

ALAMANCE COUNTY LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Meeting in person and via Zoom

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

6:30pm

Minutes

Present in-Person: Kristen Whitlow, Paula Hendricks, Jordan Dawson, Angeline Hill

Present - virtually:, Courtney Doi, Colleen Macklin, , Logan Savits, Jessica Simmons

Staff Present: Susana Goldman, Terri Lamm

County Commissioner Representative: Craig Turner

Absent: Shannon Witherow

The live and Zoom (virtual) meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm by Kristen Whitlow, who facilitated the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of 08.10.21 were approved. Courtney Doi made the motion to approve and Kristen Whitlow seconded. Minutes were approved. All in favor.

REPORT OF DIRECTOR:

- Before the report was given, Paula asked about the library wifi. She asked when the wifi was on. Susana explained that since Covid, the wifi is not turned off. Even if the libraries are closed, people can sit in their cars and access the library wifi. Paula also asked if people needed the library on Sundays for homework due on Mondays. Susana explained that our numbers show library use on Sundays has been dropping for years. This was one of the questions on our recent survey, as well. Kristen brought up the fact that we offer hotspots for people to check out. This allows them to have internet access at home.
- Kristen said she enjoyed the pictures of the mobile library opening.
- Susana updated the Board on some recent items:
 - The mobile library was officially launched on October 1, 2021. It was a huge turn-out. There were over 100 people in attendance with representatives from multiple municipalities. We had a recorded message from Senator Amy Galey. Representative Ricky Hurtado was in attendance. The vehicle has gone through its soft-opening. It has completed a three-week rotation – since our items check out for 3 weeks. The soft opening was us testing the stops we had and making sure the times worked. It runs Monday through Thursday, with the possibility of events on Friday and Saturday. The first 3 weeks, we saw over 600 people on the vehicle. We checked out over 2,000 items. The entire children's collection got checked out. The Friends group had some extra money set aside to purchase additional children's books for the mobile library. So, we placed another order to replenish. We are getting flooded with requests for stops at other locations. Susana said we are trying to figure out if we even have enough staff to cover all the needs. There will be a future plan to purchase another vehicle, not as large as the mobile library, to allow us to stop at more places in the County. The response has been quite overwhelming and wonderful.
 - A new driver for the mobile café was hired at the beginning of the new fiscal year. However, the van is very old and prone to needing repairs. We know we need to replace this van. We have adjusted the stops the van was visiting last spring to reflect some of the new requests we have been getting for the mobile library. The mobile café has been going into smaller parking areas and also doing storytimes. Melody reported that she has driven over 200 miles in the mobile café, in a vehicle that has over 200,000 miles on it already. They gave away 404

books. They had 482 interactions with people, over a course of 90 hours. We have the plan ready to work on replacing the mobile café van. The plan includes upfitting the van to be able to take carts of library books on it. That would enable patrons to check out library books from the van. Staff would also be able to create library cards at these stops. The upfitting of the van can be done by adding an E-track system. This allows carts to be locked in place within the vehicle. It will also have the wifi capabilities, like the one now. The new mobile café will also have honor books for patrons, like the current one. There are funding opportunities to replace the mobile café van this year. Our first funding hope is to use ARP money for this project. Susana calculated it would take around \$45,000 to get a new van and upfit it for the e-track system, ramp, wifi and an exterior wrap. The County Commissioners are working hard to gather all the projects could be paid for with ARP money. Susana said we hope the Commissioners will approve the purchase of a new van using ARP money. If that falls through, we have another option. That option is a yearly trust the library receives. It would not pay for everything, but a majority of the purchase. If we have to go with this option, we would probably purchase a used vehicle. Courtney asked if there was anyone the board members could write to ask for this ARP money. Susana said there is a public meeting tomorrow night with the County Commissioners where they are hearing various departments and what they would spend the ARP money on, if they are awarded any. Anyone speaking would have to sign up through the County website. It will be at 6:00pm at the historic County Courthouse. Mr. Turner said he has come up with a process by which the commissioners could determine who gets the money and how much. This process has not been adopted yet. But, he is hopeful. This will probably not be the only public hearing regarding this money. ARP money will not have to be spent immediately. Municipalities have until 2024 to spend all the money.

- The permanent library hours change was approved by the County Commissioners at the second October meeting (October 18). This went into effect on November 1. From the time of the last Library Board meeting until the hours were implemented, the library had a survey out. This survey asked the community to give their feed-back/opinion on the hours. Over 70% of the respondents approved the hours. The new hours are very much appreciated by staff. It has allowed for staff to get more programming done while in the buildings during the week.
- We are in the process of getting the remote locker unit implemented. There were more hurdles to get over than previously realized. We were awarded the grant in June. It is a July through June grant that is paying for it. Because Graham is an historic site, we had to get the installment of the lockers approved. The Historic Resources Commission at the City of Graham did approve the locker installment. We are moving forward with the next steps in getting an electrician to run power to the lockers and getting a construction crew to pour a cement slab for the lockers to sit on. Both of these items are within the budgeted amount. We hope to have the lockers in our possession by January – barring any supply chain delays. If that timeline is correct, patrons should be able to use the lockers within a month or so. Once the lockers are installed, staff will have a short training period to get used to them. The way the lockers work will be: a patron would request materials; they would select from the drop-down menu where they want to pick them up (remote locker, or something similar), the patron would then be notified when the materials have been loaded into the lockers and are ready for pick up. Patrons will have 3 days to pick up their materials, which is the same amount of time that patrons have to pick up items in the libraries. When the patron arrives to pick up their materials, they will scan their library card or put in their number, the locker will pop open and patrons will get their materials and close the locker back. These items will be checked out to the patron.
- Paula asked if any nursing homes were interested in having the mobile library stop there. Susana said that nursing homes are definitely among the 40 stops. Some charter or private schools have also requested a stop. Some of these schools don't have libraries on-site. Various churches and

neighborhoods are part of these stops. The mobile library will not be able to go to all these stops due to its size. However, the mobile café can fill in, when possible. One of the Board via Zoom asked where the mobile library stops are published and how can a stop be requested. Susana said the stops are not published because the route is still being mapped out and decided on. She will publish it as soon as it is set. On our library website, we have a “request a library stop” form. This is a fillable form that can be submitted. Susana hopes to have the route published on the website by the end of the week. She is also working with the County GIS Department to get in mapped. This will be a pdf map that is printable. Susana also hopes it will be a layer in the GIS stuff, too. If someone were moving to the area and they looked at the house they were going to buy or a school to consider, they could see if there was a mobile library stop listed. Angeline asked about getting a mobile library stop at Lake Macintosh. Susana said that we do have a stop there. Commissioner Turner said he lives in that area and has seen the mobile library there.

- Susana said we are planning on being in all the Holiday parades this year. We have been confirmed for Graham and Burlington. We are awaiting confirmation for the Mebane parade. Right now, we are not sure which vehicle we will take. But, we are leaning towards the mobile café.
- We do a story time at a park, at least, every couple of weeks – whether using the mobile café or mobile library.
- This semester we have been partnering with It Takes A Village tutoring program. They tutor students at around 24 different schools, four days-a-week. We do 4 different schools every week and are there when the parents pick up the children. That way, the parents and the children can use our library vehicles. The families have been very appreciative for this program.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Our current strategic plan runs from 2017 – 2022. Since Covid 19 has delayed everything, we have asked for an extension on this plan. Susana needs to look at the current strategic plan and see where we stand on all the projects listed in it. We have gotten permission from The State Library to do a 3-year extension and Covid recovery plan. Normally strategic plans are 5 or 10 years. Since no one knows what projects will be needed due to Covid and how much ARP money will be distributed for them, we will use this extension to try and determine that. Then, in 2023, we will seek a grant to bring in a consultant to do a brand new 5-year plan. Susana let the Board know that because she wanted them aware of the process. She will be asking some Board members to be on a steering committee or planning committee in the spring. We will have representatives from Library Board and Friends of the Library to sit in on these meetings. The meetings will probably be once a month – maybe more, beginning in the spring of 2022. That way, we can be done with it by summer and be able to concentrate on summer reading and other large programs that the libraries do during the summer. Once the plan is done, Susana will bring it to the Library Board for approval, then on to the County Commissioners for their approval.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

February 8, 2022 at 12:30 pm

May 10, 2022 at 12:30 pm

August 9, 2022 at 12:30 pm

November 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.