

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on September 1, 2021 via a virtual meeting.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** J. D’Agostino, M. O’Leary, G. Mayfield, S. Sheppard, C. Smith, K. Spertzel, S. White, and J. Donald, County Liaison.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** J. Kelly, Director; S. McDuff, Associate Director; C. Hall, Associate Director; B. McDermott, Finance Manager; J. Marshall – Systems Manager; D. Frank-Rice, IT Coordinator; Rebecca Anderson, Library Associate – Thurmont Regional Library; Marie Archange-Desir, Library Associate – Urbana Library; Amanda Berry, Library Associate – Walkersville Library; Katherine Peterson, Library Specialist – Middletown Library; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary.

**CITIZEN REMARKS:** None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** S. White made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 2<sup>nd</sup> and July 7, 2021; seconded by J. D’Agostino. Mr. Mayfield noted that in the July 7<sup>th</sup> Minutes, it was noted that someone stated that he owns his own business. While the minutes are correct, he requested the record to show that he does not own his own business. No further discussion.

VOTE: For – 6 (J. D’Agostino, M. O’Leary, S. Sheppard, C. Smith, K. Spertzel, and S. White)  
Abstain – 1 (G. Mayfield).

**CHAIR’S REPORT:** Mr. O’Leary welcomed G. Mayfield to the FCPL Board of Trustees. He noted that there were numerous applicants this time around to serve on the FCPL Board of Trustee. He thereafter thanked members of the Nominating Committee for working through the numerous qualified candidates. Mr. O’Leary thanked Mr. Mayfield for his interest and support of FCPL.

Mr. Mayfield stated that he loves the library and thanked everyone for having him serve on the FCPL Board of Trustees.

Thereafter, Mr. O'Leary stated that he would transfer his time to James Kelly. He noted that over the last 1-1/2 years, FCPL has had a great deal of variability. Earlier this summer it seemed that things were going down and then things changed back again. He added that J. Kelly and his team are doing a great job. They have been doing this since March, 2020 and they continue to be nimble, flexible and look at the situation and modify services accordingly. It seems likely that things will continue for the foreseeable future and J. Kelly and his folks are modifying things accordingly.

Mr. O'Leary thereafter asked members of the FCPL Board of Trustees to take notes of any questions and comments they might have during J. Kelly's presentation and he will be glad to answer those questions following his presentation

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**a. FCPL – Update:** Mr. Kelly thanked Mr. O'Leary for recognizing the team and how nimble they have been over the last year and a half. It is nice to know the Board recognizes that. He thereafter welcomed G. Mayfield to the FCPL Board of Trustees and noted that he met with Mr. Mayfield a few weeks ago virtually and looks forward to his partnership on the Board.

Mr. Kelly noted that as everyone may recall, FCPL reopened its doors on June 1, 2021 with limited hours and capacity restrictions. This week FCPL moved into the next phase of our reopening plan by reinstating standard hours at branches, reopening our small study rooms, and where possible, rearranging furniture to further encourage social distancing.

For now, we continue to provide curbside service. When we opened our doors in June, we anticipated that the number of curbside pickups would drop and, in fact, that's what happened. We will continue to support contactless curbside pickup, since some customers are more comfortable with that model in this phase of the pandemic.

We are confident that with our cleaning protocols, distancing practices, the mask mandate in County buildings, and with the community's cooperation, FCPL can provide a safe space for the public and for our team. He further noted that FCPL is pausing the return of in-branch programming and the reservation of community rooms until the CDC classifies community spread in Frederick County as low. We continue to follow guidance from local, state, and federal authorities and, as we have throughout the pandemic, FCPL will remain flexible, and stepping back should the numbers require us to do so.

K. Spertzel inquired whether staff are getting push-back or abuse from those patrons who are unhappy with the mask mandate. Mr. Kelly stated that generally staff have conversations with our patrons at the door. Most people have masks with them but basically FCPL is like any other retail establishment and at times those interactions can be difficult. Staff is handling those

situations confidently. Some members of the public get it and others have to have things explained to them. FCPL works closely with the County Executive and Public Health Officer so we are moving forward as one.

Mr. Kelly thereafter reviewed statistics. He noted that at every September meeting the Board receives more updates in their packet than a normal month. This is because, when you return from summer recess, three months of data are available, one fiscal year closes and the next fiscal year begins.

Mr. Kelly began with reviewing the June numbers and what we learned in FY21, our pandemic year, which was a year of challenges that we hope none of us have to face again. As you can see, in June, we closed the fiscal year strong. A number of measures show spikes – in-branch visits, circulation of physical materials, and new library card registrations.

Opening our doors to foot traffic in June naturally played a huge role in these increases, but let's also remember that FCPL announced the move to "fine free for all" that same month. That move also drove traffic, though it is difficult to tease out to what degree since it happened during our grand reopening. These two important things happened at the same time.

For some perspective on the totals, in June we saw almost 39,000 branch visits. This is about a third of the amount we would have in a typical June, but Mr. Kelly noted that he is happy to see that spike after 16 months with our doors closed. In time, these numbers will exceed pre-Covid levels.

Regarding circulation, the FY21 number is lower than previous years due to the pandemic, but he noted he was genuinely surprised to learn that we were only down 27% from the 3-year average. Remember, FCPL doors were closed to the public for 11 months of the fiscal year. He added that he is proud of that 2.3 million total circulation because it reflects the hard work of our team in envisioning and deploying a curbside service model, in launching a popular personalized picks service, and in expanding/marketing our digital collections – all in the middle of a global pandemic.

Digging into new library card registrations a bit deeper, you can see that it far surpasses the 3-year average. Almost 1,200 of those June registrations happened in a branch, which is higher than a typical pre-COVID month. The remaining 325 cards issued in June were digital cards, which demonstrates that this service, too, is still well-used even with our branches reopening. This is another great example of how we are reimagining services to simplify access, a goal of our strategic plan.

The wi-fi numbers climbed even higher this month to nearly 30,000. As a reminder, during the pandemic, FCPL completed a grant-funded expansion of our wi-fi infrastructure, expanding the reach of our signal at every branch, starting with our regional libraries in December, 2020 and completing the work at all other branches by February, 2021. We shared this news with the public on March 9, 2021, and, as you can see, wi-fi use has jumped. The number will only go up as customers eventually return to our physical spaces for research and studying.

As for programming, the numbers reflect virtual programming as you are used to seeing, but, in addition, it includes 15 in-person outdoor story times which saw an average of 39 attendees per program. As FCPL slowly brings back live outdoor programming, it has been very well received.

Pivoting to the July, 2021 numbers, FCPL opened the year strong with some of the aforementioned measures growing even more and we look forward to seeing how trends play out in FY22.

**b. Budget/CIP Update:** Mr. Kelly advised that FCPL staff recently had its first meeting with members of the Public Works Department regarding the FY 23 Capital Budget. He noted that FCPL currently has three projects in the current CIP:

- Middletown Library – a 15,000 sq. ft. facility currently in design with construction to be completed in FY23
- West Frederick Library – a 15,000 sq. ft. facility will have a feasibility study in the current year.
- Linganore Regional Library – a 25,000 sq. ft. facility - design in FY26 and construction FY27

Mr. Kelly added that FCPL's Facility Master Plan also includes a North Frederick City branch and a remodel of the C Burr Artz Library branch, however, these projects do not appear in the County's six-year Capital Improvement Plan yet.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly reviewed the Operating Budget. Planning for the FY23 operating budget is already underway. B. McDermott, Finance Manager, is gathering proposed budgets from branches and departments. He noted that starting this month, Ms. McDermott will begin regular budget meetings with Administration as we set priorities for FY23. Mr. Kelly further noted that as members of the FCPL Board of Trustees may recall, he provided budget training for the Board last year. He stated that he plans to do so again in mid-January and within the next few months, he will be in touch with the Board to get that date set. He noted that a mid-January training was perfectly timed because it is just before the Board's Finance Committee meets to review the proposed budget in late January and ahead of the full Board's vote on the operating budget in February. At that training, we review the budget timeline, elements of the budget, review our major sources of revenue and limitations on certain lines of revenue, and walk through expense lines.

One final budget update, the Maryland State Library has awarded FCPL a grant in excess of \$80,000 to fund an outreach and mobile services project. These funds will help us secure a new outreach vehicle as well as new technology to be used to better serve people where they are in the community. This award is perfectly timed since, as you'll remember, the County Executive and Council funded a new Bookmobile position which will help with this expanded outreach. Mr. Kelly stated that he is sure you'll hear more about this project at a future Board meeting, but he wanted to share this news and publicly thank our Community Engagement Manager, Bryan Hissong, and the C Burr Artz Branch Administrator, Beth Heltebride, who worked on the grant proposal.

Mr. Kelly advised that the next Board meeting will be held on October 6, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. It will be determined whether or not that meeting will be held in-person or virtually. We will communicate information regarding the next meeting within the next few weeks.

Mr. Donald inquired as to when the groundbreaking will be for the Middletown Library. S. McDuff stated that we are tentatively anticipating that groundbreaking will be in March, 2022, as long as the weather cooperates. Mr. Donald thereafter inquired whether the theme of the library is being worked out. Ms. McDuff noted that we are still working on the details of the theme but the theme is related to the history of Route 40 and the streetscapes in Middletown. Mr. Donald noted that he was recently speaking to a friend of his who loves the library in Myersville so much that when visitors come to see him, he takes them to the library in Myersville.

Ms. D'Agostino inquired whether the library has already selected a construction company for the Middletown Library. Ms. McDuff explained that the project is still in design at this point and once that is complete, the County will then put the project out for bid.

C. Smith inquired whether the Friends organizations were able to continue operations during the pandemic and/or resume their public facing events such as used book sales. Mr. Kelly advised that the Friends groups never stopped operating during the pandemic. Some pivoted to other means of fundraising during the pandemic. The Friend of the Library in Urbana is planning a book sale event this fall. Even though they took a year off, they are hopeful they will be able to relaunch again.

Ms. Smith further inquired about the statement made by Mr. Kelly earlier about not being able to resume programming indoors until the transmission rate is categorized as low. Mr. Kelly stated that is correct. Ms. Smith stated that this may mean it will be a long time coming. Mr. Kelly stated that it all depends on the numbers. He added that Frederick County quickly went to high so perhaps the spike will go down as quickly as it arrived. Ms. Smith inquired whether a moderate level would be considered. Mr. Kelly advised that FCPL is sticking with low as a safety precaution for the public and for our team. Having people in an enclosed space, especially a story time program, it would be better to have these types of programs outdoors. The outdoor programs that FCPL has conducted, were very well-received. There was an average of 39 people who attended each story time. Even having the program outside, FCPL has seen great attendance. FCPL will continue to offer programming but it will be outdoors. Ms. Smith stated that she is hoping that FCPL has not set the bar too high since what people are saying is that this is something we will have to live with for a long time. She noted that programming is not stopped because of flu season. Mr. Kelly stated that he believes this is the right decision for now but as we see the numbers play out, we will make decisions as we move forward. There is a chance that we may move more quickly but for now, we will be holding programming outside until the transmission rate is low. Ms. Smith inquired whether this is a library decision or a county-wide decision. Mr. Kelly advised that FCPL is making decisions based on input from the

other agencies and what the levels are. He further noted that FCPL also looks at what other library systems are doing in our area.

Ms. D'Agostino inquired about programming for older kids (teens) that can be masked and, hopefully, vaccinated. Policies are different for those that wear a mask and those that do not wear masks. Mr. Kelly advised that FCPL is sticking with low for now but he hears the Board's concerns. He will bring all this information back to the team and see if there is some way we can move forward as to what may be safe for various groups. One of the things he discussed with Mr. O'Leary was providing teen programming in a different format (server) and that has proven popular and enables us to provide high-level programming in a safe way.

Mr. O'Leary stated that as far as Board meetings go, it seems that there were some hesitations on the part of some individuals so we decided to tilt toward caution and meet virtually. Going forward it will be on a meeting-by-meeting circumstance unless there is a preference by the Board as to one mode or the other but we will probably tilt toward being cautious.

Mr. O'Leary noted that the physical reopening of the library has begun but that doesn't mean, however, that all of the virtual aspects are being turned off because of being open physically. What we have is both aspects of service existing at the same time. This puts an extra burden upon the library because they are not running just a virtual library or a brick and mortar library. Those services that have proven to be so popular during the physical shut-down will continue because they have demonstrated their value. With traffic in the physical location, that means more physical engagement and staff are returning to those activities as well. Staff are running both at the same time. Mr. O'Leary noted that the Board is very proud of the folks juggling these balls because they are labor intensive in their own way.

Ms. D'Agostino noted that circulation increased when the libraries reopened in June, and inquired whether these numbers are kept seasonally (such as when school lets out) or was it a product of FCPL reopening. Mr. Kelly stated that there are trends month-to-month and we demonstrate that on the three-year average line on the Dashboard so you can see where there are trends. There are dips and rises throughout the calendar year. Some of the fluctuations are as a result of school being in session, the summer reading program, etc. There are patterns and trends that we see all the time and we try to demonstrate those by the average line on the Dashboard. He added that this past Covid year will always have an after effect when it comes to statistics and it is difficult to determine how much of that increase is the result of opening our doors in June and how much is a factor of going fine-free. All of this happened in the same month so it is difficult to point out which percentage is part of which factor.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**a. LATI RECOGNITION:** Mr. Kelly stated that he has the honor of recognizing the members of our team that have successfully completed the Library Associate Training Institute. As you'll recall, LATI is a 90-hour program that all Library Associates in the State of Maryland must complete. Through this program, staff gain a greater understanding of the principles and value of public libraries and about the resources and the profession in general. They learn about print and online resources, the reference interview and excellent customer service. The program involves online learning sessions, independent work, coaching sessions, and, in non-Covid years, face-to-face learning. It is an intense program and they balance this 90-hours of coursework on top of their day-to-day responsibilities.

This evening, Mr. Kelly recognized the following list of graduates and thanked each of them for their commitment and hard work: Rebecca Anderson, Marie Archange-Desir, Amanda Berry, Katy Peterson, Erika Schenkelberg, Diane Stefanick, Miranda Tong, and Julia Williams.

Mr. Kelly stated that he had the opportunity to meet with each of the LATI graduates but it is also rewarding to share their success with members of the Board. Members of the FCPL Board of Trustees shared their congratulations.

Mr. O'Leary noted that this opportunity is one of his favorite things at Board meetings - to be able to acknowledge those individuals who have participated in the LATI program. He researched the actual curriculum of the LATI program and was impressed with how deep and rigorous it is. When you interact with the library, you have a person that is well-trained, knowledgeable and is personally interested in helping individuals with whatever they need to accomplish. He added that he doesn't think, in his opinion, that there is anything more important to a library's success than what the LATI graduates did. There are lots of folks such as the Director and Catie and Sheila and Board Members that are important but those individuals that typically use the library, don't know those members. They know individuals such as Amanda who are out there providing the services and that is what shapes a person's perception and appreciation of the library. He thanked all of the LATI graduates and noted that the Board is happy that those individuals went through a lot of work to complete the program. It will strengthen their ability to serve customers.

**b. Financial Report:** B. McDermott presented the Fiscal Year 2022 financial statement for September, 2021. The data is tentative as of July 31, 2021 and was pulled on August 13, 2021. The revenue total collected is at 0%. As we end the first period of the new fiscal year, revenue was received totaling \$4,000 in July including library fines, miscellaneous operating and passport fees. She pointed out that much of FCPL's revenue is received and posted quarterly or at the end of the fiscal year. The transfer from the County general fund, Maryland State Education Grant and in-kind county revenue are quarterly. The contributions/donations and fund balance revenue are recorded at the end of the fiscal year.

She thereafter reviewed expenditures. Expenditures are at 6%. Library material purchases reflects an expenditure of 4% for annual e-content subscription renewals that were paid in July. Other operating expenditures are at 6% and equipment maintenance/repairs are at 19%.

Equipment maintenance/repairs was the most significant expense for several annual technology license and hardware agreements. County Finance also posted personnel and telephone expenses. She added that the FY22 total revenue and expenditures are comparable to FY21 and FY20 July figures. FCPL is exactly where it should be one month into the fiscal year. Expenditures post automatically when the transactions post to the general ledger.

Grants awarded are at \$3.3 million which includes a Middletown Library Branch Construction Grant in the amount of \$2.309 million along with another \$1,000,000 grant in FY23. FCPL is awaiting official notice of the grant award for the additional \$1,000,000. Funding is provided by the Maryland State Library to support the construction of the new Middletown Library project. The Frederick County Workforce Services Technology Partnership Grant was received in the amount of \$30,000. FCPL and FCWS entered into a technology partnership agreement to provide FCPL with \$30,000 to support the purchasing and circulation of mobile wi-fi hotspots and tablets. The agreement award will also fund an additional \$5,000 to FCPL in FY23. The Staff Development and Maryland Library Association Conference Grant was awarded to FCPL in the amount of \$31,100 to support library staff training throughout the fiscal year and attendance at the MLA Conference in May, 2022. The support of this grant will allow public librarians and library associates to attend conferences and training and earn their required hours of continuing education. Every five years the State of Maryland requires this training for state certification.

Grants submitted are at \$86,500. The One Maryland One Book Grant was submitted in the amount of \$500.00 to support the speaker's fees and programming in line with the state-wide initiative of The Maryland Humanities. Mr. Kelly previously mentioned the ARPA – Equity/Engagement Grant. This grant was submitted in the amount of \$86,000. We have received notice that this grant was approved. These funds will be used to purchase a van, mobile book cart, book bike, chrome books, and wi-fi hotspots. This funding is provided by the Maryland State Library.

Donations are at \$14,645. The donations received include several generous donations that FCPL received for the Greatest Need, Summer Reading, Youth Services and Library Branches. She noted that next month there will be an increase due to the success of the Read-A-Book Ball. There were 284 donations received totaling over \$18,000. J. El-Zeftawy will probably be doing a presentation in the next month or so about this and you will learn more information about this.

Ms. McDermott noted that the C. Burr Artz Trust approved the first quarterly FY22 transfer of \$90,000 and FCPL earned \$15.00 on the Nallin CD. The funds received each year from the C. Burr Artz Trust are based on an approved fiscal year budget plan to be used for the sole benefit of supporting the C. Burr Artz Library. The interest received from the Nallin CD is to be used for the purpose of purchasing large print books. The total for all of the above categories is at \$3.4 million.

Mr. O'Leary stated that Brandy pointed out about funds going towards staff training and he noted that this ties into the training and staff enrichment purposes of the LATI program. He further noted that if you look at the range of services and complexity of the things that are offered by the library, having well-trained folks to provide these services is absolutely essential



and on-going. Things changed in the last year literally from month-to-month as to what skills and services staff are expected to do. He stated that this is one of the great strengths of the public library - to keep folks at the top of their game - because that enables them to do the best they can for all of the folks that come into the library and depend on FCPL.

Mr. Kelly advised that all librarians and library associates are part of the State Teachers' Retirement Program and, as part of that, they must maintain certification by having enough credit hours over a five year period.

**c. Holiday Schedule:** Mr. Kelly noted that every year we come to the Board for approval of the holiday schedule. A proposed schedule was sent to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees prior to the meeting. This schedule pretty much stays the same from year-to-year. Any changes reflected on the schedule are because we want to bring consistency with the County. There have been times in the past when FCPL has been open and the County has been closed and this leads to some confusion with our customers so we thought it would be best to be in better alignment with the County. He added that there is no date on the list when the County is closed and FCPL is open.

J. D'Agostino made a motion to approve the proposed holiday schedule for 2021; seconded by C. Smith. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous

**d. Fine Free Update:** C. Hall provided an update on FCPL going fine-free. She noted that a lot happened last spring and summer to get FCPL to fine-free status. Thereafter, Ms. Hall reviewed a timeline. She noted that the timeline is provided as a reminder of the milestones of FCPL's fine-free journey. The timeline indicates the irregular progression of fine-free for FCPL due to extenuating circumstances. FCPL instituted fine-free on children's materials on October 1, 2019. Thereafter, FCPL went temporarily fine-free for all during the Covid closure. Thereafter, in the spring when we started our discussions about going fine-free, one of the things driving that discussion was the Maryland Lifelong Learners Act which went into effect on March 8, 2021. This Act made it so that FCPL could no longer charge fines on children's cards and that complicated matters.

The irregularity of the timeline impacted FCPL's ability to track metrics. It is hard to correlate what is happening because there is not a clear cut start/stop date. She noted that we are hopeful that we will be able to track some metrics. The two that we are focusing on for decision making are blocked users and new users. It is hoped that we will be able to see a correlation in our efforts to bring customers back into the library and also to use FCPL's fine-free status as a benefit when engaging with high, non-use populations in our community. FCPL is seeking ways to reach these populations through communications and outreach. She noted from the graph displayed that in June, 2021 there were a lot of blocked users and now in July, 2021, FCPL has very few blocked users. The graph also displayed how many card holders FCPL has. When the barrier of fines was removed, FCPL was able to open the door to thousands of our community members.

FCPL was in really good company when it went fine-free and that has remained true. Several other jurisdictions have also gone fine-free in the last few months. Ms. Hall displayed a map of FCPL's fine-free neighbors. The trend of going fine-free aligns with the common value of libraries removing barriers, especially to serve those communities that are historically marginalized and under-represented. Removing these barriers moves FCPL toward its strategic goal to Simplify Access and Building Bridges.

Thereafter, Ms. Hall noted that when fine-free status was voted on as a policy, FCPL had to put into place a new process for blocks and notices in the absence of fines. She displayed a graph of the new workflow which was agreed upon. FCPL had to compromise a little bit on the process because FCPL wanted to be able to place blocks on accounts based on days overdue. However, FCPL's current integrated library system was unable to do that for us. It would only place blocks based on the amount due. She thereafter noted that FCPL will be instituting a new ILS system in November, 2021. The new ILS system has been very responsive to FCPL's needs and has the ability to block accounts based on days overdue rather than the amount owed. The new ILS system will also include a customer engagement module (PatronPoint). This will allow us to text and send customized notices to our customers. This will allow FCPL full control over the messaging to our customers who are blocked due to long overdue items. This is an improvement FCPL is looking forward to implementing down the line.

Ms. Hall stated that she mentions all of this so that everyone is on the same page and to remember where we came from and where we are. This also foreshadows considerations for change to both procedures and policies related to FCPL's fine-free status. She advised that FCPL will continue to gather metrics, review procedures and recommend policy recommendations, if needed, in the future related to fine-free status.

Ms. Spertzel inquired whether FCPL is working with the schools to reach some of the children in the under-served population. Ms. Hall stated that this is not done specifically with the marketing and outreach campaigns but FCPL has a good partnership with the schools. FCPL has Student Success Cards so we can get the word out to those populations. FCPL is also trying to find ways to get into the communities themselves.

Ms. Sheppard noted that she was working with C. Hall on her sabbatical to get students at FCC to sign-up for library cards. She polled her students yesterday and, out of a class of about 20 students, only 3 students had library cards. Ms. Sheppard advised that she offered extra credit for those that came back to class with a library card. She inquired whether this is a conversation that we can revisit. Ms. Hall noted that this is definitely something we can revisit. She added that with the new vehicle that FCPL will be getting, possibly FCPL can go to the college and visit with the students before each semester. Ms. Hall reiterated that we had some great discussions and great ideas but the world fell out from under us but added that this is something we can revisit.

Mr. O’Leary stated that the Board would love to hear an update at a future time. It will take a while to see how things play out. When there are new patterns/trends that are emerging, the Board would love to hear about them.

Ms. Smith inquired whether staff has heard any reactions from the public about going fine-free. Mr. Kelly noted that within two days of the vote by the Board to go fine-free, he received a postcard from a member of the community thanking him directly for the Board vote to go fine-free. He added that FCPL received a lot of feedback from social media about going fine-free. Ms. McDuff stated that staff have heard lots of great feedback from our customers and how this impacts them. It has been a great experience – not only for our customers but for staff. Staff like to feel that they are really helping the community.

S. Sheppard noted that coming from a family who checks out about 35-40 books at one time and because her children love the library, going fine-free has saved her a lot of money. She definitely appreciates the fine-free policy. Mr. O’Leary inquired whether Ms. Sheppard has ever used curb-side pick-up. She advised that she has used curb-side pick-up but her children prefer to go into the library. Mr. O’Leary inquired whether the C. Burr Artz Library is her “home” library. Ms. Sheppard stated that the C. Burr Artz Library is her main library but she and her family have gone to Walkersville and Thurmont to pick up books.

**e. Reaffirm Policies:** Ms. McDuff advised that this time of year we bring the entire Policy Manual to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees for affirmation. There are three policies that we are proposing edits – Borrowing Policy, Fines and Fees Policy and the Meeting Room Policy.

She thereafter outlined the various changes to the policies. The changes to the Borrowing Policy basically eliminated outdated formats and details about stickers that should not be a part of a policy since they are procedural and not policy. For the Fines and Fees Policy, we are attempting to make this policy about charges related to customers’ accounts. There were charges in that policy that were moved to other policies. We basically eliminated the redundancy. For the Meeting Room Policy, we realized that the Meeting Room Policy was pretty lengthy and a little bit confusing for our customers to understand. This Policy was edited to eliminate some procedural sections so it is more clear and concise. Much of what was removed is already in our procedures that we share with the public. Unfortunately, this information can’t be found right now because people cannot book meeting rooms but normally the public can find how to book meeting rooms on FCPL’s website. In addition, the charges for meeting room usage was moved from fines and fees to the Meeting Room Policy.

Ms. D’Agostino inquired whether the library still offers Playaways because it was crossed out on the Borrowing Policy. Ms. McDuff stated that what was crossed out was Playaway Views. FCPL continues to offer Playaway Audios and they are included as an audiobook in the Borrowing Policy.

Ms. Sheppard inquired about the books that read to the children. Ms. McDuff stated that this is Wonder Books. Ms. McDuff stated FCPL is getting as many of those as we can and whenever FCPL gets donations or grant money that can be used for the collection, FCPL often puts the funds towards that because they are very popular. It basically replaces the book with the CD that we used to have. It is a much better format.

Mr. O'Leary stated that there are two sections that are being removed from the draft that was sent to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees and he was wondering if the content would be inserted into the procedures as they are developed and made available. The first one talks about eliminating the number of times that any individual/group can use the spaces and the second one talks about the labeling or naming of a public library not being part of the activity of any individual or organization. Ms. McDuff advised that the limit on how often an individual/group can book a meeting room will be in the procedures and also the entire piece about publicity and not making it look like a library event when it is a private event will also be in the procedures.

J. D'Agostino made a motion to accept the policy changes; seconded by G. Mayfield. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**f. Committee Assignments:** Mr. O'Leary stated that there has been discussion about this and requested that members of the Board refresh their understanding of what their intents are about serving on the various committees. Mr. O'Leary inquired of Mr. Mayfield whether he is ready to join the Finance Committee. Mr. Mayfield agreed to serve on the Finance Committee. S. White and S. Sheppard are also currently on the Finance Committee. Ms. White indicated that she is currently the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Ms. Smith noted that part of the discussion that was had was that she is currently on the Nomination/Evaluation Committee but since this is her last year on the Board, she suggested that she should move off of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee so that someone else that will be continuing on could be part of the selection process of the vacancy on the Board. S. White indicated that she and C. Smith had discussed possibly switching roles.

Mr. O'Leary then noted that C. Smith will shift from the Nomination/Evaluation Committee to the Finance Committee and S. White will shift over to the Nomination/Evaluation Committee. Ms. White indicated that she was Chair of the Finance Committee and inquired whether C. Smith or S. Sheppard would like to become Chair. It was decided that C. Smith would become Chair of the Finance Committee for this upcoming year.

Thereafter, the Nomination/Evaluation Committee was discussed. As of now, members of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee will be J. D'Agostino, K. Spertzel and S. White. The Chair of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee will be K. Spertzel. Ms. White inquired whether the Board will be looking to replace one member, C. Smith, at the end of next year. Mr. O'Leary verified that this is the case. Mr. O'Leary thanked members of the Nomination Committee for their efforts this past year. FCPL received a record number of applicants for the open position on

the Board and each one of the applications was carefully studied. Six applicants were interviewed. Members of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee deserve commendation for the amount of work they put into selecting our new Board Member. In addition, Mr. O'Leary noted that members of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee assembled a new director's evaluation which is vastly superior to the instruments that were used in the past. It resembles, in structure, the system used for library employees but reflects the distinct nature of the director's position. This is an important administrative advance to have a much more robust evaluation procedure for the director. This was also a great deal of work.

Ms. Spertzel added that the e-mail from J. El-Zeftawy was phenomenally successful in getting applicants for the trustee position and noted that she thinks this should be a part of the procedures in the future. Her e-mail was a great way of making sure that the public that really cares about the library were aware of the vacancy and how to apply. Mr. O'Leary inquired whether this is something we should do regularly. Ms. Spertzel stated that so many people referenced the e-mail from J. El-Zeftawy. She added that she is very appreciative of the efforts by Ms. El-Zeftawy. Mr. Kelly advised that the response was so good and we had a record number of applicants and agrees that we should spread the word through all of our networks and social media.

Mr. O'Leary noted that over the next few months, members of the Finance Committee will be active as we move into the budget schedule. He inquired of Mr. Kelly whether it had been mentioned about the informational planning training session. Mr. Kelly noted that there will be training in mid-January. This training helps members of the Board to understand the budget process. Last year this training was very helpful so, based upon that, we thought this is something that could be done regularly. The budget will be finished up in early 2022. Thereafter, members of the Nomination/Evaluation Committee will start to gear up for the process of replacing C. Smith. Mr. O'Leary noted that currently the FCPL Board of Trustees is a very young Board in terms of experience. C. Smith is the longest standing member but the rest of the members do not have a depth of experience. He added that the Board will have its work cut out. He further noted that later in the year, we will need to wrap up with the director's evaluation. Mr. O'Leary stated that this is basically the work cycle for these two committees.

S. White noted that for the month of November, meeting dates have been changed around. Mr. Kelly stated that this was done due to the audit approval. Ms. White advised that members of the Finance Committee will meet the first Wednesday in November and the actual Board Meeting will be the third Wednesday in November. This was a change that was implemented last year. Mr. Kelly noted that he will have L. Tibbs send out the meeting list again to everyone.

**BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:** None.

**OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS:** None.

The next FCPL Board of Trustees meeting will be held virtually or in-person at the C. Burr Artz Library – Community Room on October 6, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Kelly advised that a decision as to whether or not the meeting will be virtual or in-person will be made two weeks prior to the meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. O’Leary requested members of the FCPL Board of Trustees let him know their thoughts about virtual or in-person meetings so that we will have a sense of what the Board thinks the better method should be.

J. D’Agostino made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by S. Sheppard. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. O'Leary', is written above a horizontal line.

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M. O’Leary, Chair  
Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees