

**Botetourt County Library Board of Trustees**  
**April 15, 2020, Virtual Meeting Via Microsoft Teams**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Amy Baker, Chair; Julie Phillips, Library Director; Barbara Hawkins, Marlene Preston, Linda Steger

**Absent:** Steve Clinton, Board of Supervisors

**Call to order** -- 2:00 pm

**Approval of minutes** -- Minutes of the February 18, 2020 meeting were approved as submitted.

**Directors' Report** – Julie Phillips  
(Notes include responses to Board members' questions.)

**Pandemic Action Plan**

- Draft developed by library staff and shared with Board members prior to meeting
- Library moved from Level 2 (medium risk) to Level 5 (very high risk) quickly

**Library Operations During Closure**

- **Staff Training**
  - Opportunity to update technology skills and to train staff with strategies for supporting job-seekers and those needing to apply for unemployment benefits
  - Branch managers meet with director weekly.
  - Staff have increased opportunities to interact online.
- **Staff Tasks**
  - Staff are scheduled in shifts to offer phone response to patrons' questions about such issues as the use of technology or strategies for using Google to solve problems.
  - Staff are working on individual or collaborative projects (see below).
  - Some are phoning patrons who might be isolated.
- **IT Support**
  - Phone access designed so that branch managers could offer patron assistance without use of personal phone numbers
  - Google Voice as back-up for callers needing lengthy consultation
- **Patron Access** – Spike in patrons using online technology to access resources – some reporting difficulty learning to use new tools
  - Website changes to highlight online resources
  - Publicizing resources -- Information provided via Facebook and *Fincastle Herald*
  - Usage statistics will be expanded to reflect length and focus of phone requests for assistance.
  - Less resistance from patrons to training as use of technology is essential
  - Internet access in parking lots of closed branches – used less than anticipated
  - Online support for groups that formerly met in person at branches – still in development

### County Library-related Operations During Closure

- **Budget** – The spending freeze prohibits buying books for the rest of this fiscal year. The library budget hasn't been threatened; the budget for the next fiscal year could be level with this year's budget.
- **Staffing** – The county is not imposing furloughs and is trying to assure continued salaries to employees. Staffing remains stable except for courier who could not work from home and one resignation. Part-timers continue to work as scheduled; laptops have been provided to enable work from home.
- **Accountability** – A new employee status report shows how staff members are using their time and reflects library's good use of tax dollars. The report reveals a list of goals, action steps, and accomplishments for each employee.

### Staff Initiatives -- to be launched during closure, some to be continued after reopening

- **Oral History Project**, led by Rhonda Bandy -- Developing strategies for interviewing citizens and sharing stories
- **1 on 1 Instruction, "Book a Librarian,"** led by a group of branch representatives -- Developing plan for one person from each branch to coordinate a support program, helping patrons determine what they need, and providing relevant training for them by phone
- **Early Literacy**, led by Jackie Howarth -- "1000 Things Before Kindergarten"
- **Social Media Plan**, led by Hannelore Lewis -- Evaluating usefulness of online connections with patrons (such as Facebook) and highlighting website as virtual branch
- **Beanstack app** for summer reading and beyond, led by Jaime Duval
- **Economic Development** – Working with Virginia Employment Commission to determine ways the Library can support patrons and local business/government initiatives.
- **Other:** Virtual Story Times, Science Shows, Facebook-live events

### Summer Reading

- **Virtual program** – Children will use an app to enroll, log reading, and engage in other activities. Enrollment forms will be available at the website for downloading and printing; paper forms will be distributed in high-traffic locations. Overall, the exchange of paper copies will be minimal.
- **In-person Activities** – Only two activities are still on the summer schedule: Little Critters (allowing for social distancing) and the Grand Finale Water Day (August). Adjustments will be made as necessary.

### Staged Re-entry Plan

- **Timing** – Hopeful for full fall opening; phases may begin June 10
- **Materials handling** – Books seem to hold virus for 24 hours, but no data exist for other types of media, such as movies.
- **Curbside delivery** -- Might be first step in providing requested materials to patrons
- **Capacity** – May need to limit number of patrons in each area of the library – enforced distancing to protect staff and patrons. Support to computer users in the library may be reconfigured to expand distance between librarian and patron. May consider appointments for library use and support.
- **Virtual Services** – Patron expectations may change so that virtual services will be requested even after branches re-open.
- **Patron Feedback** – May consider patron surveys after programs to gauge patron satisfaction

**Strategic Plan -- Next Steps**

- Strategic priorities have changed – economic impact, expectations for virtual services, potential reluctance of patrons to attend in-person programs.
- No longer possible to solicit input at a community meeting
- Plan will focus on strategic priorities and must be flexible enough to provide for the unknowns.

**Policy/Plan Updates –**

- The current Code of Conduct is useful but needs updating to protect the library and its patrons. A revised draft will be developed by staff and shared with Board members.
- The Continuity of Operations Plan needs adjustment to provide for changes as the COVID threat (or any other threat) ebbs and flows.

**Blue Ridge** – Interior painting continues and is partially funded by Friends group.

**Adjournment** – 3:00 pm with Board members’ expression of appreciation to Ms. Phillips for her leadership during this time of change.

***Next meeting – June 17, 2:00 pm, Eagle Rock***