needs of our community.

Mr. Kelly noted that prior to 2016, FCPL had no formal Strategic Plan. When he first arrived in December, 2014, as Associate Director, many staff felt like the organization had no direction. We have come a long way very quickly. On June 30th, we will officially reach the end of our Fiscal Year 2017-2019 Strategic Plan. Many of you were here when we committed to those priorities: 1) to inspire a culture of learning; 2) to strengthen community connections and 3) to cultivate the library as a destination. We look forward to providing you with an update on all that we have accomplished together in that time and look at some of the numbers.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly noted that in just the last 3 years FCPL:

- a. Opened new facilities
- b. Staff have worked hard to extend their reach with expanded community partnerships, programming and outreach
- c. Has grown its development program
- d. Rebranded the organization
- e. Updated its website
- f. Articulated new mission/vision/values
- g. Turned over our entire administrative team
- h. Recruited/promoted many new leaders system-wide
- i. Fostered relationships with funders and advocates at the local and state level
- j. Has seen record numbers of customers using our facilities, services and collections
- k. Radically changed the culture of our organization.

In fact, Mr. Kelly advised that three of FCPL's staff members, Catie Hall, Beth Heltebridle and Levi Branson, presented a standing-room only session at our annual state-wide library conference on the topic of culture change. This session was attended by several library directors and associate directors. At this same conference, Kim Martinez led a media training and Marion Currens led an advocacy workshop.

At FCPL we don't always do things the same way as other libraries and that's a good thing. More and more people want to learn from our team's successes and from the challenges that we've navigated together.

The foundation for all of that work is our mission, our vision, our values and our Strategic Plan. He noted that you can be proud of FCPL's team and he added that he is looking forward to tonight's conversation which will help us set a direction for the next three years.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly reviewed statistics. He noted that when we started to see some of these incredible numbers earlier in the year, he was hesitant about getting too excited about them. He added that he wasn't sure what we were seeing would be a consistent climb. Mr. Kelly stated that, as he has said in past meetings, increases in circulation are expected with the opening of a new branch so the Walkersville community is to thank for some of the increases we have seen this year. We can expect to see additional increases when Myersville comes on board in the next fiscal year. The explosion in digital circulation is also a major contributing factor to the trends we are likely to see through the rest of the year. He noted that the packet sent to the Board includes the March numbers and year-to-date totals, so with only one quarter's worth of data yet to report, Mr. Kelly noted that he is getting a little more confident about forecasting trends for the year. Visits were up 16%, circulation and program attendance were both up 5%. Year-to-date numbers are even stronger. Circulation of digital content remains over 25%. He noted check-outs of e-Magazines have increased 36% since the beginning of the year and the use of FCPL's business database, Reference USA, has increased six times over in the first quarter of this year.

b. CIP/Budget – Update: Mr. Kelly noted that on Tuesday evening, April 30th, the County Council held their public hearing on the budget. The bulk of public comment was regarding the proposed additional staff member for the Urbana Senior Center which sees high demand for senior programming and currently only has a staff of one. The hearing adjourned after only 45 minutes. The following day, Directors were invited to appear before the Council to address questions about their budget. Some of the questions that came up were regarding FCPL's revenue sources, the collections budget, the un-funded budget appeal for an additional Bookmobile driver, and the possibility of a new Senior Center to be co-located at the proposed Middletown Library site. Mr. Kelly noted that some Council Members are going through their first budget cycle so he was happy to provide background on FCPL's component unit status and answer questions about FCPL's budget. Today, Chief Administrative Officer, Rick Harcum, shared a list of proposed budget reductions from the Council. In past years, our component unit has found itself on this list but we were not on this round of proposed reductions. Mr. Kelly advised that he will keep the Board informed, if anything changes. Mr. Kelly noted that the County Council will formalize and adopt the budget by the end of May, 2019

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly noted that S. McDuff will provide an update on the Myersville Library later this evening. Mr. Kelly also mentioned that a conversation is emerging about a possible co-located Senior Center at the new Middletown Library. He will be attending a meeting on May 22, 2019 with the County Executive, the Burgess of Middletown, staff from the Department of Public Works, and the Senior Services Director to continue this discussion. He further noted that he will keep the Board informed of any developments.

Mr. Kelly also noted that today he attended a meeting of the Frederick Planning Commission. At this meeting, Planning Director, Jim Gugel, presented the FY20-25 Capital Improvement Plan which includes a handful of library projects. Following his talk, the commission voted and provided what is called a "finding of consistency" which means that the proposed projects fall within the parameters of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Kelly advised that on May 1, 2019, he was invited to sit on a panel at Frederick County Public Schools Career and Tech Center. A group of architecture students decided to envision and design a new library for our proposed Linganore project. The group could have selected any kind of building for their project but they picked a library. The panel which included Dr. Alban - School Superintendent, a representative from MSDE's library capital grant program, as well as local engineers and architects, heard the student's presentation. We thereafter provided feedback as they will be presenting at a national competition in a few weeks. It was a wonderful opportunity and it was great to see these talented students applying what they learned to real life issues. Mr. Kelly noted that he was grateful for the opportunity to work with them.

Ms. Manny inquired whether there has been any discussion about a Senior Center at the Linganore Library. Mr. Kelly noted that it is his understanding that the new proposed site may include additional housing focusing on seniors. FCPL has been very intentional about its needs when speaking with members of the County Council and we know that the Middletown Library needs 15,000 square feet and the Linganore Library needs 25,000 square feet so if we can find a way to add square footage to provide for a Senior Center at the same location, we will be more than willing to do that. Mr. Kelly noted that when he spoke to the Director of Senior Services, he learned that Senior Centers must have a certain amount of space in order to qualify for certain grants so assuming all of these things can be met, FCPL is certainly open to the conversation about it and we'll see how it goes.

Ms. Smith stated that a co-worker mentioned to her that he read something in the newspaper that said the status of the Linganore Library had changed. Mr. Kelly stated that he met with the developer recently and nothing has basically changed. He indicated that what the co-worker may be referring to is that originally the developer had proposed a site that was in the Town Center and shared parking with some of the anchor stores. The grocery store that was originally planned for the Town Center did not want to share parking with the library so the developer went back to the drawing board and found another site for the library that is adjacent to the education complex so it is a great site. Mr. Kelly noted that the project is still in the CIP and moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Report: Ms. McDermott reviewed the financial statement that contains data through March 31, 2019. Revenues are at 70% which is a 9% increase from last month. Expenditures are at 69%. Ms. Greenway inquired what is included in contract services. Ms. McDermott advised that contract services includes mostly the contracts that are held through procurement for which FCPL is receiving services such as shredding services, interpreting services, etc. Ms. Greenway stated that FCPL used to have professional storytellers and was wondering if they were included under that. Ms. McDermott stated that some services such as that can be included in that category. Ms. Vogel added that during the summer FCPL hires magicians, professional storytellers, etc. Ms. Greenway inquired whether that is in coordination with the summer reading program. Ms. Vogel stated that some of the funding comes from the County and some from the summer reading fund. Ms. Greenway stated that there was a time when FCPL used professional storytellers all of the time and then the budget was cut. Ms. Vogel

advised that FCPL did have a professional storyteller for a while who was a County employee and she was paid at a particular rate to do large scale story times. Ms. Vogel noted that now all of FCPL's staff can do story times.

Ms. McDermott thereafter noted that grants awarded are at \$829,000. She noted that the Facilities Master Plan Grant has been moved to the grants awarded category. Grants submitted are at \$48,000. There are two new grants that have been added this month (MLA and Myersville Branch Library Capital Grant). Donations are at \$210,000 and other endowment account revenue is at \$135,000 for a total of \$1.175 million.

Ms. Greenway inquired whether the grants submitted are to the State. Ms. McDermott noted that there are two grants (MLA and Myersville Capital Grant). FCPL applied for these grants at the State level and paperwork has now been submitted to the County.

b. Construction Update: Ms. McDuff noted that a major portion of the materials that had been delayed have now been shipped. She added that she should have a solid grand opening date within the next week or so. We are trying to coordinate a date with the County Executive's Office and the Mayor of Myersville to make sure everyone is available on the right date. She noted that she was hoping to announce an opening date tonight but we are not quite there yet.

Thereafter she displayed photos of the Myersville Library. There has been a lot of work being done on the site as far as grading, curbing and concrete installation. She noted that one of the Town Council Members lives directly across the street from the library and he provides a lot of these pictures. There will be two driveways into the library so everyone can make a loop. One side of the parking area is for the Town Park and it will be a combined parking area so when FCPL has large events, we will have plenty of parking and in the event the Town has a large event, they will have plenty of parking. She also noted that the Town is planning to have all of their renovations done just before our grand opening as well so everything will be new and beautiful.

Ms. McDuff advised that FCPL received an additional \$33,000 from a grant. Initially, FCPL received a \$750,000 grant from the State but the State had some extra funding that needed to be applied to a project, so the State gave the extra funding to FCPL. The project is 80% complete at this time. FCPL has spent 92% of the grant with \$60,000 left to spend. A huge furniture order was placed this week. Hiring is continuing. M. Currens and her team are working on programming and office supplies and all of the other items that need to be ordered.

c. Strategic Plan: K. Martinez stated that some of the content she will be presenting tonight will look familiar but there is some additional content that she will be providing to everyone. Ms. Martinez highlighted the great team she worked with on the Strategic Plan. The team consisted of the following individuals: Robin Frecker, Levi Branson, Joe Dacey, Beth Heltebridle, Naomi Keppler, Sharon Lauchner, Jason Marshall, Kim Martinez and Amy Whitney. The team originally convened in November, 2018. Ms. Martinez noted that initially the team spent a lot of time discussing the intention of the plan and who we are developing the plan for and ultimately

making it a useful, productive document that can be used by the staff and be brought to life.

She thereafter reviewed the timeline for the Strategic Plan. In November, 2018, the team convened to discuss the Strategic Plan. In December, the team kicked off the research portion focusing on the best ways to get input from the community and staff. The month of January was used to complete the research. In February, 2019, we reviewed all of the data and wrapped up the analysis and developed our themes. In March, 2019, Ms. Martinez made a presentation to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees and recapped the research and presented our initial themes. During the month of April, the team took all of the research and themes and drilled it down into the key priorities which she noted that she will speak about later this evening. Now that it is May, the team has some work to do to finish up everything but the next milestone will be just how we get this into the arms of staff to bring it to life.

Ms. Martinez thereafter reviewed the research that brought us here today. There were three sub-groups. The first sub-group was focused on researching and gathering input from the community. The next sub-group was focused on gathering input from staff. This was critical given that our staff are on the front lines every day so they needed to have a strong voice in this entire process. The third group was focused on all of the other things. They spent a lot of time pouring over other sources such as the Livable Frederick Plan and the United Way's Report. They spent a lot of time benchmarking against other strategic plans. They looked at over thirty different strategic plans from other libraries, for-profit businesses, non-profit businesses, vendors, etc. and they were very intentional in their efforts in looking at a diverse group of strategic plans to pull out some of the best practices and apply them to our own approach.

Mr. O'Leary noted that the documentation received by members of the FCPL Board of Trustees has a sentence or two about this process and inquired whether the final plan will have a more thorough explanation of the steps that were just mentioned. Ms. Martinez stated that it certainly can. She noted, however, that the team felt brevity was important for this plan because we want to really focus on the three priorities. She stated that she could write a fairly long thesis around our research process but at the moment it is just a sentence or two. There is a lot more work that can be highlighted and we can come to a middle ground between brevity and information. Mr. Laugelli stated that brevity seems like a good idea until you are five or ten years down the road and you look back at it. He thinks it should show a lot of the work and a guide for future efforts. Ms. Martinez said she doesn't want to give the impression that everything is in her head. Everything to do with the strategic plan has been documented so the details would never be forgotten but we will find a middle ground to determine what goes in the final plan.

Ms. Greenway inquired whether the Strategic Plan is required by the County and who else sees the Strategic Plan besides staff and members of the FCPL Board of Trustees. Ms. Martinez advised that the Strategic Plan is not required by anyone. She also added that anyone who wants to look at the Strategic Plan is able to do so. Mr. Kelly added that we don't tell the same story to every person; it depends on the audience. There are some people that want to know the process and some people will want to know what the priorities are. Mr. Kelly noted that members of the FCPL Board of Trustees shared the Strategic Plan from Anne Arundel County with him. He

noted that it is a beautiful plan but is also 47 pages in length with 3 pages that are really about what they are going to do for the next few years. The question is – where is the balance for us as to what to include and what not to include. Ms. Greenway inquired if FCPL sets the deadline. Mr. Kelly replied that we would like our Strategic Plan to start July 1, 2019 since everything we measure will start with the new fiscal year.

Ms. Martinez noted that after the research process was complete, the team began pouring over the research and trying to zero in on how to translate strategic priorities. Some of the key findings included:

77% respondents ranked “information and sources” as a top priority for why they use the library.

“Borrow items” and “Attend programs” were ranked as the top two reasons for using the library.

The community is not aware of all they can do with a library card.

The library should bring the community together.

Ms. Martinez stated that FCPL’s current Strategic Plan emphasizes the role that we play in serving as that community connection. This is also something that we recommend continuing in our next Strategic Plan.

In March, 2019, the team took all of those findings and research and drilled them down to three key research themes: Access – Connection – Awareness. When she refers to access, she is meaning that library services need to be accessible to all and it is our role to make that happen for our customers. She noted that everyone can probably agree that strong connections make strong communities and libraries can play a role in fostering that strength. We are committed to being a hub for that connection point. The group spent a lot of time talking about awareness. The research showed that there is a lack of awareness.

Ms. Martinez noted that the team also took some time to look at our mission, our vision and our core values. These are just a few years old and, as a team, we were not tasked with re-writing these because when these were written, they were written with the vision that they would have a long shelf life and they do. Everything should be rooted in with our mission, our vision and our core values. We looked at the strategies as the next layer and how we can focus our efforts over the next three years to achieve our mission, our vision and core values. The strategic priorities will bring everything to life.

Simplify Access –

Goal: We will empower our communities by providing simple and convenient access to library resources and services.

She noted that with each of the proposed priorities, the team outlined a few actions. These were intentional. We wanted to help illustrate to staff through the goal and the potential actions how they might have a role in simplifying access.

Building Bridges – this speaks directly to the connection theme that was presented earlier. How do we bring community connection to the next level? What is the next step in this process? We still view the library as being an integral part of a community connection point but what does that mean and how do we progress.

Goal: We will cultivate meaningful relationships and foster vibrant and strong communities.

Ms. Martinez noted that FCPL has some great community relationships in place and there are more to be made but how do we take those relationships to the next step so that FCPL is supporting the community, connecting our customers to those experts or resources and that is what we talk about when we refer to building bridges.

Potential Actions:

Facilitate connections between people in need and social services

Provide a forum for community conversations

Expand partnerships with community businesses

Ms. Martinez noted the third priority is Spark Excitement. The team wanted to bring awareness up a level.

Goal: We will connect to and resonate with the people of Frederick County, inspiring them to explore, to invent, and to transform.

Potential Actions:

Identify and connect with new audiences

Pioneer bold new events with community support to reach new audiences

Seek new opportunities to promote FCPL's diverse and robust programs, resources and services

Ms. Martinez stated that we do a great job speaking and connecting with our power users (the folks that visit us frequently and take advantage of what we offer) but how do we spark excitement and resonate with the folks that we are not already talking with and that is what rises to the level of a strategic priority.

Thereafter, Ms. Martinez noted that it is about getting these priorities out to staff assuming that we are all in agreement. Work plans will be created at each of the branches and the various departments will be creating them. Every member of the staff is responsible for having a performance plan and held accountable for them. All of this will be guided by the strategic plan.

Mr. O'Leary inquired about the first priority – Simplify Access - and wanted to know if that came from customer questions/complaints or from staff and, in addition, what type of things

made up the first priority. Ms. Martinez noted that it was “all of the above”. She added that at the Walkersville discussion group, she had a very lengthy discussion with one of FCPL’s customers where she talked about her lack of comfort when it comes to technology but her desire to take advantage of all that we offer digitally. She noted that this is just one story but that same subject came up over and over again. She added that FCPL is competing with other sources in terms of providing content and the other sources are notoriously known for being incredibly user-friendly and easy to access. If FCPL is going to get this content into the hands of customers, it needs to be as stream-lined and as simple as possible. Mr. O’Leary noted that Ms. Martinez mentioned digital as opposed to non-digital content and inquired whether customers noted that non-digital material is working a little more smoothly rather than the means by which they get to the digital materials. Ms. Martinez noted that they focused on digital due to the growth and use of digital but she added that when the potential actions were listed, it doesn’t mean that we don’t want to simplify access to physical content but our focus groups showed that digital is a hot topic.

Ms. Smith inquired whether there was anything in the prior Strategic Plan that was not achieved for whatever reason. Mr. Kelly stated that there are some carry-overs from the first plan because there is still more work to be done. He noted that we are anxiously waiting for June 30th so that we can close the books on those three years and look at that data. Mr. Kelly noted that although those benchmarks are not listed on our website, we are tracking statistics all of the time. There are at least 10 – 15 statistics that we have been tracking over the three year life of the plan. Some of the final numbers will be because we met the final benchmarks because of the initiatives we did and then there will be some other logistical decisions that we made internally that have impacted those numbers. We look forward to our meeting in the fall where we will be sharing some of the things that we learned from the last plan.

Ms. Greenway noted that the previous administration gave members of the FCPL Board of Trustees a 20-year outlook and one of the pieces of that was to move the administrative people in this building to another facility. She inquired whether that document was the Strategic Plan or is that something else. Mr. Kelly noted that he thinks what Ms. Greenway may be referring to is a rough building plan. He stated that rather than spitball where we think we are going to need buildings, we are trying to make targeted, informed decisions about that with the Master Facilities Plan once it is received. The 20-year plan that was referred to will be updated once we receive the Master Facilities Plan from HBM Architects. Ms. Greenway further inquired that those sort of things are not part of a Strategic Plan per se. Mr. Kelly explained that not as FCPL uses that term but a Strategic Plan can be anything. Some of the other strategic plans that we received included three pages of priorities and then they slapped their annual report into it and reported what they did the last three years. The Strategic Plan can be decided by each individual organization. Mr. Kelly noted that in his opinion, FCPL’s Strategic Plan is targeted and about what we can do for the community and what will work over the next few years. Ms. Greenway stated that ultimately FCPL’s Strategic Plan is about services that we provide to the community. Ms. Greenway further inquired if the Strategic Plan is for three years. Mr. Kelly advised that the Strategic Plan is for three years. Mr. Kelly noted that it is hard to forecast beyond three years. Progress is going to look different from branch to branch because everyone has a different role.

The proposed Strategic Plan gives us enough focus but it is broad enough to allow for the differences in community services. Ms. Greenway further inquired whether there is designated staff to measure the statistics. Mr. Kelly noted that there are statistical measures that he reports to the Board each month and there are other statistics that are being kept as well. Ms. Greenway stated that some things are hard to measure. Mr. Kelly advised that numbers only tell one part of the story. Statistics are important but that is only one measure so we are trying to look at this from a number of different angles and statistics are just one angle.

Mr. Laugelli noted that the main purpose of the Strategic Plan is to create a document that communicates to the staff and gives them a clear sense of where we are trying to get to and that is the primary purpose of the document. It is a balancing act and inquired whether this will be on the website. Mr. Kelly stated that the purpose is to keep everything brief for staff. When you look at the Carroll County plan that has 57 measures, no front-line staff can tell you three of those. If we keep it simple, it is easy to apply to staff's daily work. Mr. Kelly shared a story where Catie Hall was at a training recently and she mentioned to someone from a neighboring county that we were working on our Strategic Plan. Catie was able to tell her the three priorities and a week later that same person that does not work for FCPL repeated those priorities back to her. This is pretty powerful and our own staff will be able to do the same thing.

S. Manny noted that she is happy to see awareness on the list. She has seen progress in access and connection. She said that it is difficult to make people aware of the programs before they happen. Ms. Martinez added that at the focus groups there were so many suggestions about what the library should do and she found it very hard not to say that the library does do that. Ms. Manny stated that members of the FCPL Board of Trustees learned about the Memory Lab at the last meeting but she didn't know about it until then.

Mr. Laugelli stated that members of the Nominating Committee recently interviewed seven applicants for the Board of Trustees. He noted that over and over "awareness" was the biggest concern in that people don't know what is out there.

Ms. Greenway noted that maybe FCPL's website has a lot to do with it. There is nothing that is mind-altering on the website. Ms. Manny stated that if you are looking for a particular resource, you can find it but it is about how you can pull people in that are not aware.

Ms. Smith stated that the proposed priorities are very positive and action-oriented.

Mr. O'Leary inquired about accessibility. He noted that one definition of that is ADA compliant and the other is accessibility with a small "a" and he inquired which definition applies to the Strategic Plan. Ms. Martinez replied that it means all of the above. It is not just the ADA reference but also includes how we make things easy and accessible, how we connect with someone that may have English as a second language or to someone that doesn't speak English at all. There are lots of different levels of accessibility. The inclusion in the Strategic Plan is broader than the ADA reference.

Mr. O'Leary thereafter inquired about the second goal that states "Facilitate connections between people in need and social services" and requested a definition of social services. Ms. Martinez stated that one thing that was heard loud and clear in our research is how Frederick County has a great plethora of social services whether it be for those that are homeless or for those that are looking to learn the English language. Staff at the library recognize that they can't be experts in all of those topics but we can be the connection point. Mr. O'Leary stated that he has some difficulty seeing the library as a social service referral agency and how that really is core to the mission. He thereafter noted that within Frederick County there are hundreds of agencies that provide social services and each one has distinct and complex functions and inquired how it is practical for library staff to do this effectively and knowledgeably. Mr. Kelly stated that as far as this being core to the mission, he stated that the way he looks at it is this way - any individual that has an information need whether it be a three year old that wants a story or someone in our community that needs mental health services - that is a reference question, so we will try to connect people to their resources. Sometimes it will be a book on the shelf and sometimes it will be someone else in the community to provide the service. FCPL staff are not the ones to provide mental health services but as part of our core mission, we should know what resources are available in the community and seek to make appropriate referrals. If we don't have a problem doing that for an academic reason, we shouldn't have a problem doing that for any other issue. Mr. Kelly stated that he thinks it is very important to our core mission. Mr. Kelly stated that you can say that connecting to social services is not part of our core mission but it is happening. It is happening every day and he would argue that through the connections that we are making through the community with the health department and other agencies, FCPL is helping to move the needle on some of these issues. Mr. Kelly stated that he thinks we should be honored that those patrons that may come in to use the computers or other services feel comfortable enough to ask for help. Mr. O'Leary stated that what is essential to doing reference is having a good understanding of the pros and cons of the individual content sources and inquired whether it is practical to acquire that expertise for the vast array of different social service providers. Mr. Kelly stated that it is not knowing what the answer is but it is learning with the person you are helping and trying to find it together. Very often a patron will come in and ask something and Mr. Kelly said if he doesn't know the answer, he is with the patron and they learn together and we will find a person in the community that can help. Mr. O'Leary inquired whether this is done elsewhere. Ms. Greenway inquired whether Mr. O'Leary has ever been outside the library before the door opens. She stated that if you would be here at that time, you would see that 99% of the people that are waiting for the library to open are people that are in need of social services. There are maybe two or three of us that are waiting for story time. Mr. O'Leary stated that he doesn't doubt this at all but the question is whether this is the right means. Ms. Greenway stated that they are thrown out around 7:00 a.m. from the overnight shelters and they come directly to the library. Mr. Kane advised that in his job he deals with this population a lot and they are here at the library using the Internet to keep track of court dates and appointments. They use the Internet to find resources and if they are having an issue at the library, the library is fundamentally failing in their purpose if staff would be unwillingly to step in and help them with finding answers and filling out forms. Mr. Kane stated that he thinks that it is absolutely core to the mission.

Mr. Laugelli stated that we have had this discussion before. He noted that it is difficult but at the end of the day you have to trust staff. He stated that as members of the FCPL Board of Trustees he is not sure that we should get involved in the day-to-day flow of things and we should trust staff. Mr. Laugelli noted that there are other library systems that go way further than FCPL. Mr. Kelly advised that there are library systems that have social service workers on staff. Mr. Kelly stated that he would love to have a social worker on staff but FCPL does not have those resources.

Ms. Manny stated that this is part of building bridges. Staff don't need to know everything but they need to know how to connect.

Ms. Martinez inquired whether there are any other questions. Mr. Laugelli requested that Ms. Martinez highlight what is next. Ms. Martinez stated that she thinks she is hearing agreement with the three priorities so the next short term step is to get this out to staff. There will be discussions about the meat of it and creating a work plan/benchmarks. With regard to the Strategic Plan, she stated that she is hearing that everyone is in agreement with the priorities so the next step will be to roll those out to staff.

Mr. Laugelli stated that what he is missing is perhaps leveraging these things into some sort of public outreach program that says this is what the three priorities are. Ms. Martinez stated that she sees opportunities and noted that everything we are talking about externally needs to come back to these priorities and the Strategic Plan. Ms. Martinez stated that her next thing to do will be to complete a communications plan and it will be based off of the Strategic Plan.

d. Recommendation of Board Members: Mr. Kane noted that members of the Nominating Committee interviewed candidates and will be making their recommendations tonight.

Ms. Manny noted that Debbie Kiser, George Laugelli and she were very excited to meet with the highly qualified candidates. It was awesome that we had such a great pool to choose from and members of the Nominating Committee have selected three candidates to recommend to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees. She noted that once the recommendations are approved by members of the FCPL Board of Trustees, the recommendations will be sent to County Executive, Jan Gardner, to appoint these new Board Members. After that it will go before the County Council to be confirmed. It is hoped that they will be confirmed at the June 4th County Council meeting and they will be on board as of July 1, 2019.

The first person that she would like to recommend is Jenny D'Agostino. She lives in Frederick. She has two young children and she frequents the C. Burr Artz Library and is very aware of all of our programs. She has a professional background as a business owner and forensic accountant. She is well-versed in financial reports so we thought that was a big plus. She has over eight years of board experience in serving for-profit and non-profit boards.

Ms. Greenway inquired whether members of the FCPL Board of Trustees will get anything in our e-mail so we can look at everything to see their backgrounds. Mr. Kane stated that their resumes

were forwarded to all members of the FCPL Board of Trustees.

The second person that she would like to recommend is Karyn Spertzel. She was born and raised in Frederick County. She left for a short time and returned to Frederick in 2001. She is a recent retiree and spent 35 years employed with the federal government. Her final position was with the Department of Defense as a cyber security privacy compliance officer. She is ready to give back to our library system.

The third person that she would like to recommend is Suzette White. Suzette is recently retired from State Farm Insurance. She is an attorney and she has experience with policies, procedures and budgets. She currently serves on the South County Advisory Board of the YMCA.

Ms. Manny noted that the three candidates are looking to be involved and they seem to be committed and that is something that we thought was important.

Mr. Laugelli gave S. Manny a “tip of the hat” for handling this. There were originally nine different people but a few dropped out. He stated that it was a real pleasure being a part of this process. Each interview was quite interesting. He added that he feels really good about these people.

Ms. Manny noted that the Nominating Committee was unanimous in the selection of these three individuals.

Ms. Smith inquired whether these individuals have been notified of the recommendations. Ms. Manny noted that these are the three candidates that would be brought before the Board, then once members of the FCPL Board of Trustees vote on these individuals, she will notify them.

Ms. Manny made a motion to recommend Jenny D’Agostino, Karyn Spertzel and Suzette White as members of the FCPL Board of Trustees starting July 1, 2019; seconded by C. Smith. Ms. Greenway stated that she will have to abstain since she can’t find any resumes in her e-mail. Mr. Kane stated that he just forwarded Ms. Greenway another copy of his e-mail that he sent to everyone in March, 2019.

VOTE: For (5) – Kyle Kane, Cheryl Smith, George Laugelli, Mick O’Leary and S. Manny
Abstain: Candy Greenway

Ms. Manny advised that she will let all of the candidates know whether they were recommended or not by members of the FCPL Board of Trustees. She noted that she will also contact Joyce Grossnickle and let her know of our recommendations. Once Joyce receives them, our recommendations will go to County Executive Gardner and then on the County Council.

e. Board Member Onboarding: Mr. Kane recommended that the Board Member Onboarding be tabled until the June meeting in the interest of time and the fact that the Discussion of Officer Appointments under Old Business may take some time and it is a more pressing issue.

Mr. O'Leary inquired as to when the three individuals that we are recommending will be "official" so the onboarding process could begin. S. Manny stated that their terms will begin July 1, 2019. Mr. O'Leary advised that we would want to have the onboarding in place sometime between July 1, 2019 and the first board meeting in September since there are no meetings during the summer.

Mr. Laugelli stated that due to the large number of new members that we are bringing on board, he recommended that a Board Retreat be scheduled this summer so that we can meet everyone and that could also be the beginning of the onboarding process. Mr. Laugelli stated that at past retreats we have had presentations from staff during the retreat but that is not something that has to be decided right now.

Mr. O'Leary advised that in terms of orienting these new folks, there is a certain governing body of documents that they will be given but he would like to see more of a human interaction during this early period between the new folks, current board members and James Kelly. He also mentioned that the site visits he did with Kim Martinez were immensely valuable and suggested that some abbreviated version of that should take place. He noted that these are some of the components that he would like to see considered. Mr. Laugelli stated that typical retreats usually have staff presentations in the first hour or so and then staff leave and then members of the FCPL Board of Trustees are free to discuss whatever issues are needed. He thinks the onboarding process needs to be a richer experience than handing someone a binder. Ms. Smith stated that she thinks a guided tour is a good thing.

Mr. Kane requested that onboarding be on the June agenda as well.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Discussion of Officer Appointments: Mr. Kane inquired whether there have been any other ideas other than what has been previously discussed. Mr. Laugelli stated that members of the Nominating Committee had the discussion of putting someone in on an interim basis to fill out the term of Chair on a one-year basis and thereafter resume the normal procedure after that. Mr. Laugelli stated that he feels it should be handled by the Nominating Committee and noted that if anyone is interested in being Chair or Vice-Chair, let the Nominating Committee know and we will figure it out. Ms. Smith inquired whether this would be for the period of September, 2019 through June, 2020. Mr. Kane stated that the period would run from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Mr. Laugelli stated that we could announce candidates at the June meeting and go from there as long as everyone is in agreement. This will give us a year to get settled. It was noted that Mr. Laugelli's term will expire on June 30, 2020. Officer appointments will be added to the June, 2019 agenda.

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: None.

OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS: None

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the C. Burr Artz Library – 110 E. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD.

C. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by G. Laugelli. No further discussion.
VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Kyle Kane, Chair
Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees