

March 16, 2020
Dorchester County Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
George Seago Branch
Summerville, SC

Minutes

1. Call to Order:

Board chair Bill Collins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Also attending the meeting were board members Keturah Inabinett, Michelle Leviner, Warren McCarl, Katherine Pemberton, Beth Sabine and new board member, Michelle Sweatman. Staff members present were Library Director, Robert Antill and Business Manager Cassandra Manigault.

Guests/ staff: Jen Gleber, Leslie Kollar and Cheryl James

2. Public Comment Period:

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Dr. McCarl and seconded by Ms. Leviner to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2020 meeting. The motion passed.

4. Business Department Report (attached):

Ms. Manigault reported on the work of the business department beginning with the monthly income and expenditures. Income received was \$3,216,905.93 through the end of February. Expenditures for the same period were \$1,817,051.48. Ms. Manigault reported that the only unexpected expense of any note was vehicle maintenance for the Book Mobile which needed repairs.

A review and discussion of the upcoming budget followed. The draft budget for 2020-21 will be discussed with the County staff on April 20th and County Council will meet in mid-May. The business office plans to duplicate the 2019-20 budget for the most part for now while we await the county auditor's numbers. It is anticipated that state library aid will increase. Once we get finalized numbers, the business office can continue to refine the budget through April.

A motion to approve the budget contingent on their being no surprises from the auditor was made by Dr. Carl and seconded by Ms. Leviner. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Director's Report (attached) :

a) Buildings and Grounds / COVID 19

Mr. Antill made his report, stating that while there were no issues at the Summerville Branch, he was still dealing with a roof leak at the St. George Branch. He is in the process of obtaining bids from contractors.

Mr. Antill reported that due to the on-going COVID-19 outbreak, Dorchester County is operating at op-con #3. The Dorchester Co Library leadership is continuing to monitor the

situation and is looking to DHEC, the CDC and Dorchester County government for guidance. Leadership has conveyed to staff to continue with rigorous social distancing, hand washing, and other general precautions including staying home if sick.

Currently, the public can only come into the branches for physical materials and patrons walk in, check out materials and walk out. No internet usage, public programming, etc. Staff is reporting in and cleaning shared spaces. The board had a lengthy discussion of whether it was appropriate to close the Libraries and asked the staff present at the meeting for their input. Several staff indicated that there was a concern about asymptomatic persons spreading it to vulnerable family members, etc. Additionally, some library staff fits into the vulnerable categories for the virus. Currently, Mr. Antill reported , Calhoun, Dillon and Dorchester counties were the last library systems in the state to remain open.

One concern expressed by the board was that many patrons rely on the internet provided by the library. Ms. Sweatman asked if patrons were able to access library internet from electronic devices in their cars in the parking lot. The answer was yes, and Mr. Antill indicated that he would look into strengthening that access. Obviously patrons will continue to access eBooks no matter if the libraries are physically open or not. Board discussion on merits/ challenges of closing the branches physically followed.

Dr. McCarl made a motion that we close the Library branches to the public effective at close of business March 16, 2020 through at least March 31st, when that status will be re-evaluated. Internal staffing levels and logistics will be determined by the Library Director. Michelle Sweatman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

b) Personnel

Mr. Antill reported on a few personnel changes. One staff member at each location has departed. At St. George, the library plans to post for that replacement and is also interviewing for a position in the Business Office.

c) Collection/ Library Performance

The board looked over the numbers provided on library materials being utilized. Electronic circs are down a bit but Mr. Antill anticipates that will certainly change over the next few weeks and months as people are isolating at home. The library has anticipated this and has moved some funds from books to ebooks.

6) Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

7) New Business

No new business (see above for Covid -19 discussion)

8) Executive Session

Ms. Pemberton made a motion that the board go into executive session. It was seconded by Dr. McCarl and passed unanimously.

The board came out of executive session.

9) Motions for County Council

Three motions were made regarding properties for acquisition and construction of new library branches.

Motion #1 was made by Ms. Pemberton and seconded by Dr. McCarl:

The Dorchester County Library Board of Trustees recommends that the Dorchester County Council acquire Vaughn's General Store and Vaughn's Furniture Store, located at 437 and 441 S. Railroad Avenue in Ridgeville, SC for the purpose of establishing a new library branch.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #2 was made by Ms. Leviner and seconded by Dr. McCarl:

The Dorchester County Library Board of Trustees recommends that the Dorchester County Council acquire 443-447 Railroad Avenue in Ridgeville, SC – directly adjacent to Vaughn's Furniture Store- for the purpose of establishing a new library branch parking lot.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #3 was made by Ms. Pemberton and seconded by Ms. Sweatman:

The Dorchester County Library Board of Trustees recommends that the Dorchester County Council accept a donation of land to the County by Dorchester District Two Schools on Patriot Boulevard in North Charleston, SC for the purpose of establishing a new library branch in conjunction with Ft. Dorchester High School's media center.

The motion passed unanimously.

10) Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. McCral and seconded by Mr. Collins. It passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.