

## ALAMANCE COUNTY LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Meeting in person and via Zoom

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

6:30pm  
Minutes

**Present:** Logan Savits, Jessica Simmons, Courtney Doi, Kim DiMuro, Cheryl Sanford, Paula Hendricks

**Via Zoom:** Kiah Glenn

**Staff Present:** Susana Goldman, Terri Lamm

**County Commissioner Representative:** No one

**Absent:** Bonnie Whitaker, Lorna Nelson

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by Logan Savits. Logan asked that everyone introduce themselves because Cheryl Sandford and Kiah Glenn are new to the committee. Everyone introduced themselves since there are 2 new people on the committee.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There was no public comment.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of 05.09.23 were approved. Courtney made the motion to approve, Kim seconded the motion.

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR:

- Susana said, for the new committee members, our Assistant Director retired in April. The position was frozen by the County for 3 months with the new fiscal year. It became unfrozen on October 1. We went through the hiring process ready to hire as soon as it was unfrozen. Susana said she was pleased to announce that the new Assistant Director is Kathy Garrison, 35-year employee of the library system. She has the amazing knowledge and history of this County and is a native of this County. Susana said Kathy brings a lot to this position. She is the most amazing people-person that Susana has ever met in her entire life and that is exactly what the role needed. Kathy is someone to be the staff's voice and to smooth projects over and get stuff done. Of course, Kathy leaving the public service manager position left a vacancy in that position. At the moment we have 6 full-time vacancies on the books. 3 of those positions were initially frozen with the budget. They were vacant when the fiscal year ended. The commissioners froze it so we couldn't hire until October 1. Then some people moved on to other positions. Susana is hopeful to have 2 of those positions filled within the next 2 weeks, assuming everything works out with all their requirements. On top of that, there are also 3 part-time vacancies scattered across the branches. Usually what happens is there are more part-time vacancies than full-time because part-time get promoted to full-time. Last month, we had 4 new part-timers start, along with Kathy in her new role. Kathy has been at it for a month and has really let Susana pass projects off to her, which has freed Susana up to do other things. There are so many things going on in the library right now, Susana said it was nice to have someone willing and able to share the load.
- There are a lot of projects in the works. We have been looking at what we can do with the special allocated non-recurring money from the State. This money has to be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026. If all the stars align, the money should be spent by the end of 2024. Susana said she wasn't sure if it would be the end of the fiscal year or the end of the calendar year. Susana said she would like to show everyone 2 of the completed projects that have happened at this branch, if it's not too late when the meeting ends. We now have Zenbooths. These are study rooms/privacy booths available in the Reference area available for quite study. Study rooms have been in high-demand allowing people to study without having to share a large table with anyone else. We also had the project to create a new meeting space in this building. That project has been underway for around 6 months. This morning, the company installing the wall asked if they could come and do the work today. So, as of around 2pm

today, the new partition wall is up. Susana still has to get the technology in there to have a smart Board installed. She is continuing to work on the small pieces. We hope to have that meeting space available for the public to use, just like Meeting Room A, beginning in the new year. That will give us a little time to get things in place, through the holiday season.

- Mebane library has re-organized almost their entire 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Not so much their book stacks. Those are very heavy. At the top of the stairs, that whole open area has been re-done. We have swapped out some furniture. We are waiting on their privacy booths to arrive. They have been ordered. Their existing study rooms have very little privacy, due to the glass. These privacy booths will allow people to do a Zoom interview, to call their doctor, etc. Susana said we are very grateful for our 2 couriers. They travel 5 days a week to deliver materials from branch to branch. They also assemble and disassemble all our furniture. They have put our Zenbooths together.
- We have a new agreement with the jail in Graham. We supply books and magazines to the inmates each quarter. We go through the donated materials and meet the requirements for what we can and can't send the inmates. They get 2 to 3 boxes each quarter to add to their library. That is something we've been interested in doing and are glad that this partnership is back. We did this about 10 years ago. However, over a period of time, it fell by the wayside. Susana said she was glad it was back and is now consistent. We've been doing it for about 6 months. Kim asked if the inmates had their own library. Susana said she was not sure what the set-up is in the jail. They do have something. But she isn't sure it meets the definition of a library. Kim asked if we were giving them the books. Susana said, yes, we are giving them books. These books are discards and donations. A few members said that this was a great resource for the inmates. Susana re-iterated that the items come totally from donated materials. The donations are made with the support of the Friends of the Library. When they are done with the book sale, the Friends let Susana come and pick whatever she wants for the inmates from their donations. Susana said though it is only 2 – 3 boxes per quarter, she feels like it will build over a period of time. The third delivery is about to be made. The inmates have actually started to make genre requests. Susana said she thinks that is awesome because she wants them to be able to read. The inmates have nothing else to do. There is no outdoor space or exercise space. So, they are, basically, in their cell about 22 hours a day. Westerns are in high demand. Unfortunately, not as many of them get donated. But Susana said she is doing her best to get what she can to supply that need. A few members expressed an interest in possibly donating some Westerns. The donations must be paperbacks and nothing can have staples.
- Graham's projects have not all been implemented yet. But they are plotting how to re-arrange things because they would like privacy booths, as well. Graham doesn't have any study rooms. The one room that could be used as a study room is too big for one person to use. It is an awkward design. It is more of a small meeting room. The whole library will have to be re-arranged to accommodate the privacy booths. This includes the stacks. We still have the non-recurring money available when Graham makes their decision. That will probably be the last thing we do and it will take care of the rest of the money. Kim asked if there was a time-limit on the privacy booths. Susana said the study rooms, as well as the privacy booths, are an hour at a time. This can be extended if no one is waiting. If someone comes in and needs to take a test that will last longer than one hour, staff will make special exceptions, if the person talks to staff to arrange it. These rooms are first-come-first-serve. Staff do have a calendar and they regulate the time in and time out. The 2 Zenbooths have height-adjustable tables in them so they are ADA compliant. We do have tables and they are a decent height for most wheelchairs. However, the specialized wheelchairs might not fit under our existing tables. This increases our opportunities for the community. We like to be able to meet the need, whenever possible.
- Before Covid, we had iPads for children that were able to play specific games that were pre-loaded onto the iPads. These were for in-house use only. They were learning apps for children to use. Those iPads were purchased with a grant, for that purpose. They have reached their end-of-life. That date is

very close. We are using project money to purchase new devices. They are called Launchpads. It is a vendor that is specific to libraries. The devices are pre-loaded and don't need an internet connection to work. They have what is called "academies" on them that are theme-based. It might be like a numbers and letters theme. Within that, there would be multiple games and things for children to learn whatever the subject matter is. They come in thousands of subjects and thousands of themes. There could be one subject that has 4 different themes. Susana said the struggle is choosing the ones we want because there are so many options. With the project money, we should be able to get around 40 – 45 Launchpads. They are less expensive than an iPad. They are chargeable and come with a charging cord. At least 10 of them will be only for in-house use. The rest will actually be available for check-out. Kim asked if we were able to donate the old iPads – what are we doing with them? Susana said she would have to negotiate with IT on that because there are requirements from the County-level when it comes to purchased equipment. Susana said we have special permissions for books – using the book sale to purge those. But everything else that is County owned – technically there are regulations in place about how to dispose of these items. Normally electronic items go through the IT department who wipes them clean and purges them. Susana said she doesn't know where they purge them, whether it's with a recycling company or whether the items are donated. Jessica asked what the name of the company was again. Susana said the company that produces them is called Playaway. Jessica said, "Oh, they have the things that you listen to." Susana said, yes, they have preloaded audio books. We do still have those. Susana said, because they work only with libraries, they know what libraries need and what patrons want. She said they come in large cases. It's a larger version of the orange cases the playaways come in. They sit on the shelf nicely. It's embedded in a very good shock-proof case. Jessica asked if there was a time limit for check-out, like our other materials. Susana said she thinks we are leaning towards a 3-week check-out, just like our other materials. There will be no fine for late returns. However, if they are not returned at all, there will be a fee charged to the patron. Just like all our items, if someone checks them out and doesn't return that item, there will be a fee put onto their account. The order will be placed within the next couple of weeks. Once they come in, they will have to be barcoded and cataloged. December/January is what we are shooting for. Kim asked how much they were. Susana said the price depends on the theme. They can be anywhere from \$110 to \$175 each. Most of the content will focus on the elementary age. There will be a small number for early literacy (young child) and there might be a hand-full for teens. Right now, we are unsure if teens would be interested in them or not. Susana said the hope is that, if they are popular, we might, in year 2, be able to add a few more, as money allows. Because they are not too expensive, Susana said she would like to be able to add a few more each year.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Library Materials Selection Policy:
  - Susana talked about the special collections in local history. The library is scanning a lot of the materials so they can be added to the catalog. Many items had never been cataloged. Susana said the staff requested this Selection Policy be reviewed in anticipation of the Board's interest in reviewing it. They asked this because we are in the process of re-doing our special collection section. That was our focus this time because when our local history librarian of 30 years retired in April, we had to re-learn our local history department and re-do the whole room. We didn't know what we had. Susana talked about some of the materials we found in local history.
  - The Board discussed the Freedom to Read attachment, at some length. They talked about re-numbering the pages for clarity. There was discussion about changing the wording in this attachment. However, the wording can not be changed because it was not written by Alamance County Public Libraries. It was written by ALA

(American Libraries Association) and included in the Materials' Selection Policy as an attachment. It was decided to remove the appendices from this policy i.e. The Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View, and Access to Information statements.

- There was discussion on how to limit access of materials in the children's department, the mobile library and the BookMARK.
- There was discussion on what publications the library uses to determine the items purchased and added to the catalog. Susana said that the library uses Publishers Weekly, among other publications. Some are specific to children, some to adults.
- Paula Hendricks asked about the 16-page document she had at the last meeting. Logan said the way it was left at the end of the last meeting was that there is a policy and we have a way to challenge any material that's in the library. Therefore, each item on the list needs to be submitted via the form. Logan said the Library Board does not have the power to tell staff to do a specific job, outside their job responsibilities. Susana said, at the end of the meeting, what she understood to be decided by the committee was that the focus was going to be on what the committee had the authority to do which was to review the policy. Also, the committee did not have consensus to ask the staff to go through the list of 800+ items to see if they were in the library's catalog.
- Cheryl Sandford said she thought the flashpoint of certain materials was that they were LGBTQ books. She recommended that labels be put on them for identification. This would only affect the children's books.
- Courtney Doi asked for a list of labels the library already uses on books. Susana will send this information to the Library Board a couple of weeks before the next meeting in February.
- Susana said she would do her best to send out the changes in the selection document ahead of time so the Board can look it over.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- There was no new business.

#### **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

February 13 @ 12:30pm

May 14 @ 12:30pm

August 13 @ 12:30pm

November 12 @ 6:30pm

Logan called for the meeting to be adjourned. Courtney made the motion to adjourn. It was seconded. All in favor. No opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.