

MINUTES OF LIBRARY BOARD MEETING

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Library Board Meeting

DATE OF MEETING: February 25, 2021

LOCATION: Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

1.- MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: Stephanie Oppenheimer at 7:01 PM

2.- NOTICE: This virtual meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state and local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency. All participating members of the Library Board of Trustees were present at this meeting through electronic means. All members of the public may view this video of this meeting on the City’s website at www.fallschurchva.gov/362/Library-Board-of-Trustees

3.- ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

THOSE PRESENT:

<p><u>Library Board Members</u></p> <p>Ms. Stephanie Oppenheimer: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Mr. Jeff Peterson: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Mr. Patrick Cronin: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Mr. Don Camp: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Ms. Kathleen Tysse: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Ms. Chrystie Swiney: <u>✓</u></p> <p>Ms. Molly Novotny: <u>Absence excused</u></p>

OTHERS PRESENT: CBC Youth Representatives Raissa Borges and Erin Tarpgaard. Library Director Jenny Carroll and Administrative Assistant Claudia Gutierrez were present as well.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

Ms. Oppenheimer mentioned the key points to be considered during the equity discussion:

- What was your emotional response to the information?
- Did you have an “aha” moment and what was it?
- What would you do differently now that you have completed the challenge?
- What can the Board do differently?

4. EQUITY DISCUSSION

The 21-Day Equity Challenge was provided by the Library of Virginia (based on the American Bar Association challenge). Ms. Carroll shared this Challenge with the library staff which resulted in a thoughtful, positive discussion.

Board members expressed their emotional response that discrimination is immense, pervasive, and overwhelming. The content was thought provoking and the Board discussed intersectionality, life experiences, white privilege, and the emotional impact of racism on black people. The Equity Challenge was overwhelming and eye opening to how important it is to be supportive of others and not judgmental or disrespectful of other cultures.

One Board member discussed that most of the white people in the City live in a bubble and they are privileged to live in a safe place. Ms. Carroll stated that the City is predominantly white however as the library Director, she has the responsibility to do better at reaching populations who don't engage with the library as much and to improve and diversify the collection, programs, and services. Ms. Carroll quoted Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop and the importance of people having mirrors so you can have a reflection of yourself, windows to see other experiences, and sliding doors so you can enter those experiences. With books you can learn through reading about another group's perspective and experience, especially as a white person.

Jurisdictions surrounding the City of Falls Church and national and global communities are more diverse. It is important not to limit oneself just to your community and to incorporate different perspectives and experiences. There are people in other places that are living in fear and in an unsafe environment and do not have all the privileges that Falls Church citizens have. There were comments about how people feel when they are treated in a different way just because of their skin color.

City Council has made equity part of their work plan. They are encouraging Boards and Commissions to participate and to contribute in a review of all the City's programs, services, and projects with an equity lens. Once the information is released, the Director will provide it to the Board.

Suggestions from the Board:

- Speakers or author talks such as Jason Reynolds or Nikki Henderson, hosted at the library or other space depending on scale;
- Programming directed at children/teens specifically designed to raise racial awareness;
- Partnering with Tinner Hill Foundation and other local non-profits;
- Library website additions including links to the Tinner Hill Foundation and other non-profit organizations such as Welcoming Falls Church, a monthly highlight of a non-profit, and where to access additional historical or social information so people can learn more about the City of Falls Church.
- Have a specific item on the monthly Board agenda to discuss topics, share ideas and take action regarding equity and diversity.

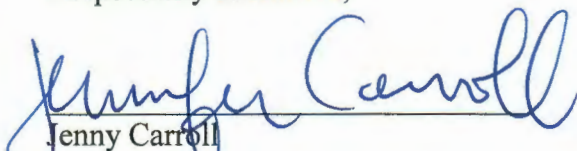
5.- BUSINESS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Carroll informed the Board that the Library Project Manager will be presenting to Council on March 1st an update from the Library Project. She also provided a memo to Council with library updates including the 4 Star Library Award, Storywalks, curbside service, which had a record of 148 pickups. She also sent an email to the Board with the schedule for the construction site tours on March 3rd.

6.- ADJOURNMENT

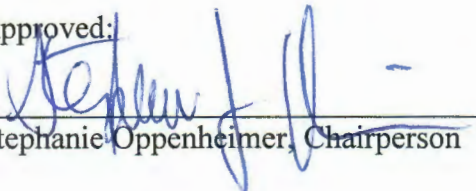
Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Swiney and seconded by Mr. Cronin, the Library Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenny Carroll
Library Director

Approved:



Stephanie Oppenheimer, Chairperson

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

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