

CHATTANOOGA PUBLIC LIBRARY
1001 BROAD STREET
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

MINUTES
BOARD MEETING-FEBRUARY 15, 2023
12:00 p.m.

The Board of Directors of the Chattanooga Public Library met on February 15, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. with Board Chair, William Sundquist, presiding.

Ms. Anna Taylor called the roll. The following members were present:

Erik Broeren
Jess Friedowitz
Tom Griscom
Jocelyn Loza
Sushma Shantha
William Sundquist
Anna Taylor

Also present: Richard Beeland, Deputy Executive Director; Sheldon Owens, Operations Manager; Richard Groves, Assistant Director of Technology; Natalie Phillips, Finance Manager; Michael Watson, Development Director; Christina Sacco, Public Relations Coordinator; Lee Hope, Head of Children's Services; Valerie Malueg, City Attorney; and Aamna Fazlic and Steve Wilson, members of the public.

Mr. William Sundquist, Board Chair; called the meeting to order.

Mr. William Sundquist began by reminding board members that they have a responsibility to show up and vote on behalf of the citizens and thanked the board members for reaching a quorum today.

Mr. Sundquist also accepted the resignation of Ken Jones. Ken understood his role and responsibility so he resigned when he realized he would not be able to attend on a regular basis. Mr. Sundquist added that he thanks Ken for his services and he hopes he comes back at some point.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2022 REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

Mr. Erik Broeren made a motion that the minutes of the October 18, 2022 Regular Board of Directors' meeting be approved. Mr. Tom Griscom seconded the motion. The motion was approved and carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 18, 2023 REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

Mr. Erik Broeren made a motion that the minutes of the January 18, 2023 Regular Board of Directors' meeting be approved. Mr. Tom Griscom seconded the motion. The motion was approved and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Natalie Phillips, Finance Manager, reported:

RECEIPTS: 43% remaining of the operating budget to be received for the fiscal year 2022-2023

EXPENDITURES: 48% remaining of the operating budget to be expended for the fiscal year 2022-2023

We have received the first of the State Metro Grant reimbursements, for the amount of \$160,464.66.

FOUNDATION REPORT:

Mr. Michael Watson said that 2022 finished in a strong position. At the January meeting, they added three new board members: Randy Franklin, Martha Crampton and Bill Wilkerson. They are now at full capacity on their board.

The Foundation is still receiving funds for Americans and the Holocaust, and the new updated total is \$98,100 funds raised to date. Total granted out \$6,179.50 in transportation grants to schools who meet a needs-based criteria. Q1 grants have been due or are coming due, and they have filed all their reports for Summer Learning grants to the Colby Foundation. As far as community engagement goes, the foundation will hold its Q1 book sale on March 24-26 at Venue701, which they used last year to much success.

Online auction will be Aug 15-30, and the Foundation is hard at work collecting items for that. In April, the employee giving campaign will launch. It was a good success last year, and they're hoping for the same this year. They also plan to launch member events this year, with March 30 being the tentatively scheduled first event – a networking opportunity with programming at the end, which is planned to be someone who will speak about Appalachian Storytelling.

Mr. Tom Griscom said he was unable to attend the Holocaust event, but he wanted to express as a board member how he appreciates the Foundation's work to bring in people who might not have come here. Those kinds of things make a difference, and the board appreciates the Foundation making those things happen.

Ms. Jess Friedowitz seconded that and thanked the staff and Foundation. The opening event was one of the best she has ever attended in the city, with a great, varied crowd of people interacting and asking questions. As a Jewish woman, she really appreciates the effort to create a space for that to happen.

Ms. Friedowitz also asked what kind of items will be collected for the Foundation Auction. Mr. Watson said that experiences are the best items they can get because they will package them up to make it a very special item to bid on. Ms. Friedowitz said she would like to talk more about donating her professional services, and she's interested in volunteering at the event.

Mr. Sundquist also added to the record a thanks to the current and former mayors, other elected officials, and current and former board members who attended the Holocaust exhibition.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Beeland, Interim Executive Director, said he would start by showing statistics. Every quarter, he presents this information to the City Council, including how many items we circulate and our attendance.

One benchmark is that we will reach 1.2 million circulated. At the end of Q2, we were at 584,797. Compared to the same time last year, we are circulating more. And this past month, we say 98,000 additional circulation. We also saw a 22% increase in our digital collections over the same time last year. That's a big jump, and in fact our digital branch has now surpassed our branches. As demand increases, prices are also increasing. We're seeing a lot more cost involved with our digital collection, and that will continue into next year.

We also report on our customer satisfaction survey. In Q1 we were at 88%, and in Q2 we were at 83%. We're right around we were want to be.

Ms. Shantha asked how we survey. Mr. Beeland said that we have comment cards throughout our buildings, and Ms. Christina Sacco said we also link to a digital survey in our all emails.

Ms. Friedowitz asked what type of sample size actually responds, and Mr. Beeland said he gets around 100 every month from all locations.

Ms. Shantha asked if we sent a separate email asking for survey answers, and Ms. Sacco said that we do with an anniversary email everyone gets once a year. Ms. Shantha asked that we also do it intentionally. Ms. Sacco said yes, and also pointed out that comment cards are also handed out at programs, and those come back 100%.

Next up, Mr. Beeland discussed our Hamilton County student card program, and said that we have a lot of interest and support to extend this program to teachers.

APPROVAL OF FREE LIBRARY CARDS FOR HAMILTON COUNTY TEACHERS

Mr. Richard Beeland sought a motion from the board to amend the Circulation Policy to add full access library cards to all licensed Hamilton County teachers.

Ms. Anna Taylor made a motion that the board amend the Circulation Policy to grant full access library cards to Hamilton County teachers. Ms. Jess Friedowitz seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Taylor asked for clarification that this would be for Hamilton County teachers only or would it extend to other staff. Mr. Beeland said that anyone with a valid Hamilton County ID badge would be eligible.

The motion was approved and carried.

Mr. Beeland said Ms. Sacco would be working with the Mayor's office to get the messaging out.

For Continuing Education for March, Mr. Beeland introduced Lee Hope, Head of Youth Services, and Richard Groves, the Assistant Director of Technology and Innovation, who presented on Programming, including planning, putting them on, and the educational standards we use.

Mr. Groves started the presentation by talking about the story time programs for each developmental age group. The story times happen every day at every location. He said we also do programs for tweens, teens, adults, all ages, outreach events, and field trips. All programs meet certain standards, and they are evaluated and approved by a group of experienced and qualified staff.

Mr. Groves said that when programming started back up after the pandemic, they took the opportunity to rethink the way the library plans and executes programming to provide the best programs possible, look for ways to increase efficiencies such as bulk ordering, and most importantly to ensure the experience was the same at every location. From the ideation stage to the post-program evaluation, all programs now go through the same process.

Mr. Groves said that we are now back to our pre-pandemic levels. We are currently doing about half as many programs as we used to, but that is due to the fact that the formal definition of library programming changed, so there are some events that we cannot count as programs anymore.

Ms. Lee Hope covered the Americans and the Holocaust programming. By the end of the exhibition, they will have given tours to over 1,800 middle and high school students and their teachers/chaperons. They go through the exhibit and rotate through two activities on the 2nd Floor: a version of the Ken Burns PBS documentary (U.S. and the Holocaust) and a writing and art project based around the secrete magazine Vedem, which was produced by teens during the Holocaust.

Ms. Lee went on to describe the standards that programs meet: Early Literacy story time programs meet the national standards of Every Child Ready to Read, which is nearly the same as the Chattanooga Basics, which was adopted by Early Matters of Chattanooga 2.0.

School age programs all meet either Tennessee STEM Standards and/or Tennessee Standards, which is the approved curriculum program for HCDE classes. Our adult programs align with the Mayor's One Chattanooga Plan, as well as one of the library's new strategic plan goals.

The programming team also looks at cost and staff time to plan and execute to make sure we're getting the best bang for our buck.

Mr. Groves then covered the organizations that the library partners with for programs. Some like CHI Memorial provide programming at the libraries, where others like Barley Chattanooga are a host location.

Ms. Hope and Mr. Groves then covered some examples of the programming that happened recently, including a partnership with the Hunter Museum of Art, a book club at Eastgate, and the LEGO Titanic series for adults.

Ms. Hope and Mr. Groves also covered some of the upcoming programs, such as a new series of LEGO events for adults, Ballet and Bookworms, a prom shop for students that will be set up with clothing donated through a prom drive, and the upcoming Crafting with Craft Bevvies where people will upcycle thrift store art.

Ms. Taylor asked what is new this year based on the feedback received from the public. Mr. Groves said that they brought Curiosity Club and the LEGO programs back this year based on feedback from adult patrons. Ms. Hope added that we also used feedback from parents we spoke to during strategic plan, and that's where the dancing and music programs came from.

Mr. Groves also said that with new staff, they are also seeing new ideas, so they're working with them to help them get used to the process and be more confident in what they can do.

Ms. Friedowitz asked if they could touch on what that process looks like. Where do they come from and who is able to propose new programs.

Mr. Groves replied that the first step is for them to do a little research, come up with an idea, and check with their supervisor. The form then comes to the programming committee, which is Richard Groves, Lee Hope, Lyn Hunter, and Crissy Varnell. They review the applications based on the metrics and then work with the business office to go over supplies with the staff person.

Ms. Jocelyn Loza asked if we have done programming around Native American culture. Ms. Hope said not yet. Ms. Sacco interjected that the staff working on the cooking program would love to find a contact with local tribes. Ms. Loza said she would help with that.

After the presentation wrapped up, Mr. Beeland added that the early learning programs – Baby Bounce, Toddler Time, and Preschool Storytime – have been so popular they have added an additional time for those each day both Downtown and Northgate.

Mr. Beeland then went on to say that next week, he'll be presenting the numbers to Council with our Q2 report, and everything Richard and Lee went over will also be presented. He then turned the floor to Sheldon Owens, Operations Manager.

Mr. Owens had some updates regarding the Americans and the Holocaust exhibition. Sheldon presented some stats:

- The exhibit has been open for about 20 days so far.
- The opening event had approximately 350 attendees.
- The Scholars Panel had 170 attendees.
- The Paper Clips Project had 75 attendees.
- The History Unfolded program was capped at 25 attendees due to the fact that it was interactive and took place in Local History. Due to the bad weather, only 8 showed up.
- This Thursday, we have the Shoah Songbook show by the Likht Ensemble at 7pm at UTC's Hayes Concert. As of this meeting, there are 337 RSVPs for that event. There will also be an encore on Friday in the auditorium, and that's already sold out at 100.
- Our next event will be Michael Bornstein, a child survivor of Auschwitz and the author of Survivor's Club, a book he co-wrote with his daughter. They will be at the Convention Center Feb 23. So far, the 10 am morning event has 1,366 students RSVP'ed, and the 7 pm one has 574 general public RSVP'ed.
- As for the exhibition tours, we've had approximately 2,641 visitors, 1,061 of which were students. There are also approximately 706 students still scheduled to visit.

Mr. Beeland then provided an update on the Executive Director search. The job opening was extended to February 28, and when it closes, our committee will look at the candidate pool. We hope to have someone in place 45-60 days after the interviews start.

Employee engagement has continued along. We had our first all hands meeting on January 20, and about half our staff participated. It was also recorded so the rest of staff could watch. We also had a Q & A session during that meeting, based on questions submitted from staff.

We will continue to have these meeting monthly, addressing concerns and answering questions, plus making any announcements.

Finally, we are looking at a Locker Delivery System for library materials. This is very similar to the Amazon or Walmart locker delivery system. The base model comes with 17 different drawers. The idea is that people can check out materials and have them delivered to the locker for convenient pickup. We are currently looking at doing this with Parks, at perhaps the Heritage House, which is in one of our biggest zip codes. We also received a request from the Mayor's office for something like this at the Eastdale Community Center. They would cost around \$12-15,000 installed, and all they need is a power source. Plus, they can be moved around, in case it's not working in one location, we can move it to another.

Mr. Beeland also discussed the roof replacement at Eastgate, and reminded the board that we have been leasing his building for decades and the roof was about that old. They are doing the work while the branch is open, closing only if there will be major disruptions.

Finally, Mr. Beeland announced that Natalie Phillips was the city's first recipient of Mayor Kelly's One Team One Chattanooga Award. This new award recognizes and celebrates city

employees who demonstrate a true commitment to the One Chattanooga values through their actions. Natalie was actually nominated by Steve Wilson, who was in attendance. Natalie demonstrated incredible selflessness and dedication to the team when she was asked to assist with payroll process challenges for several city departments and the 911 Center. Natalie went above and beyond to personally answer questions, create process, documentation, train staff can solve problems, often resolving payroll issues for an entire departments at one time. Mr. Beeland said that thanks to Natalie's work, the city was able to seamlessly create standard procedures that help ensure employees were paid on time.

Mr. Sundquist asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Beeland. There were not.

There were no public comments and no new business.

Mr. Sundquist said that soon, they will need to appoint the next Board Chair to come in after the next incoming Chair, Dionne Jenkins. Additionally, Ms. Jenkins will need to get some officers and a vice chair lined up for her two-year term. If any board members have an interest in serving at a higher level on this board, feel free to reach out to her by phone or email, and then those selections will be voted on during the annual meeting in June 2023.

Mr. Sundquist also mentioned that the next Tennessee Library Association's Day on the Hill is April 4, and if any board members can attend or run into a state legislator, please thank them for their support, because we get \$100,000/year from them.

Mr. Sundquist mentioned that the next meeting would be March 15, and that if we cannot expect a quorum for board meetings, they will be cancelled going forward. Ms. Jenkins is working on a quarterly meeting schedule, but that will not be voted on until June.

Finally, Mr. Sundquist asked if anyone had any questions. No questions were asked, so he asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Erik Broeren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved and carried.

Mr. William Sundquist, Board Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:53 p.m.

Ms. Dionne Jenkins, Acting Board Chair