

Bedford Public Library System
Board of Trustees meeting Minutes
Bedford Central Library
June 1, 2021

Board members present: Natalie Martin, Randy Cox, Mary Jo Krufka, Hope Cupit, Debbie Bahouth, Anna Stevens

Staff present: Jenny Novalis, Library Director

Ms. Krufka called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Ms. Krufka asked for additions or changes to the agenda. Mrs. Novalis requested to remove the action item to appoint BPLS Foundation Board of Directors, saving that action for a future meeting. Ms. Krufka asked for a motion to approve the agenda, as amended. Mrs. Cupit motioned to approve the agenda, as amended, Mrs. Martin seconded, all agreed.

Ms. Krufka asked for any changes to the minutes from the April meeting. There were no changes. Mrs. Martin motioned to approve the minutes as mailed, Mrs. Stevens seconded, all agreed.

No Public Comments

No Board Chair report

Director's report:

Mrs. Novalis presented the draft FY22 library operating budget. Bedford County has appropriated \$1,734,578.00 to the Library, State aid estimates are \$199,566.00 and anticipated revenues from other sources is \$66,250. Mrs. Novalis noted that the revenue estimates from other sources is a little lower due to the pandemic. Operating expenses are expected to remain fairly level for contractual services, library programming needs, supplies, continuous charges and property improvements. Personnel expenses include fringes and benefits plus a 5% COL pay increase for the library employees, same as the County personnel will receive. That expense makes up about 68% of the overall library operating budget. Library materials are funded through the state aid allocation, and the library plans to purchase \$167,566.00 in books, media and digital materials. The Board discussed some of the materials figures and discussed the personnel figures and minimum wage increases. Mrs. Novalis noted that there are two Library projects on the County's approved FY22 CIP – more HVAC replacements and “can light” replacements. The Board discussed some ongoing building improvement needs. Ms. Krufka asked if there was any more discussion on the budget action item; there was none. Ms. Krufka asked for a motion to approve the FY22 library operating budget as presented. Mrs. Cupit motioned to approve the operating budget, Mrs. Bahouth seconded, all agreed.

The VA Dept of Health released updated public library pandemic guidance and the Governor's Office has indicated many of the emergency restriction will be lifted on May 28. Mrs. Novalis summarized the current operating restrictions and noted that the staff will continue to practice

enhanced cleaning procedures even after the emergency order is lifted. The Bedford Rotary Club named Jenny Novalis a Paul Harris Fellow, Rotary's highest honor for Service Above Self for carrying out critical programming through the library system that strengthens children's literacy, and for continuing operations safely, during the last pandemic year. Mrs. Novalis noted that the library staff really were the ones who kept the library running throughout the pandemic and it was their willingness to adapt to the ever changing rules that allowed the library to thrive.

The security camera project has been delayed due to a shortage of microchips. Our vendor was able to fill some of the order, and the most essential cameras have been installed at Forest and Moneta. The IT staff hope to have the cameras in hand by the end of the calendar year, but it is pretty much out of their hands, at the moment. All the wiring is already in place, so once they arrive, installation should only take a few days.

Erate paperwork for the FY22 category 1 services has been filed, there was no need for a bid process since we are still in a contract with our current vendor. USAC has sent a commitment letter for \$41,790.00 and there are no plans for any category 2 projects this coming year. Mrs. Novalis reviewed the current operating budget revenues and expenses, including Munis reports from March, April and May 2021 expenses. The May revenue reports are a little delayed due to our current workflow. Mrs. Novalis also reported on the progress of the HVAC projects and mold remediation/repair projects.

Board Member Comments:

Mrs. Cupit thanked the staff for making and sending the Summer Reading Program flyer around. The Board had a discussion about how important summer reading program is and they should be proud of the work. Mrs. Stevens noted that considering the BPLS is the only area library doing a full summer program and had been doing a program, that is an even better accomplishment. Mrs. Bahouth stated Jenny and the staff really pulled through and kept the library operating safely, we hope the community knows how fortunate we are to have this library system. Mr. Cox added that the staff really pulled through and our library stood much taller and a lot shinier than other libraries in the area. Mrs. Martin noted that Bedford really hung in there when others didn't and suggested they write a letter to the editor. She also stated that the Bedford Friend of the Library's book sales and puzzles sales were big hits. They received a lot of large donations during the pandemic. Ms. Krufka agreed with everything already stated. She summarized the issue the Forest Library had with anti-Northam demonstrators in May and noted that the staff handled it well and they now have clarification on what to do if this happens again. She added that this was her last Library Board meeting, as her term is expiring. She has very much enjoyed being on the Board and will miss being here, she has been a part of the Board for a long time. The Board thanked Ms. Krufka and Mrs. Markham for their service on the Board and Mrs. Novalis presented them with small awards.

Ms. Krufka asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Bahouth motioned, Mrs. Martin seconded, all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.