

CONCORD PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday, January 8, 2023, 6:00 PM

Auditorium

In Attendance: Library Director Todd Fabian; Jeremy Clemans, Chris Casco, Ceillie Clark-Keane, Fatawu Issah, Norm Kinsler, Michelle Marino, Charles O'Leary

1. J. Clemans calls the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. Accept minutes of December 4, 2023 Monthly Meeting - C. Casco motions to accept, N. Kinsler seconds; All are in favor.
3. Public Comment
 - None
4. Library Director's Report and Monthly Update
 - The Director discussed that the CPL will be creating a Trust that is coming into fruition. A member of the public passed away and they decided to give 30% of their trust funds to the Concord Public Library. The library received a check this week of approximately \$217,000. This will create a new trust fund. Down the road, decisions will be made as to how the money can best be allocated. Once it goes through the City Council approval process, more information will become available.
 - Last month the Director spoke about possibly changing the CPL Rules & Regs. Following the Trustee's December meeting, the Director spoke with the City's Legal Department again, which recommended modifying the language used at the end of paragraph 13 – specifically, by re-working the language so that it reads: “violates the library rules or impacts the safety or use of the library by others.”

- C. O’Leary asked a question about the language, “designee”. The Director answered that this is more in the case if he is not available, another person is in charge.
- N. Kinsler motions to accept the change. J. Clemans seconds. All in favor.
- This calendar year - the CPL Foundation’s grant cycle runs January 2024 to December 2024. Some of the funds awarded to the Library by the Foundation will be used to purchase: artwork from the Becky Field art exhibit in an effort to revitalize the art in the Library; e-Bikes maintenance and associated equipment used by the e-Bikes such as the iPads used to sign people up for library cards and their Wi-Fi capabilities when off-site; library swag; family programming; Beanstack (a tool to manage family-involvement in various programs); Wonderbooks; new items for the Library of Things; museum passes branching out into south Boston, western Mass, Portland; a new legal-sized preservation scanner; team-building staff support; and technology - Smart TV and White Board; floor-bound charging stations. We are grateful to the CPL Foundation for these funds.
- The CPL released a statement weeks ago that the Library’s app is not working due to problems with the vendor. The app should be up and running again in the next few months. The catalog can still be located through the desktop website through your smartphone.
- Staffing levels are good. The Library only has one part time (one day a week) vacancy.

- Circulation stats - the past fiscal year broke 300,000 circulation. The CPL is back up to pre-Covid circulation levels. While not necessarily seeing as many patrons at the gate counter, the number of overall transactions as risen and not just from digital borrows.

5. The CPL Foundation Update to include discussion among Foundation Members and the trustees

- CPL Foundation members introduced themselves.
- J. Clemans asked the Foundation members if they have specific talking points to discuss with the Trustees.
- J. Clemans suggested that something be dedicated to Becky Herrmann to honor her work with the CPL. He would like to work with the Foundation to make that happen since it will likely have to come from funds appropriated by the Foundation. The Foundation agrees that they would like to collaborate and fund something to honor Becky's memory.
- The Director states that in 2025-2026, the Library has been budgeted for the construction of an outside north patio area (\$25,000 in 2025, \$150,000 in 2026). If this plan comes to fruition, perhaps a tribute to Becky can be placed there.
- C. Casco suggests having a public recognition event once something is put into place.
- Discussion on how we can commemorate Becky best. J. Clemans suggests talking to Becky's family about how they think we can honor her memory the most and that there are several potential ways in which we can honor her that go beyond the patio.

- The Director suggests waiting for the new library renovation. Wait to see if we can honor her in the proposed interior garden patio in the library renovation. We hope to find out more in the the next year to see how the new library plan may work.
- A Foundation member asks what should the Foundation be doing to plan and advocate for the library renovation. Asking for a timeline to start educating the community. The Director asks if the Foundation wants to begin by talking to the whole Council or to just the Mayor and City Manager? The Foundation will be meeting with the Mayor in the near future. The Foundation hopes to build a concrete plan together after their meeting with the Mayor.
- J. Clemans and the Director suggest that the Foundation attempt to ascertain the Mayor and City Council's willingness to construct a new library or significantly renovate the current library. If there is not significant support amongst our elected representatives, then that poses a problem in obtaining the necessary funding to move forward. If this library project is a possibility, then the Foundation can work towards gathering community support from the residents of Concord and users of the Library.
- A Foundation member asks where the library project is in line compared to other city projects (for example, the construction of a new middle school). The Director does not have the answer to that but suggests talking to the City Council, City Manager, and the Mayor in an effort to keep the Library as a budgetary priority.
- A Foundation member asks what does a library project really entail? What makes fundraising in Concord different from fundraising in other cities?

Discussion was had about educating the community about what the Foundation and Trustees each do.

- Foundation members talk of a Capital Campaign. People need to see what a new library can be and show the community what is truly needed. Our library is very small considering we are the capital city.
- How do we show the community that the library project has something for everyone? N. Kinsler suggests possibly changing the title to Library & Community Center, for example. It is about broad appeal and broad usage. Community education and ultimately, garnering the community's support is critical for success.
- N. Kinsler asks if there is a list of the construction projects that the City puts out where we can see what funds are dedicated to which project. The Director suggests looking at the City's CIP that comes out every July although the CIP is a guide that is not set in stone.
- A Foundation member wants to know the position of the library improvement plan in the City's CIP? Documentation or outline available in how we can engage the public in the process?
- The Director will ask other New Hampshire libraries who have completed building/renovation projects whether they have a marketing video that can be shared.
- The Director states that the estimate to build/redesign the library is now approximately 29 million.
- 2027 Library Design (proposed)

- 2028 Library Build (proposed)
- A Foundation member asks if the design printed in the Concord Monitor is the design they are going with. Will the design change due to patrons using library services digitally from home vs in person.
- The CPL wants to stay in the current location. How do we improve parking and services on the current footprint? Design changes are possible in the future. Since the CPL is at the same circulation level that it was at four years ago, the CPL is not worried about a decrease in in-person library usage. The CPL statistics show that physical space is something this community utilizes.
- FY 2025 funds allocated for the Prince Street acquisition.
- When is the timing right? Educate the public on the fact that the library was built in 1941 and there are many building issues that take time away from General Services. What will happen to the library if the library renovation does not happen?
- For example, the Director talks about how the State of NH and the City have an archival need as so many items are not in climate-controlled areas. The City does not have the resources for that now.
- Almost half of the CPL collection is in the stacks in the basement due to not having enough linear shelf space. N, Kinsler asks how that percentage would change with a library redesign. The Director states that the percentage would increase what patrons would see on the floor, but there would still be a need for stack storage.

- STEAM for Teen, STEAM for Littles - discussion on programming and how hard the staff is working. A makerspace room would be fantastic in the future.

6. New Business

- None

7. Old Business

- None

8. Next meeting February 5, 2024

9. C. Casco motions to adjourn at 7: 26pm, J.Clemans seconds; All are in favor.