

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 2020**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on September 2, 2020 via a virtual meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: J. D'Agostino, C. Greenway, M. O'Leary, S. Sheppard, C. Smith, K. Spertzel and S. White.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: J. Donald, County Liaison

STAFF PRESENT: J. Kelly, Director; S. McDuff, Associate Director; C. Hall, Associate Director; S. Lauchner, Manager – Library Collections; J. Marshall, Manager-Systems; D. Frank-Rice, IT Coordinator; B. McDermott, Finance Manager; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary.

CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: J. D'Agostino made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 3, 2020; seconded by S. White. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous

CHAIR'S REPORT: Mr. O'Leary welcomed S. Sheppard as the newest member of the FCPL Board of Trustees. Mr. O'Leary apologized to Ms. Sheppard because he contacted her late this morning to let her know that she had been appointed to the FCPL Board of Trustees. He noted it is very important that we have a full Board and a special board meeting was called to approve the nomination of the nominating committee. Thereafter, it had to go to the County Executive and County Council for approval. The County Council met yesterday afternoon so it was not until this morning that we were able to contact Ms. Sheppard and request her to join the FCPL Board of Trustees. Ms. Sheppard has a very broad set of credentials in teaching, reading instruction, English instruction, and literacy programming. She is an Associate Professor at Frederick Community College and for a brief period of time, Mr. O'Leary noted that their careers overlapped at FCC and he had the privilege on a few occasions to work with Ms. Sheppard and her class. It was a lot of fun. She has a very strong talent to engage students and this is very important in the college community. Mr. O'Leary further advised that Ms. Sheppard has been involved in library programming and we are happy to have her join the FCPL Board of Trustees.

Ms. Sheppard stated that she is honored to be here.

Mr. O'Leary noted that there are no significant items on the Agenda but there are a lot of informational items, particularly from James Kelly.

Mr. O'Leary stated that the last several months have been monumental in the public library and we will hear more specifics from Mr. Kelly when he delivers the Director's Report. M. O'Leary noted that he has been following what the library has done since the very first week of the shut-

down to the most recent activities and he stated that it is exemplary how the public library responded in a time of transition, turbulence and urgent need. He added that he has been tracking the various activities over the last several months and Mr. Kelly sent him some up-to-date statistics that he sent out to everyone last week. It is awesome to see what these folks have done in many different ways to transfer all of their activities, content, services, and programming, to what we are using now and over the past several months. I know that public and private institutions are all challenged, and as we look at how they performed, it is his opinion that libraries will be at the top of the list and FCPL will be at the top of that list. He noted tremendous congratulations to James Kelly and staff. The statistics that he has seen demonstrate that things are being effective and are being used and, of course, it is not over yet. The transition will continue for a period of time and, at this time, we do not know how long that will be. Even after the branches open physically in some way, we are not going to go back to the way it was in December, 2019. He noted that he and James Kelly have talked about this and he, personally, stated that some of the very creative innovations that have been put together over the last few months, won't just go away.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. FCPL – Update: Mr. Kelly welcomed everyone to the September FCPL Board of Trustees Meeting. We had our normal July/August break so it has been awhile since we have met. Mr. Kelly thereafter echoed Mr. O'Leary's welcome to Shemica Sheppard. He mentioned that she is a Professor of English at Frederick Community College and it is in that capacity that she has led a highly successful program series for us at the library. In fact, Mr. Kelly noted that he has seen her and her family using the downtown library branch so she is very familiar with FCPL's collections and services.

Mr. Kelly thereafter thanked Board Chair, Mick O'Leary, publicly for serving as official event chair and helping us get the word out about our first-ever Read A Book Ball to benefit FCPL's Greatest Need Fund. This was a one-of-a kind virtual event envisioned by our Development Officer, Jess El-Zeftawy. It struck the perfect tone and, if you saw the posts that people made on social media, the event engaged a great cross-section of the community. How many galas can boast that they had kids and families participating? Almost half of the donors on that day were first time donors to FCPL. Thanks to Mick and Jess and to our team who helped pull it off and to our community for supporting FCPL.

Mr. Kelly stated that, as you know, our doors closed in mid-March, but we never stopped serving the community. We innovated and we evolved on how we served them. Tonight Catie Hall will provide a Strategic Plan update offering a deep dive into some of the work that our team has undertaken since the last Board meeting.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly highlighted a few things and provided an update on what's coming next.

- The day after closing our doors we offered our first virtual library program. We continue to offer virtual programs for all ages – many of them partner-led and they have all been well-received. The team that helped set up virtual programming was recognized by the County Executive as part of her Unsung Heroes Program.
- We quickly expanded our e-content collection and launched a virtual library card program providing instant access for customers who did not have a card prior to our doors closing.
- We redesigned our website to help people find what they need more quickly.
- We launched curbside pick-up of materials. This was another team recognized by the County Executive because they found a way to get people the materials they needed using a contactless model that preserved the safety of the community and our team during a time of social distancing.
- We started a Personalized Picks service allowing customers to complete a simple online form sharing their interests, so our team could curate a small collection of items that would be waiting for them to pick up curbside. With our doors closed, customers do miss browsing the shelves. Our Personalized Picks service has connected customers to thousands of titles that would not have circulated otherwise

In addition, Mr. Kelly noted that staff from across the system stepped up to volunteer for county-wide projects like documentation translation services, sewing masks for the hospital and providing Meals on Wheels delivery for seniors.

Mr. Kelly noted that while we are still in stage one of our reopening plan, you can see that we're still firmly committed to the priorities of our strategic plan. We have found new ways, on an almost weekly basis, to simplify access, build bridges and spark excitement.

Turning to what's ahead –

The fall semester started this week for students so we have been focused on what FCPL can do to support learning from home:

- We are exploring expanded wifi at our regional branches.
- We are launching a chat service to provide reference assistance
- We are developing virtual programming specifically for students
- And, we will be offering two new digital platforms –
Help Now – supports learning from home by providing live one-on-one online tutoring, test preparation and comprehensive writing assistance
Job Now – supports job seekers by providing live, one-on one interview coaching and resume assistance.

Mr. Kelly noted that these services will help customers today and will continue to help them when we eventually move into the next phase of our reopening plan.

Thereafter Mr. Kelly noted that in the next phase of our plan, curbside service continues and we will add appointment-based service for things like express computer reservations. While no date has been set for moving into the next phase, we remain in contact with the County Executive's Office and Frederick County's Public Health Officers. He noted that we look forward to the time when it is safe for all county buildings to begin reopening safely.

Mr. Kelly stated that most everyone probably heard Governor Hogan's announcement yesterday that the State of Maryland will move into Stage 3 at the end of the week, however, local jurisdictions have the flexibility to be more restrictive than the State. He added that County Directors have a meeting with County Executive Gardner tomorrow and he is confident this topic will come up. He further noted that once he knows what the implications of the Governor's announcement might be for county facilities, we will have a better idea of whether FCPL will move into the next phase of our reopening plan. He noted that he will, of course, keep members of the FCPL Board of Trustees and the public informed of any developments.

Mr. Kelly thereafter reviewed statistics. Everyone received Dashboards for May, June and July. June 30th marked the closure of Fiscal Year 2020 so we have annual numbers to share. Our doors were closed for the last full quarter of the year, so unsurprisingly, this had an impact on our visits and programming numbers. However, it is worth highlighting that our total circulation hit 3.1 million which is on-par with our Fiscal year 2019 total which was also 3.1 million. Had our doors been open the last quarter of the fiscal year, we would have surpassed last year's total by a good margin.

He noted that one upshot of the closure is that it encouraged customers to explore our robust e-content collections. You will remember that circulation of e-content had been strong all year and we had been watching it hover between 25% and 30% of our total circulation from month-to-month. When the June numbers came in, you can see that e-content accounted for over a million circs or roughly 1/3 of our total circulation. Even when we reopen our doors, Mr. Kelly noted that he suspects that we will see that number remain strong because we will no doubt pick up many first time users of digital content who will now make that a regular part of what they borrow.

Mr. Kelly thereafter reviewed the July numbers but noted that since July is the first month of the fiscal year, it is way too early to start talking about annual trends. He added that we would like these monthly Dashboards to remain meaningful to everyone so, to that end, you will start to see changes in the format of the Dashboard. In our internal talks and with his conversation with Board Chair, M. O'Leary, the impacts of COVID, and the prolonged closure make year-over-year comparisons less than helpful. We will be building in month-to-month views, which will be more valuable in the short term and help everyone spot trends in the midst of the pandemic and, more importantly, as we move through the phases of our tiered reopening plan.

Mr. Kelly noted that he appreciates everyone's flexibility and patience as we work to fine tune the Dashboard.

b. CIP/Budget – Update: Mr. Kelly noted that on the operating side of the budget, we are planning our draft Fiscal Year 2022 budget. At this stage, Director’s Staff will begin meeting with Brandy McDermott on a bi-weekly basis to talk through departmental needs and setting priorities.

The auditors will make a presentation to the Board in the fall and, at that time, we will be informed of the library’s ending fund balance total which becomes a revenue line for Fiscal Year 2022.

Mr. Kelly noted, as a reminder, that the timeline for the library’s budget requires that we draft the budget by late January so we may make our presentation to the Board’s Finance Committee before the formal presentation to the entire Board in February.

On the capital side of the budget, Mr. Kelly provided an update on the Middletown project. HBM, the same firm that worked on our Facilities Master Plan last year, facilitated two successful community input sessions in mid-August. We are currently gathering input from staff. All of this feedback will provide input on design conversations with our architects, Noelker and Hull, on the project.

Mr. Kelly thereafter advised that staff had their first meeting with the Department of Public Works regarding the Fiscal Year 2022 CIP budget. At this point in the CIP budget cycle, we met with DPW to discuss projects in the current plan and share ideas for potential projects down the road. The only building projects that are in the current CIP are: 1) the Middletown Library construction project – design is happening now and construction will follow in Fiscal Years 2022 and 2) The East County Regional Library is planned for development at Rt. 144 and Eaglehead Drive in FY 2023. This will be a regional library on the east side of the county and be at least 25,000 square feet.

In closing, Mr. Kelly noted that he would like to get two dates on everyone’s calendar:

1. Wednesday, October 7th is our next board meeting. It will be determined whether it will be in-person or virtual. Signs are pointing to virtual at this point but we will be in touch as the date draws closer.
2. Saturday, October 17th is the Citizens for Maryland Libraries’ 2020 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees and Library Supporters. I know some of you have attended this free event in the past and found it valuable to connect with your peers state-wide. This year they will be meeting virtually via Zoom from 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and the keynote speaker will be Carla Hayden of the Library of Congress. Mr. Kelly will provide full details and a link to register to members of the FCPL Board of Trustees tomorrow.

J. D’Agostino inquired whether the Help Now and Job Now platforms are provided by FCPL staff or is this a service that is provided by outside personnel. Mr. Kelly replied that it is a third-

party service. FCPL subscribes to the services so all of our customers can utilize it.

J. D'Agostino further inquired whether there are any concerns about the budget since e-content is still going up since we are adding other tools. Mr. Kelly stated that we are able to make allocations within the current year's budget to cover these things and, as we put together the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, we will be taking a look at that. If it is a third of our circulation now and is growing, we want to make sure we can stay on top of that. Mr. Kelly added that last year we had a few budget appeals that were sent over to the County and one of them was regarding getting additional material support. We had widespread support for that initiative but, unfortunately, when they were putting the budget together, that is when the pandemic hit, so none of the appeals went through for any of the County agencies. He noted that, of course, there is still a need and that will be part of the budget appeals that we will be submitting this coming year.

J. D'Agostino asked if "fine-free" will be lifted in the third quarter. In the past, Mr. Kelly noted that we have discussed fines in the past and he shared his philosophy that it would be great to not have fines. Fines are still a source of revenue, however, it is trending downward with the increase in electronic circulations. He noted that going back to the budget appeals that were submitted last year, we requested additional operating funds and, if we would be able to get that additional support from the County, it would offset the revenue we are getting from fines. But, as mentioned, fines are trending down every year and since the Board last met, both Carroll County and Howard County have now gone fine-free. He added that he received a phone call from the Director of Carroll County Public Libraries that they will be going fine-free on September 1, 2020 and, since we share a lot of mutual customers from the Mt. Airy area, we may be receiving questions as to why FCPL is still charging fines. He noted that if the funds are received by the County, we would love to move in that direction. Fines are trending downward so it is not money we can depend on at this time.

S. White inquired whether, due to the pandemic and budgets, could there be any issues with the Middletown and East County projects going forward. Mr. Kelly stated that he doesn't foresee any issues with the Middletown project because we are already in design right now and construction is planned for next year. Mr. Kelly noted that as far as the Linganore Regional Library is concerned, that is currently in the out-years so, depending on the revenue coming into the County, we may see some of the County projects continue to stay further out but he does not anticipate that for the Middletown Library.

Ms. Smith stated that she has FCPL's reopening plan on her bulletin board. She noted that FCPL's Phase 2 includes groups of less than 50 and services by appointment. She inquired how FCPL's reopening plan fits into the Stage 3 reopening plan by the State. Mr. Kelly thanked Ms. Smith for her question. He noted that it is important to clarify that the State has their phased reopening plan and FCPL has its own. It doesn't mean that if the State is in Stage 3 that FCPL is in Phase 3. It is important to stay flexible and noted that not all elements of the plan that was shared with members of the FCPL Board of Trustees may remain in those phases. We are scheduled to have talks with the County Executive soon. We don't want to reopen all of the

branches and they are still locking down all of the other County facilities. We are trying to move at the same pace as the County as far as reopening but we are also trying to weigh that against the needs that the community has for computer access. As part of the ways FCPL is trying to mitigate that is by boosting wifi at the branches. While we know that people still have to be on property to utilize the wifi, we are still trying to provide improved services. We are looking for ways within the confines of each phase of the plan to continue to improve service.

Ms. Smith further inquired about passport services and whether this is something that people are saying they are in need of. Mr. Kelly stated that he has not heard anything about it but it is a service that lends itself well to appointment-based reservations. We may not see a rush for that service since no one is travelling right now. Mr. Kelly also noted that the State Department is not accepting passport applications right now but we need to remain flexible.

K. Spertzel inquired whether Mr. Kelly knows which of the virtual programs are most popular. Mr. Kelly stated that he does not have that information right now but he will get that information and share it with everyone. Ms. Spertzel further inquired that once we go back to normal, whether it would be worthwhile to continue with some of the most popular virtual programs as outreach programs. Mr. Kelly noted that Mr. O'Leary alluded to that earlier this evening and we will be taking a look at everything once we reopen and what services will continue and what will be scaled back. Mr. Kelly added that the story time and genealogy programs are very popular and he noted that we even found a way for our partners to be engaged in programs and stay connected to the community.

Mr. O'Leary noted that as he alluded to earlier that as the branches open up and people start coming in, there will be staff engagements with those folks. We don't know what the volume will be but we can expect more people will be coming to the branches and folks that may have been involved in digital activities during the physical shutdown will be engaged in actual physical contact with customers. If some of the expanded digital offerings are really popular, it is a type of a problem you might want to have in that you have demonstrated a whole new aspect of service that is popular. Mr. O'Leary added that he imagines that Mr. Kelly and his staff will have some very interesting discussions and will come to the Board at some point in different ways. It is what comes along with success.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Report: B. McDermott reviewed financial statements which contain tentative data through July 31, 2020 and the data was pulled on August 14, 2020. She noted that the data reflects the first month of the new fiscal year which shows revenue at 0% and expenditures at 6%. As FCPL starts Fiscal Year 2021, these percentages are comparable to previous years for this time frame. FCPL will start to see increases in revenue as we move forward towards the end of each quarter. Most of our revenue sources are received quarterly so you will start to see changes as we move through the fiscal year. She noted that under the expenditure section, library material purchases are at \$198,000, which is mostly due to the increase for e-content at this time.

Ms. McDermott thereafter noted that grants awarded are at \$315,000 which includes the Middletown Design Grant in the amount of \$300,000. This grant will be used for the purpose of design and planning of the new Middletown Library. The staff development grant in the amount of \$15,000 will support library staff training. We have a lot of virtual training in place for Fiscal Year 2021. Grants submitted are at \$24,000. We have submitted the Technology Act Grant. This grant will help assist system-wide programming for teens. The funds will procure mobile devices to be used for teen programming. Donations received for the first period were \$850.00. It might appear low but we are continuing with campaigns and programs to bring in donations. She noted that the Read-A-Book Ball was a great success and donations reached almost \$19,000.00. Ms. McDermott stated that she enjoyed getting all dressed up to read her book and she hoped everyone else did as well. Other endowment revenue are at \$98.00 which is the result of two interest payments we received for two CDs that FCPL has.

C. Greenway stated that she didn't understand what she was supposed to do for the Read-A-Book Ball. Ms. McDermott stated that you just needed to note that you were going to participate in the program by reading a book and you got dressed up at home and you read your book in the comfort of your home. Ms. Cheryl stated that they raised a lot of money. Ms. McDermott noted that Jess El-Zeftawy and the rest of the library staff deserve so much credit for this campaign. Mr. Kelly added that it was great to do a campaign when we couldn't be together.

b. Holiday Schedule: Mr. Kelly reviewed the proposed holiday schedule for Calendar Year 2021. We normally bring this proposal to the Board in September of each year for the Board's approval. He noted that there are not any major changes from previous years that staff has not seen before. There are some holidays that fall on the weekend so it may look a little out of the ordinary but he assured everyone that it is keeping with the policy manual of Frederick County and everyone will get the time off that they are entitled to.

C. Greenway made a motion to approve the 2021 Holiday Schedule; seconded by C. Smith. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

c. Strategic Plan Update: Catie Hall provided a PowerPoint demonstration of the Strategic Plan Update. She noted that when we met in June, she provided an update on what FCPL has been doing since the closure and now she will provide what we have been focusing on since then.

She reviewed the guiding principles of the Strategic Plan – Core Values, Vision and Mission. This Strategic Plan covers Fiscal Year 2020 – Fiscal year 2022. We are just entering into our second year of our three-year plan. When the staff work group put this plan together and proposed it to us, they used this information to guide them in developing strategic priorities and goals. They came up with three strategic priorities and some broad goals. Those goals are:

Simplify Access
Build Bridges
Spark Excitement

She noted that just as a reminder as to how the Strategic Plan works - it is a very high level plan and it guides a lot of the other work that we do. It is top level and it has been created out of our guiding principles and then it provides work plans every year. Each location/department creates a work plan each year and those work plans reflect how we are going to get this work done. Each supervisor assigns individual goals to each staff member that relates to the work plan that, in turn, relates to the Strategic Plan. It is a tiered approach and this is one tier of that approach. She added that this Plan has worked really well for us but during this last six months, while we were closed, having a flexible plan meant everything for us.

Our first priority is to **Simplify Access** – this has been our focus for the last six months. We had to close our doors in March and had to find new ways to provide access to all of our resources. It has been a source of pride for the Director's Staff to see library staff pivoting to providing digital services and providing curbside pick-ups. It has been amazing to watch. The first thing we did was provide virtual programs. We provided over 400 virtual programs since we closed our doors. She added that, as Mr. Kelly noted earlier, FCPL expanded the reach of our temporary, online cards and then in June, we converted those cards to permanent, digital cards. A customer can continue to be a digital card holder and use all of the online resources or they can come through curbside pick-up and trade in their digital card for a more, full-service card and get more physical materials. Providing various options to customers is one way to provide more access. FCPL expanded greatly our digital offerings. We added 85,000 new titles in the spring. We also had an opportunity to expand a lot of our limits and with the new fiscal year, we are continuing to monitor all of this so that we can balance the demand with budget implications and materials. Curbside service started in June and a few weeks later, the hours were expanded and allowed people to just drop by instead of making appointments. We have had approximately 22,500 curbside pick-ups since this started on June 1, 2020. This accounts for approximately 125,000 items checked out. Curbside service has received a lot of positive feedback from our customers.

One of the things FCPL did last fall to simplify access for our youngest customers was to go fine free on children's materials. FCPL is glad that this was done last fall because it helped build the momentum we needed to continue to serve our youngest customers during the time FCPL has been closed. FCPL was only able to collect data from October – February so it is not as full of a report as we had hoped to have but we want to share this information with everyone. This was a goodwill effort to increase accessibility and put a positive image out there about the library and to make sure everyone knows that the library is for them and that we have resources for everyone. From the period of October, 2019 – February, 2020, we did see a 9% increase over the previous year for new card holders. We had an increase of over 11,000 in the number of items checked out, especially in elementary materials. There was also an increase of 12,500 people that visited the library. This is a pretty significant increase. Before we went fine-free last September, we were starting to see a little down-trend in our visits so this is particularly significant.

She noted that in March, FCPL had to shut its doors but we kept the momentum going while we

were closed. We updated FCPL's website so families at home that were trying to do school work or find things to read, were able to access everything more easily. FCPL expanded its digital collection and expanded the number of check-outs children could have in those collections. FCPL also created virtual programming as well. We will take a look at all of those programs that we have been providing and try to find even more ways to provide what people need right now.

The next step to simplify access for our youngest customers is the learning from home initiative that Mr. Kelly spoke about earlier. In addition to the tutoring services and expanding wifi, we increased check-out limits for the student success cards since the students don't have access to the schools. We wanted to make sure students had access to books to take home.

Build Bridges has become an initiative for FCPL. This is an umbrella approach of finding ways to bring the community together and this has been around topics of equity, diversity and inclusion. We created some anti-racism booklists, programs about African-American genealogy, Shemica Sheppard did a hip-hop lecture series, and we have created story times. We will continue to find ways to bring the community together around topics like this. Right now we are engaging in conversations with our community partners because we want to gain insight into their current challenges and determine what FCPL can do to make a more positive impact in the community.

FCPL partnered with the Community Action Agency this past summer to provide summer lunches. This occurred at the Walkersville and Brunswick library branches. They provided over 3,000 lunches to kids this summer. Walkersville Library staff also did Blessings in a Backpack and that provided a backpack full of food on Fridays so that the kids could eat throughout the weekend.

Spark Excitement is the fun one. Mr. Kelly told everyone about what is going on in Middletown and it is always great to have something to look forward to in times like this. The Middletown Library has been a fun project to see what people want in their library, to see what the design firm is coming up with to put in the library, and we are very excited to offer this expanded, new branch to the Middletown community.

She noted that Fredrik Backman, author of [A Man Called Ove](#), will be doing a virtual program about his most recent book on September 10, 2020 from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Also, she added that FCPL rolled out Personalized Picks. It is great for the community and it is just as great for staff members because staff love to talk to people about books and recommend books. Personalized Picks has been as big of a win for staff as it has been for the community.

She gave a shout out to our Summer Challenge Team who were very quickly able to pivot to an all on-line Summer Challenge for our customers this summer. She noted that they will be providing an update at next month's meeting.

C. Greenway inquired where she can find Personalized Picks. Ms. Hall stated that it is on the

homepage of FCPL's website. She further asked if staff has thought about adding FCPL Board of Trustees picks. Ms. Hall stated that she hadn't thought about it but it is not a bad idea.

C. Greenway further inquired about Blessings in a Backpack and asked for an explanation of what the library's participation is for this program. Ms. Hall stated that FCPL does not provide the items in the backpacks but we provide the ability to get the backpacks to the children through curbside pick-up.

S. Sheppard inquired whether FCPL is looking to put a library on Rt. 40. Mr. Kelly responded that there are two bookmobile stops in that area as of right now. We know that corridor should have had a brick and mortar library in it years ago. There are residents on both sides of Rt. 40 that would benefit from that. This is a project that we are talking to the Department of Public Works about in the long-term. Capital projects can take a long time to make it through the County in order to have a brick and mortar outlet. He noted that in conversations that he has had with the rest of the Director's Staff, we feel that with the partnerships that we already have on Rt. 40 that we can have a presence there even if it is not in an actual brick and mortar facility.

Mr. Kelly added that he was approached by a developer who is developing land at the end of Rt. 40 with an offer of a parcel of land to be used for a library but when we took a closer look at it, it didn't meet the County's standards for flood plain. We continue to have talks with the County and developers in that area about opportunities that we might have. The County is not keen on us renting existing commercial property on Rt. 40. Building a facility on Rt. 40 is in our Master Plan that HBM developed for us last year and put a pen to paper anecdotally as to what is necessary.

Ms. D'Agostino inquired whether the bookmobiles are out and running. Mr. Kelly advised that while the physical locations were closed so were the bookmobiles. However, the bookmobiles have just started running again and are providing service to the community.

Ms. Greenway inquired of Mr. Kelly regarding his comments about a brick and mortar facility and whether those comments are being made as part of the current environment where people can no longer get together and wondered if that would be our strategy going forward. She added that shouldn't we be thinking about more virtual experiences?

Mr. Kelly advised that these two things can run on parallel tracks. We don't give up on long range conversations about having a brick and mortar facility because it is many years of conversation to get something like that into the CIP. He stated that he remains hopeful that what we are dealing with right now as far as distancing will go away. It doesn't mean that we will abandon a presence out there. We think about FCPL's presence on Rt. 40 all the time. At the present time we are thinking about more immediate concerns and making sure our bookmobiles are back up and running in those areas. We agree that we can have a conversation about brick and mortar and a conversation about leveraging partnerships that we have in that area.

Ms. Greenway stated that she thinks about that huge mall out there on Rt. 40 that is empty and it

seems like such an opportunity for non-profits or the library to come in and do all kinds of fun things for kids. Mr. Kelly advised that he agrees but the County is not very keen on leasing a space in that area. He further noted that he will keep advocating for folks in that community because there is a definite need. Ms. Greenway added that people are desperate for libraries.

Mr. O'Leary noted that the long term capital plan calls for expansion in areas east, north and west of the City of Frederick. There have been tentative discussions about getting away from an all or none plan. It seems like this is a discussion that we can continue and see if there is an interim solution to fill some of the gaps in some of the areas of the County.

d. Reaffirm Policies: Mr. Kelly advised that a few years ago we overhauled all of our policies and as part of that discussion, we said what we would do is at the September meeting, if we had any changes to policies or recommendations for the Board to consider, we would bring them to the September meeting. In addition, we would reaffirm all existing policies that would not have any changes at the September meeting.

Mr. Kelly requested that the Board reaffirm all of the policies as written since there are no proposed changes at this point. Pending the Board's vote, we would just update the policies page of our website that the Board considered the policies as written and they voted to reaffirm in September, 2020.

C. Greenway made a motion to reaffirm the current policies; seconded by K. Spertzel. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: Mr. O'Leary stated that the review of the Strategic Plan and the initiatives of the spring are continuing with comparable energy and innovation through the summer and into the fall and beyond. We commend that vitality and it is entrepreneurial and creative. Some of the initiatives will prove to be fruitful and others will not. You really have to put it out there and see what happens especially in a turbulent and confusing environment that we are in at this time.

C. Smith advised that she participated in discussions with people about what FCPL is doing during this COVID period and what things are going to stick and what FCPL will adopt going forward because they worked very well. Ms. Smith suggested that in the past we have had to cancel meetings in the winter months due to inclement weather but when we get back to normal, she thinks WebEx is an excellent alternative for members of the FCPL Board of Trustees to meet every month and not have to cancel meetings because of inclement weather. She is looking for the silver lining in the COVID cloud. Mr. Kelly stated that it is a point well taken and we are grateful for the County's IT Department setting up this platform for us to use for our Board meetings. C. Greenway stated that she thoroughly agrees and the fact that staff members who work all day could then just watch the meeting from home.

Mr. O'Leary further commented that many of us have been meeting via Zoom and Teams and it does have some advantages but it is not like we have a big choice right now. He thinks that

Cheryl's point is well-taken and he thinks we are doing quite well with our meetings.

OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS: None

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. either virtually or at the C. Burr Artz Library – 110 E. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD.

C. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by J. D'Agostino. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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

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