

CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Minutes of August 11, 2020

The Catawba County Library Advisory Board met on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, 12 noon, in the Community Room of the Main Library in Newton.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Canrobert, Honey Estrada, Greg Kain, Kevin Moretz, Carol Preston, Tamara Shavers and Suzanne White, Library Director, Siobhan Loendorf, Assistant Library Director, Michele Francois, Business Manager.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Carmen Isenhower

CALL TO ORDER

Kevin Moretz, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The board approved the renewal of Kevin Moretz as Chair and Carol Preston as Vice-Chair of the board.

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 2, 2020 meeting were approved as written. The meeting scheduled for May 12, 2020 was cancelled due to COVID-19.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Staffing Update

New Business Manager and board liaison: Michele Francois, started May 4th

TechConnect Librarian: Jennifer Schraw, starts August 17

Sherrills Ford-Terrell Branch's Glenda Ramsey retired end of June

Lindsay Robins, LSSII lateral transfer from St. Stephens Branch to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Branch

Tim Gabe, promoted to LSSII at St. Stephens Branch

Katie Hartley, promoted to LSII at Maiden Branch

Alyssa Vang and Connie Mastroianni, hired as half-time Library Assistants at Sherrills-Ford-Terrell Branch

Kacy Steiger, new hourly Library Assistant

Suzanne White, retiring effective 8/28/20

Strategic Planning

The Library is wrapping up the 2020-2023 Strategic Planning process funded by a 2019-20 LSTA grant award. The consultants have facilitated the library through a comprehensive planning process to enable the library to engage community and stakeholders and evaluate library spaces to develop a robust and meaningful strategic and facilities plan, providing guidance and a touch stone for future services and outcomes. A preliminary draft of a high level 2020-2023 Strategic Plan was shared by Ms. White, and the Board was asked to further review the draft after the meeting and to provide any further input. As advised by the consultant, the library will use this plan as the overarching guide, and develop annual working plans to best innovate and respond to an ever-changing environment.

Programming

Suffragette:

The Centennial celebration of the Women's Right to Vote project kicked off pre-COVID at the Harper House with a Suffragette Tea, but plans to display historical panels have been stalled by the pandemic. They've been completed and the group looks forward to highlighting them some time in the future. In the meantime, they will create digital versions of the panels and will post them on a library Suffrage Centennial page, one each week leading up to election day.

Programming has continued using the online platform Zoom to host author visits, etc. There were 12 people in attendance for Elaine Weiss, the author of *The Woman's Hour*, which was hosted by Hickory Public Library. In July, we hosted 31 participants at a presentation about African Americans and the Suffrage movement led by Dr. Veronica McComb, associate professor of History at Lenoir Rhyne University.

August 12 kicks off a Light Up for Suffrage display at the Hampton Inn that faces I-40—the hotel will have building lights in purple and gold through the rest of the month of August. The project team is also working on a future collaboration with the UNC School of the Arts to create a 'sculptural light display.' On August 22, the League of Women Voters will be at the Farmers Market in Hickory to conduct voter registration and promote the Suffrage Centennial page.

Summer Reading:

Summer Learning went online this year with a new web based platform to register users, track reading, provide recommendations, earn activity badges, etc. As of Aug 11, the library has a total of 668 children, teens and adults for the online Summer Learning Program – this about 1/3 of the total registrations of last year but not bad considering that the library cannot do in person programming or school visits. The 340 registered children have logged 74,410 minutes of reading and earned 1,120 activity badges for completing challenges such as writing reviews, attending online programming, or walking a literacy trail in the park. The 132 registered teens have logged 29,526 minutes and completed 495 badges, and 195 registered adults have completed 471 activity and challenge badges.

The library has conducted online programming including story times, family challenges, and featured presenters including storyteller Donna Washington, Mad Science, and Yasu Ishida Origami. In addition to the online materials, patrons were able to pick up printed packets of Summer Learning activities that were low-tech and low-cost. Community members have responded positively, and have shared the impact of the program.

COVID-19 Status

The Library continues to be “Open with Options” – the libraries are all open and following CDC and State recommendations, including limitations on access to facilities to allow for social distancing and for safety and sanitizing protocols. Libraries are limiting the number of people in the building, providing one-hour visits, following strict cleaning and sanitizing protocols, and frequently disinfecting high touch surfaces, furnishings, technology, and equipment between customer use. Staff are Isolating returned materials 84 hours, and offering curbside pickup service at 5 library locations. The Library to Go Service is currently on hold, as is meeting room use and in-person programming, with the exception of limited census training and voting in November. Library teams have been working hard to create engaging online programming, even amid staffing shortages with family and school situations.

Grant Projects

COVID-19 Support: The Library received a grant from the State Library for PPE and other safety supplies which was used to purchase sneeze guards and masks.

Community Navigator: The library is implementing the Community Navigator LSTA Grant project, partnering with Appalachian State University to host interns from the School of Social Work to work at the library interviewing high-need patrons, assessing their most immediate needs, and coordinating efforts while referring them to appropriate community resources. Through direct interactions interns will help people navigate services, provide mental health first aid, and facilitate training for library staff including de-escalation strategies and trauma informed care.

Wi-Fi for All: The Library was also awarded a State Library NC Cares Grant to help bridge the digital divide and enhance internet access across the county, and will partner with community organizations to provide free Wi-Fi in parking lots at locations that are typically underserved, as well as training/educational opportunities. Additionally, the library will be offering Wi-Fi enabled tablets that will be available for checkout by community members.

Library Endowment

Since the February library advisory board meeting, we have received gifts to the endowment fund totaling \$3,750 which includes our Library Day of Giving, a matching grant of \$500 from the Friends of Catawba County and a \$500 gift from Friends of Claremont Library. The endowment account at the North Carolina Community Foundation has a balance of approximately \$41,495.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm

The next regularly-scheduled Library Board Meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at the Newton Library at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Francois, Library Business Manager