

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MARY RILEY STYLES PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Held in the Mary Riley Styles Public Library
120 N. Virginia Avenue Falls Church, VA 22046
March 16, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Brad Gernand called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Board members attended the meeting:

Brad Gernand
Chet DeLong
Ed Rose
Jeff Peterson
Stephanie Oppenheimer
Don Camp
Terry Zawacki

Councilwoman Karen Oliver, Library Director, Mary McMahon, and her assistant, Claudia Gutierrez, were also present.

Chair Brad Gernand proposed that the Board defer items 7 through 11 from the agenda because of the time change.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Library Board unanimously approved to defer items 7 to 11 on the agenda to the next Board meeting.

2. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT FEBRUARY 17, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Library Board unanimously approved the February 17, 2016 meeting minutes with minor changes.

4. ARTS AND CULTURAL DISTRICT TASK FORCE (CATCH) REPORT

No report.

5. LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORT

Don Camp informed the Board that the Foundation has \$6,900 in its checking account which is ready to be used for the library. He also thanked the Director for referring a patron who is interested in helping the Library Foundation with the referendum. The Director informed the Board that this person approached her through the library webpage, "Ask a Librarian." He is a cultural digital strategist and a retiree from the Smithsonian Museums. One of the Board members asked if the Director could invite him to a Board meeting soon. She said will although he often travels out of the country.

6. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Councilwoman Karen Oliver did not have anything to report to the Board concerning the

Council retreat or other Council related business.

7. DRAFT OF THE 2016 USER SURVEY– FIRST READING: Delayed until next meeting

8. DRAFT OF THE LIBRARY PROGRAMS POLICY–FIRST READING: Delayed until next meeting

9. DRAFT OF THE GROUP VISITS AND LIBRARY TOURS POLICY– FIRST READING: Delayed until next meeting

10. DRAFT OF THE INTERNET, WI-FI, AND COMPUTER POLICY—FIRST READING: Delayed until next meeting

11. DRAFT OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND POLICY—FIRST READING: Delayed until next meeting

12. REPORT OF THE CHAIR ABOUT THE COUNCIL MEETING WITH CHAIRS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Chair Brad Gernand mentioned that Chairs of Boards and Commissions were present, and that the Council would like to know more about what Board and Commissions are considering in the course of their business as well as relay more information about what Council is doing to the Boards and Commissions.

13. DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS POSED BY BOARD MEMBER

The Director responded to questions that were posed by Board member Jeff Peterson and which were included in the Board packet for the Board's consideration. She said that the timing of a referendum was explained to the Board by the City Attorney, Carol McCoskrie, at the last Board meeting. The Director explained that the bond referendum of \$8.3M could potentially add a two cent increase to the tax rate. She said that the recent CIP public opinion survey was authored by Assistant City Manager, Cindy Mester, and there was no input from any Boards and Commissions as to what questions would be asked on it. There was a short turnaround time for responses to the survey due to the snow storm in January that caused the City to close for 4.5 days and also holiday closures. There were about 250 responses to the survey this year—previous years had as many as 800 responses.

The annual costs in the library's CIP proposal for utilities were based on the Director's estimates. She noted that they are just that, estimates, which will fluctuate, but Council wants an idea of what additional operating costs will be incurred with a larger building. She also said that the utility costs are not part of the bond since they are operating expenses. The Director said that David Moore, AIA, estimated that the library would remain open 95% of time during the construction of the expansion/renovation project. The project would be phased so that the extension would be built first and then tear down the adjoining wall to attach it to the main part of the library. While doing that, the library could be closed for a week. When work begins on the main part of the building, furniture and collections would be moved to the new portion of the building, and the library would remain open most of the time that the renovation is taking place. Again, the renovation work would be completed in phases.

Chet DeLong handed out a draft letter that he composed for the Falls Church New Press about the need for a library renovation/expansion project. The Board read the draft and made suggestions. They also said that by expanding the word count, it could become a guest editorial for the paper. Chet

agreed to work on it so it could be given to the paper as a possible guest editorial.

The Director passed out a draft letter and copy of a Council resolution (Res. 88-32 adopted November 28, 1988 stating the Council's policy concerning the need for a referendum for a CIP project). The resolution states that if a CIP project costs less than 10 percent of the City's general fund budget for the fiscal year, the project does not require a referendum. The \$8.3M library project is less than 10 percent of the proposed 2017 operating budget which is \$87.2M. The draft letter urges the Council to approve the FY2017 operating budget and Capital Improvement Plan which contains funding for the expansion and renovation of the library building. It also recommends that Council approve proceeding to implement the library project without a referendum per their stated policy in Resolution 88-32. Councilwoman Karen Oliver reminded the Board that the Planning Commission wanted the library project to go to referendum, but Chet DeLong said that it was because the initial project cost was \$18M. Since the project was greatly reduced to meet the Planning Commission and Council's wishes and is less than the 10 percent cap, it does not require a referendum. Chet DeLong suggested that Board members talk with Council members to express their feelings and reasons for not wanting the library project to go to referendum. Councilwoman Oliver said that this Council has a bias toward hearing from the public about what the public thinks and wants, so thinks they will require a referendum despite the project being less than 10 percent of the City's budget. However, she felt it would be helpful to raise the issue and see where Council stands on it.

The Board reviewed the letter to Council, and Jeff Peterson said he would research what Council's past practices have been around the issue of projects that are less than 10 percent of the City's operating budget and add any pertinent information to the letter that he gathers from his research.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Library Board unanimously approved sending the letter to City Council, subject to any proposed changes by Jeff Peterson.

14. LIBRARY REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Director informed the Board that the 20 hour temporary LAII position for the Local History Room has been filled. The new employee should start on March 28th. She has a background in archival library work and has worked at the National Cathedral archives. Sarah also has an MLS and has used the InMagic database that the library uses.
- The gutter/downspout work that was required after the snowstorm has been completed. Other building related issues: several problems during the last couple of weeks with the HVAC system and elevator.
- The Director reminded the Board about the budget Open House this coming Saturday, March 19, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the gym at the Community Center. The Director will be there to answer any questions from the public or Council.
- The Director informed the Board that the library will be starting an ESL group on Monday, March 21, 2016 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the library conference room. An ESL leader from Tyson's Pimmit library asked the Director if MRSPL would be interested in hosting this program while Tyson's is closed. The teacher said that her students preferred coming to this library. It will be a conversational English language group with emphasis on American culture for adults only. The announcement of the program has been advertised. Two MRSPL library volunteers will be co-leaders for this program. The Director will welcome the students to MRSPL, and then a staff member will give them a library tour, show them how to use the catalog, and how to get a library card. Board Member Ed Rose suggested that the library donate some books to the students.

- Youth Services hosted a Northern Virginia Youth Services group this past week. About 20 people from other library systems attended. They discussed policies and procedures for Youth Services departments, reading programs, and several other items. This group will meet 3 to 4 times a year in different locations to exchange information.
- Work continues on the InMagic database, the \$19,500 database that the Foundation donated to the library for the Local History collection. The Director again thanked the Foundation for making this purchase possible. The database will facilitate the organization and accessibility of local history information in several formats: photographs, audio files, video files, and documents. The installation and staff training will be completed by mid-June. Some of the data has been migrated for staff to review for accuracy and learn how to manipulate the data so it presents in a consistent, easy to use manner. Board member Don Camp suggested also having a database of sources in other locations such as the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian that have information about Falls Church.
- On April 6th there will be a general staff meeting about dealing with patrons who have mental health issues. The last staff meeting emphasized community resources for the mentally ill and homeless. There have been several incidents in City facilities recently, so all City staff have been invited to attend the meeting.
- The Director told the Board that she would be requesting a decision on closings over the 2016 holiday season. While it is still some time in the future, long range schedules are beginning to plan the weekends at the end of the year. The City will close at noon on Friday, December 23rd and then all day on Monday, December 26th. The library will be closed on Sunday, December 25th, but the Director is asking that a decision be made about Saturday, December 24th. She will ask for a decision at the next Board meeting so schedules can be completed.

15. BUSINESS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Board member Jeff Peterson asked the Director if she had an opportunity to talk to Cindy Mester, Assistant City Manager, about the shared/leased parking project. She said that she told the City Manager that the Library Board is very interested in having concrete information about the shared parking project prior to a possible referendum or preferably having a memorandum of understanding in place with 313 Park Avenue prior to a vote in November. She also stated that the Board would like the cost information about the plan by then as well. City Manager, Wyatt Shields, said he will talk to Cindy about it.

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary W. McMahan
Library Director

Approved:

Bradley Gernand

Bradley E. Gernand, Chair

Copies: Board of Trustees, City Manager, Library Reference Desk, Staff Bulletin Board, City Clerk,
Library Web Page

The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request a reasonable accommodation for any type of disability, call 703-248-5032, TTY 711.

DRAFT

Letter to City Council; 3.13.16

Dear Mayor Tarter and Members of Council:

The Board of Trustees of the Mary Riley Styles Public Library urges you to approve the proposed FY 2017 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan containing funding for badly needed upgrade and expansion of the Library building. In addition, we recommend that you approve proceeding to implement this critical project without a referendum.

The proposed upgrade and expansion of the Library has been repeatedly approved in prior year Capital Improvement Plans and is endorsed by the Planning Commission and by City Council. Recent public surveys show strong public support for the project and the Library Board and staff have participated in public outreach on the project.

As we have indicated in earlier briefings on the project, the essential systems of the Library building, including HVAC, bathroom plumbing, and elevator, are in critical need of upgrades. Deferring replacement of these systems could result in damage and emergency repairs at significant cost. In addition, demand for Library services is already beyond the capacity of the existing building and the proposed expansion will provide space that is essential to meeting the increasing service demands of the growing Falls Church population.

Although the proposed Library project meets critical needs, the project cost is modest. The \$8.3 million budget is the product of long discussions with City management on how best to reduce costs and meet the most critical needs cost-effectively. For example, the Board is working with the City in implementing the proposed "shared parking" approach to addressing the parking challenges at the Library in place of more costly new structured parking.

Most important, in 1998 the City Council adopted Resolution 88-32 providing that projects costing "less than 10 percent of the City general fund budget for the fiscal year in which the bonding authority is sought" do not require approval by referendum. The \$8,381,605 million Library project is less than 10 percent the proposed 2017 operating budget of \$87,245,000 and should proceed consistent with adopted City policy and without the delay associated with a referendum.

Again, thank you for your support of the Library project.

Sincerely,

Bradley Gernand, Chair
Mary Riley Styles Public Library
Board of Trustees

cc: City Manager
Library Director

D_R_A_F_T

The Little Library That Could

As is generally known, our small one-unit library has won national star rating for __8__ years. How has this happened in a work space that is badly deteriorating to the point of failure of air and heating systems, obsolete elevator, leaky plumbing, leaky roof, lack of space, etc? Of course it is the dedicated, hard-working staff and director that have accomplished such a feat. How long will they have to overcome such an environment where a) the working spaces may range from 55 to 90 degrees, depending on the season, or b) they arrive to find their work space flooded from toilet overflow, or inundated by roof leaks. How often do we have to have an employee or a patron trapped in a creaky elevator for which parts are no longer manufactured? These are not just one-time occurrences, they are repeated hazards.

I cannot imagine that citizens of our City want to tolerate such working conditions for these employees. Yet we hear comments that there is no need to change or improve the building. Or we hear comments that libraries are no longer necessary in these digital times. This is the same thinking that declared the computer revolution had brought us to the paperless age. So now our paper usage has soared almost beyond belief. Come on, let's get real. The city's citizens and employees need a library renovation and expansion just to continue serving its current patrons, let alone accommodating an additional upcoming hefty population increase resulting from new and contemplated apartments and condominiums. As a member of the Library Board and as a private citizen, I urge readers to tell City Council members that you encourage and support a library renovation and modest expansion, and if it comes to a referendum, that you fully support it. Let's remove the handicaps staff is struggling to overcome and redirect their efforts into improving even our stellar record.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA,
CHOOSING A PROCEDURE FOR ISSUING BONDS OF THE CITY
BY PROVIDING THAT THE CITY CHARTER PROVISION FOR A
BOND REFERENDUM SHALL BE UTILIZED FOR ALL NON-WATER
AND NON-SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS WHERE THE BOND AMOUNT
EQUALS OR EXCEEDS TEN PERCENT OF THE CITY'S GENERAL
FUND BUDGET.

- WHEREAS, the City of Falls Church is authorized to issue bonds for the purpose of borrowing money; and
- WHEREAS, the Charter of the City of Falls Church provides, in §7.06, that bonds of the City may be issued if approved by a referendum of qualified voters; and
- WHEREAS, the Public Finance Act of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in §15.1-199 of the Code of Virginia, provides that the governing bodies of cities may, by majority vote, authorize bonds of the city as an alternative method of bond approval; and
- WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in Falls Church Taxpayers League v. City of Falls Church, 203 Va. 604 (1962), had recognized that the City of Falls Church may choose to issue bonds of the City under either its Charter or the Public Finance Act; and
- WHEREAS, voter referenda give the voters direct control over expenditures by the City of Falls Church which may require an increase in individual or business taxes; and
- WHEREAS, voter referenda are most important where the City Council is contemplating a substantial increase in indebtedness in order to fund large capital projects that may require a significant increase in taxes and which may require fundamental policy choices about the City's priorities and future course of development; and
- WHEREAS, the alternative procedure provided by the Public Finance Act is more useful for smaller capital projects that do not significantly increase the City's indebtedness and where a City Council majority vote procedure may give the City a desirable degree of flexibility in planning capital improvements;
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH that:

SECTION 1. The City of Falls Church, through its Council, recognizes the general desirability of allowing the citizens of Falls Church to decide whether the City should

undertake capital projects that will entail a substantial increase in indebtedness.

SECTION 2. In consideration of the above, the City of Falls Church hereby chooses that only the voter referendum procedure provided in the City Charter will be utilized where the City seeks to issue bonds of the City for all non-water or non-sewer capital projects, unless the aggregate bond amount for a capital project is a sum less than ten percent of the City's general fund budget for the fiscal year in which the bonding authority is sought; prior to following this procedure, the Council shall determine that there is a substantial public need for the project and that the public welfare would be substantially benefitted by the project.

SECTION 3. This resolution shall take effect upon its adoption.

Adopted November 28, 1988
(TR88-31)