



**HERSHEY
PUBLIC LIBRARY**
701 COCOA AVENUE
HERSHEY, PA 17033

Library Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes – June 20, 2020

Library Mission: The Hershey Public Library is the hub of our community, creating possibilities for everyone to enrich their lives.

Present: Sue Kreider, Chris Abruzzo, Natalie Nutt, Jordan Yeagley, Geoffrey Crout, Bill Ecenbarger, Carin Kaag (Friends President) Absent: Leigh Anne Dornberger, Hillary Marotta (Endowment Board President), Laura O’Grady (Library Director)

1. Call to order 7:01 PM
2. Approval of May 19 meeting minutes (Attachment A) Motion made by Bill, seconded by Natalie, motion carries unanimously.
3. Reports of Representatives
 - a. Friends of the Library Carin Kaag – Carin updates the Board that the Friends have cancelled their book sale for this year, but they have two other fundraising opportunities including a read-a-thon and a virtual 5K. They are working on the budget for 2020-2021 considering revenues will be down.
 - b. Endowment Trust Laura O’Grady – Laura updates the Board that the Endowment Trust will be meeting on Monday. They’ve submitted for their third and final reimbursement associated with the Grant. The change of the tax status for the Endowment Trust is complete and they just had their 990 finished. Now that the project is wrapping up, they plan on relaxing any spending for the next few years to allow the principle to grow.
4. New Business
 - a. Current state of library operations- Laura O’Grady
 - i. Operating hours- Laura reports that due to the reduction in part-time hours, as well as the elimination of the full-time cataloger position, the library was forced to reduce operating hours at the library. Changes include the elimination of evening hours on Monday and Thursday, as well as shortened



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days on Saturday and Sunday. Laura is pleased that the public and staff have been very patient and flexible with these changes.

- ii. Cashiering- Laura reports that the Township is using a new financial software. This means that all staff are being trained on new cashiering operations as we regularly work with payments including overdue fines, meeting room rental payments, coffee sales, recycling bags, and radon kits. Everyone is excited that we'll soon be able to accept credit cards for payments.
 - iii. Cleaning protocols- Laura reports that the library has successfully incorporated cleaning protocols into everyday library work. The staff regularly cleans the public computers, the staff computers, the staff telephones, and they continue to quarantine all returned items for up to 5 days before checking them in. This is in compliance with recommendations made by the CDC on how to mitigate virus spread on library materials. We do not have all furniture out, to encourage social distancing, we still do not have toys or Board Books out to mitigate the spread of germs. The water fountains are unavailable, and signs are posted in the public bathrooms asking that no more than 2 people enter the bathroom at any one time.
 - iv. Mask enforcement- Laura reports that the staff has been pleasantly surprised at how well the public is doing with wearing masks inside the library. The library has paper masks on hand, as well as some face shields, to use if a patron needs to use the library but does not have a mask.
 - v. Virtual programming- Hershey Library has been very successful with their virtual programming. We've been able to roll pretty seamlessly into virtual programs and we believe it is something we will continue to offer after pandemic mitigation has passed. The library saw over 300 visits for virtual library programs in the month of June.
- b. Library Budget- Laura O'Grady- Laura reports that due to the economic impact of the pandemic, the Township is having to make tough decisions for the remainder of the 2020 budget, as well as looking forward into 2021. Each Department manager was tasked with reducing staff and services to help close the budget shortfall the Township



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is projecting. Currently the library had to eliminate the full-time cataloging librarian position, reduce part-time staff hours to 20 hrs/week (24 when working a weekend), and reduced the remaining library budget by 15%. It's very possible that more cuts will be incurred. In order for the library to continue to receive our level of state aid, we need to be open at least 45 hours a week and be open 7 hours over the weekend. The library also must spend at least 12% of their operating budget on collections materials. After the recent budgetary reductions, the library is now open 49 hours a week.

i. Sue Kreider poses questions to Chris Abruzzo and Natalie Nutt:

1. **Do you believe these recent budget cuts are in response to the pandemic, or a way to permanently reduce library services in Derry Township?** Chris replies that each of the Department Heads have been tasked with the difficult job of finding cost savings in their operations. He believes that the Township will be feeling the effects of this over the next few years, and therefore Township services will most likely be reduced for those few years. If by 2022 everything is back up and running like normal, it's very likely that we'll be able to bring employees and services back. Natalie Nutt echoes Chris' comment and adds that she's grateful for Laura's leadership through this pandemic and is thankful for her work with Chris on finding cost savings so that the tax payer doesn't have to shoulder additional financial burdens. Chris adds that there may be opportunities to reimagine library services. Laura adds that she's certain that there will be efficiencies gained, and creative solutions reached, but it will be a difficult journey to get there.
2. **In a follow-up to that question, do you Chris and Natalie commit to retaining the library as a department of Derry Township?** Chris responds that he is very aware of the intense community support of the Library and the unique way in which the Township came to operate the Library. He believes with the current Board of Supervisors there is no interest in ceding ownership of the Library, but he cannot



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speak to future Boards. Natalie echoes this sentiment. When it comes to Township services, police and road construction take priority, but even those departments will be feeling these cuts.

3. **I know it may be difficult to answer this, but how much of the crunch that we find ourselves in has to do with the pandemic, and how much has to do with the Community Center project?** Chris answers that both him and Natalie inherited this project and all the funding implications that went along with it. Due to the efforts earlier in the year they were able to scale back the size of the project and hopefully realize cost savings. Chris says he may be an optimist but once the building is constructed, the community center should operate with a similar or even reduced township subsidy than it had in the past. The journey to get through construction with change orders and foundation issues will determine how much extra belt tightening will be required before we get to a fully operational center.

5. Old Business

- a. Construction update – Laura O’Grady Laura reiterates her earlier statement that construction is very near completion. A railing to the right of the new entrance needs to be repaired, and walk off floor mats need to be installed but the project is mostly complete.
 - b. RB Digital Lending Platform – Laura O’Grady Laura demonstrates a new magazine and eAudio lending platform called RB Digital. This product is available to us through County Coordination Aid. The current contract is being held through DCLS and will expire after 1 year. Natalie asks if Laura believes County Aid will continue to fund this product. Laura replies that she heard that Overdrive just acquired RB Digital so it’s possible this product will become part of the Overdrive subscription we hold with our Library District. Based on usage statistics we hope to see this product continue.
6. Financial Report – (Attachment B) Laura explains that the new Finance Software isn’t fully operational yet, so this meetings Financial Statements are not as detailed as in months past.



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Laura hopes that as we use the product more completely, she'll be able to give the Board a much more comprehensive report.

7. Communications – Laura shares with the Board two emails that were received. Both emails are thanking Rita Smith for her virtual programming over the past few months.
8. Staff Reports
 - a. Director & Staff Reports (Attachment C) – Laura shares the Director & Staff report with the Board.
9. Adjournment- Natalie makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Jordan seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously. The meeting adjourns at 7:47 PM.

Attachments

- A. May 19, 2020 Minutes
- B. Financial Report
- C. Director & Staff Report
- D. Communications

The next meeting of the Hershey Public Library Board of Directors is Tuesday September 15, 2020 at
7:00 PM