



Board of Trustees Special Called Meeting 6 May 2021 Minutes

Trustees Attending: Chair Andy Simon, Cathy Hammon, Logan Hill, Lauren Emert, Jesus Ortega-Valenzuela, Dawn Reagan, Susan Schneibel, Stephanie Thompson, Susan Williams

Staff Attending: Anjanae Brueland, Anna Gombert, Kathleen Christy, Cynthia Spitler, Kathy Thompson, Carrie Godfrey, Brennan LeQuire, Chelsea Mathenia, Melinda Rust, Lisa McDaniel-Tipton, Jeanne Pierce, Gail Holloway

Visitors: Andrew Jones - The Daily Times

Guests: Joan VanSickle Sloan

Call to Order: Chair Andy Simon called the Blount County Public Library Board to order on 6 May 2021 at 5:30 pm.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Library Director's Resignation, to appoint an interim director, and to discuss the Library Sustainability Plan.

- Andy opened the meeting by thanking staff for their hard work at the library, and asked that the reading and approval of the April meeting minutes be conducted at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- Andy introduced the resignation letter of Library Director K.C. Williams.

Cathy Hammon made a motion to accept the resignation of K.C. Williams. Stephanie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- Andy asked a member of the board to create a commendation letter to be sent to the Daily Times to serve as a public record of all the positive growth and changes in the library in the past six years under K.C. Susan Schneibel was asked to work on the letter.
- Andy asked Anjanae Brueland to leave the room.

Jesus Ortega-Valenzuela made a motion to accept Anjanae Brueland as the interim director. Susan Williams seconded the motion.

- Cathy asked for a discussion before a vote on the motion. She asked if the interim director would be immediately authorized to take over both responsibility and authority of the library. K.C. would serve in an advisory role for her final weeks.
- Cathy suggested that the board chair sit down with K.C. and Anjanae to discuss the division of power.
- Jesus asked about the compensation for the interim director.
- Andy shared the job descriptions of both the director and deputy director, pointing out that they are very similar.

Cathy Hammon made a motion to amend the previous motion so that Anjanae immediately assumes full authority. Lauren Emert seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- Andy shared that he is in communication with County personnel about how payroll is set up for different positions, and that currently Anjanae is one step below K.C.
- Andy discussed the possibility of a 10 percent pay increase for the interim, as a package not an increase in pay rate. The package would be paid out on a bi-weekly basis and carry two weeks into a new director's term.
- Dawn advised the board to make a proposal to the County Commission in order to spend the money for a possible supplemental salary.
- Andy has discussed appointing Anjanae as interim director with Liz Schreck, Mayor Ed Mitchell, and HR Director Jaelyn Johnson. K.C. also recommended Anjanae for the position.

Cathy Hammon made a motion to authorize Andy Simon, on behalf of the board, to work with authorities to negotiate an appropriate compensation package for the new interim director. Stephanie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- Andy encouraged all board members to meet with Anjanae, as she will be reporting directly to the board.
- Andy proposed putting the Sustainability Report on hold, and emphasized that employees would like to see this as well. The budget has been affected dramatically by recent resignations, and the cafe and meeting rooms are bringing in more revenue than expected. Utility bills are also dropping.
- Cathy expressed the desire for the new director to be able to review the Sustainability Plan when they are hired. She also expressed that she supported putting the plan on hold but not completely eliminating it, because the board had asked for this plan and a large amount of work went into creating it.
- Andy proposed putting the hiring of an Education Services Manager on hold. He also explained that if the report is halted, the management structure would revert to what it had been previously.
- Anjanae will provide a budget breakdown and clarification at the next board meeting.
- Andy discussed with the county personnel department that, while the plan is on hold, any part-time personnel who have resigned can come back at the same pay rate and in the same position.
- Cathy stated that staffing should fall under Anjanae's purview.
- Anjanae reported on a meeting with the staff on Tuesday, May 4, as well as a meeting with the Admin Planning Team. Her goals during the interim are to keep the ship steady, bring joy into the library, and to do things at a slower pace.
- Lauren asked if there was an update to the library process and programming with the new executive order.

Board of Trustees Special Called Meeting 6 May 2021 Minutes

- The library is currently operating at 56 hours a week, but could be asked to open back up to the full 70 hours soon. If this does happen, the library can ask for a year extension.
- Andy expressed that if the Sustainability Plan is put on hold he would still like to continue with the creation of the lower level bathrooms and the implementation of Sky-Fi tables, both of which could be funded by the Foundation.
- Jesus shared concerns about restrictions on hiring back employees and wanted the board to empower Anjanae to share her outlook on the budget and employees.
- Anjanae stated that she was working on crunching numbers and assessing the needs with the Admin Planning Team, which she will then bring to the board.

Stephanie Thompson made a motion to put the Sustainability Report on hold. Susan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- Andy suggested creating a five-person search committee for the next library director, the same number as the last committee, with two board members volunteering to serve. He also explained that during the last director search, the committee hired a consultant and brought in four final candidates.
- Cathy suggested that a majority of the committee be made up of board members.
- Susan Schneibel suggested a larger committee, and Susan Williams raised the idea of having all three funding bodies represented in the search committee.
- Jesus, Stephanie, Dawn, and Andy volunteered to serve as the board members on a seven-person search committee.
- Andy shared that the Board, Director, and Deputy Director are not currently covered by liability insurance. Anjanae is working to get them all covered as soon as possible.
- Andy asked the board to meet every two weeks on a temporary basis during the transition period. A quorum would be needed for the board to take any action at these additional meetings.
- The board will meet one additional time on June 1, as well as the regularly scheduled meetings on May 18 and June 15. Anjanae asked that the June 15 board meeting be moved to June 22 so that she may attend in person.
- The next board meeting will include a discussion on how employees can make complaints or communicate with the board.

Andrew Jones asked about a proposed survey for library staff. This survey will no longer be sent out.

- The Board expressed a desire for staff presentations given in board meetings to be recorded and included in the training for new trustees.

Cathy Hammon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lauren Emert seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Next Library Board Meeting – 18 May 2021, 5:30 pm, Dorothy Herron Room

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Gombert