

BREVARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pete Poole, District I
Tom McGill, District II (Absent)
Dr. Rochelle Kenyon, District IV
Mark Broms, District V

OTHERS PRESENT

Wendi Jo Bost, Library Services Director
Jeri Prieth, Assistant Library Services Director
Debra Martin, Talking Books/Homebound Services
Elanya Bairefoot, Interim Director of Central Library
Sean Rowan, Information Technology
Lisa Olzewski, Director of Cocoa Beach Library
Ashley Link, Director of Melbourne Beach Library
Karen DiNatale, Executive Secretary

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm, by the Chair, Mr. Broms. This was an in-person meeting at the Catherine Schweinsberg Rood Central Library and a virtual meeting utilizing GoToMeeting forum.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Poole, seconded by Dr. Kenyon to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2021 Board Meeting. *Motion unanimously carried.*

Correspondence

Ms. Bost read a touching letter from a patron whose mother had passed away and how much a book she held on to from the library gave her comfort.

Dr. Kenyon stated she received a letter regarding the importance of building a library in Viera.

Library Services Director's Report

Ms. Bost stated she has visited eight libraries so far and plans to visit the rest of the libraries by the end of April. Ms. Bost stated the staff is phenomenal and she is learning a lot through these visits. One of the main concerns is staffing. Libraries have been working steadily through the pandemic taking a toll on workers. Also, have been working with our Finance Manager, Laurie Blair, on the budgets for the next fiscal year. She is learning the needs of the libraries, how we budget and understanding government procedures. She then demonstrated a sample of a take home child's craft that is given to patrons to show the creativity of the staff and how it benefits the patron through learning, following directions and manual dexterity.

Dr. Kenyon questioned why are there directors directing two libraries. Ms. Bost stated it has to do with the size of the libraries.

Mr. Broms asked how are libraries handling departmental meetings. Ms. Bost said that most meetings are being held through Teams (virtually). There has been a meeting where staff met in person in a socially distant room to discuss the mobile library and taking a tour of the mobile library. We have learned that doing meeting by Teams saves money on travel expenses not to mention time.

Mr. Poole asked how do we know the schedule of the mobile library as to where it will be? Ms. Bost explained that the Mobile Library is brand new. We don't have anyone staffing it yet as we are determining how we can best use the Mobile Library.

Ms. Bost read a complimentary letter from a patron in regards to Debra Martin of Talking Books/Homebound Services. The letter states how much Talking Books/Homebound Services means to the patron and that Ms. Martin has helped her elderly father with materials through this difficult year. The letter stated her knowledge, sense of humor and professionalism makes Ms. Martin an invaluable employee to Brevard County. Ms. Bost then introduced Debra Martin of Talking Books to give a report.

Ms. Martin started by saying how much she loves her job as she feels it is a ministry of serving others. Talking Books started in 1988 and then in 1996 Talking Books and Homebound Services merged. They serve approximately 2000 patrons who have said Talking Books is their lifeline. Patrons are as young as 3 and go through 104 years of age. We are one out of 11 Sub Regional libraries in the State of Florida that offer this type of service. The department has sent out recently as many as 1000 books a day that couldn't be done without their seven dedicated volunteers. Some of the assistive devices they have are Closed Caption TV (CCTV), Reading Edge Personal Reader, an enhanced workstation that magnifies information 16 times to provide access to system's on-line catalog for independent searching, and a collection of hand-held aids. In the coming months we will be getting new assistive devices to all 17 libraries.

Personal Appearances

Mr. Poole visited the Alafaya Branch of the Orange County Library System and noticed wearing mask signs up. It was explained due to Orange County still having a mask mandate.

Unfinished Business

Ms. Bost went through the handout of the facilities projects for 2020-2021. Melbourne Beach Library light project turned out to be a much larger project than anticipated due to being beachside. Also, on the Eau Gallie HVAC project, the bid needs to be reworked at hopefully a lower cost. Cocoa Beach Library will be closed on May 10th for two weeks for flooring.

Ms. Bost gave an e-books update. From October 2019 through March of 2020 over 300,000 checkouts putting us on trend for over 600,000 for the year. As far as McMillen Publishing they have changed their lending model in March. Libraries can purchase as many copies as they wanted. They did eliminate the perpetual access classification at this time.

Mr. Broms asked if e-books is impacting the procurement of books as we're investing more in e-books. Assistant Director, Jeri Prieth stated the book budget has stayed the same at each library. We have not reduced the library budget purchasing for physical materials. Mr. Broms asked if we could have a report for the next meeting on how the library is evolving with e-books.

Ms. Bost gave a report on fines and fees. Fines were waived during the COVID-19 pandemic. During that time the library has lost over \$200,000 in fines collected. The money received from fines and fees is used to maintain facilities. That \$200,000 will now have to be come from another source within our budget. Ms. Bost states that fines shouldn't be considered punitive but rather an incentive, but does agree staff are evaluating

finer for children's material. Mr. Broms stated he would like to look at eliminating fines entirely because of social inequities and staff having to be put in the enforcer role for collecting fines. Dr. Kenyon stated patrons will not appreciate fines being reinstated. Mr. Poole stated we could train staff on collecting fines where it wouldn't be a burden to staff. Ms. Bost will continue to look into this matter. This topic will remain as Unfinished Business for the next Board meeting.

Ms. Bost stated that the Library Policies and Procedures will be updated at approximately two policies per meeting until all are updated.

New Business

Ms. Heather Palmer was to have given a report on South Mainland Library. Due to unforeseen circumstances her report will be given at the next meeting.

Comments by Public/Friends

None.

Comments by County Library Board Members

Dr. Kenyon asked why the library does not buy DVD series. The series in question was "Peaky Blinders". Dr. Kenyon feels there may be a negative perception that we do not purchase DVD series. Ms. Bairefoot stated that there are series that are not available for purchase. Ms. Bairefoot said she would look into it and let Dr. Kenyon know what she finds out.

Mr. Poole would like to recognize Debra Martin for all she does for Talking Books.

Mr. Brom moved to adjourn and Mr. Poole seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m. Next meeting will be at the Central Library on May 19, 2021.



Edwin (Pete) Poole, Secretary

Approved by the Library Advisory Board on May 19, 2021.