

**St. Charles City-County Library District
Board of Trustees Quarterly Work Session Minutes
July 13, 2021**

The St. Charles City-County Library District Board of Trustees met in person on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in Community Commons Room 240/243 at the Spencer Road Branch. The meeting was also accessible via the application Zoom for those not able to attend in person. The meeting agenda, including directions to access the meeting virtually or by phone, was posted on the Library's website on Friday, July 9, 2021, at 11:54 a.m.

Board Members present:

- Staci Alvarez
- Justin Collier
- Joann Leykam
- TJ Rains
- Nevada Smith
- Renee Tillman

Board members absent:

- Georganne MacNab
- Gail Zumwalt

Library Staff present:

- Tiffany Barke, Chief Talent Officer
- Lori Beth Crawford, Chief Communications & Engagement Officer
- Aaron Eller, Regional Branch Manager, Middendorf-Kredell Branch
- Alison Griffith, Branch Manager, McClay
- Earl Haug, Assistant Branch Manager, Spencer Road
- Jennifer Jung, Regional Branch Manager, Spencer Road
- Jason Kuhl, Director & Chief Executive Officer
- Robin Lunatto, Executive Administrative Assistant & Recording Secretary
- Maggie Melson, Director of Youth Services
- Cindy Miller, Branch Manager, Deer Run
- Madison Morris, Branch Manager, Corporate Parkway
- Sara Nielsen, Director of Adult Services
- Scott Pyatt, IT Support Specialist
- Laurie St. Laurent, Deputy Director & Chief Customer Experience Officer
- Carol Schrey, Director of Collection Services
- Kristen Sherry, Outreach Services Manager
- Diana Tucker, Branch Manager, Kisker Road
- Julie Wolfe, Chief Financial Officer

Others present:

- Three additional staff members and citizens signed on to view or listen to the meeting

Board President Nevada Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The work session agenda included one topic, "Library 25 Overview and Hours of Operation Presentation".

Jason Kuhl began a preliminary discussion with the Trustees about hours of operation at their June 2021 board meeting. He presented a comparison of service hours among the seven libraries in Missouri that serve populations greater than 200,000. The data showed that the St. Charles City-County Library is open more hours per location annually than all other libraries except Springfield-Greene and despite this, has the lowest per capita revenue of the seven libraries. The Library 25 Committee has been looking carefully at usage throughout the district and has formulated a proposal for new hours of operation. The Trustees were notified that a presentation regarding the Library 25 and Hours of Operation would be given at their July 2021 work session.

At the beginning of the work session, Jason explained that the presentation would provide an overview of the Library 25 work group and proposed services hours for the Library. Jason introduced the co-chairs of the Library 25 Steering Committee to the Trustees: Maggie Melson, Director of Youth Services; Sara Nielsen, Director of Adult Services; and Carol Schrey, Director of Collection Services.

Maggie Melson began the presentation by explaining what the Library 25 Committee is - a team made up of a variety of staff from across the library with a goal of designing what the Library will look like in 2025. Team members representing a wide variety of positions were selected by Library's executive staff. Their goal is to create a practical vision for how the library will operate to best serve the community by 2025. Guided by the strategic and facilities plans, as well as new and lasting realities brought about by the pandemic, the guiding principles for the team are sustainability and the understanding that ongoing financial stability is paramount to developing an effective plan of service.

The steering committee meets weekly to go over priorities, share updates from subcommittee meetings and tasks, give each other feedback and make sure subcommittees have what they need to get things accomplished. Beyond the three Library 25 steering committee chairs, the remainder of the committee is made up of representatives from the four following subcommittees:

- Staffing – job classifications, optimizing staff, assessing work structure, and staffing models
- Technology – how technology can best support staff and customers to provide strong service to the community
- Services – how the library provides services by looking through a lens of customer service and utilizing staff effectively
- Collections – policies, strategies, guidelines and partnerships regarding the library collection (everything the library buys and supplies to the public for checkout)

Ms. Melson reported that the Library 25 Committee has already accomplished several services improvements, including joining the MOBIUS consortium which provides access to more than 29 million items, improved text messaging technology for a better customer experience with curbside, and working on a proposal for an updated staffing model with an emphasis on cross-training and optimizing staff. The Services subcommittee has also been working on proposals to develop a more sustainable model for providing passport acceptance services and updated hours of operation that would balance access with sustainability of operations.

Sara Nielsen, Director of Adult Services, reviewed the proposed hours of operation for the Library. Branches would be grouped as follows:

Group 1 Hours: Corporate Parkway, Kathryn Linnemann, Middendorf-Kredell, and Spencer Road

- Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Friday & Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Group 2 Hours: Cliff View, Deer Run, Kisker, McClay, and WingHaven®

- Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Friday & Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Group 3 Hours: Augusta and Boone's Trail

- Monday 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday 9:00 a.m. - noon

Sara reviewed the changes to service hours at the branches. Sara explained that Group 1 hours would increase from current hours (reduced during pandemic) and Group 2 branches would be closed on Sunday. Group 3 hours would remain unchanged. A map was shared which showed the Group 1 locations along the I-70 corridor.

Ms. Nielsen explained the reasons for the proposed changes. The library has excelled at making the most of limited resources through the years, however there is a limit to how far resources can be stretched. Operating

expenditures have outpaced increases in revenue for many years. Since 2004, revenue has increased 66% while costs of operation have increased 85%. Despite cost curtailing measures, 97% of revenue is projected to go toward operations in FY22, the highest percentage ever. The St. Charles City-County library has a per capita revenue of \$51. With the implementation of the proposed new hours, the library will be open 1,558 hours per million dollars of revenue, the third highest among the seven largest libraries in Missouri. This would place our library just below St. Louis Public but still well ahead of most other libraries (double in some cases).

The new hours will also create opportunities for savings by removing inefficient schedules, reducing underutilized time frames, and reducing facility operations. The library encounters challenges with nine-hour days (opposed to an 8-hour day) on Fridays and Saturdays, especially among part time staff.

Ms. Nielsen shared a map that demonstrated how customers already use more than one branch and noted that keeping Group 1 branches open on Sunday provides comparable travel times for the majority of St. Charles County residents. In addition, the suggested service hour schedule frees up approximately 16,000 staff hours to be used more efficiently and will allow staff to easily move between branches to fill unexpected absences or help with large events held during the 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. timeframe. No existing staff will see their budgeted number of hours reduced as a result of this change. Additional costs savings (HVAC and other utilities, lower cleaning costs, and snow removal during inclement weather) would be realized from Group 2 buildings being closed on Sundays.

Carol Schrey, Director of Collection Services, explained that the reasons for the new hours do ultimately tie back to the library's strategic plan:

- Goal I: Facilities for the future – what will our facilities be and how can they be repurposed for greatest service to customers while being efficient and fiscally responsible
- Goal III: Service Model - the Library 25 Committee has been investigating workflows and general staffing efficiencies. The proposed service hours would allow the library to hire people that know and care about our library and the community
- Goal IV: Digital Leadership- accelerated by customer needs during the pandemic when no branches were open and onward

Carol reported on the services the Library offers outside of its branch hours of operation, including 24/7 Wifi at all locations, Open+ service at the Cliff View Branch (allowing customers access to the collection, technology, and printing during specified unstaffed hours), and holds hopper 24/7 pickup lockers at two current locations with three additional locations to be added in 2021. Other services include long term (16 week) loans of Chromebook/hotspot kits, pre-recorded library classes and events, virtual help via chat, email and phone available during Group 1 hours, and mail delivery of items for customers that meet parameters (homebound or physically unable to visit branches). The library offers online temporary library card registration which allows customers 24/7 access to online resources. The library has a robust offering of digital resources through its website including downloadable and streaming books, audio books, magazines, newspapers, movies and music as well as research and learn options like LinkedIn Learning, Gale Courses, Creative Bug and online tutoring. Carol concluded her portion of the presentation by stating that although the library is proposing to right-size hours of operation at physical branches, the services she described will be available at all times to customers.

Lori Beth Crawford, Chief Communications and Engagement Officer, spoke about communicating the reasons for and benefits of the changes to the hours of operation with staff and the public. Pending approval, we would begin talking with staff immediately and the public communications rollout would begin in mid-August 2021. Emphasis would be placed on the close proximity of branches and benefits of the plan. The Library would use social media, in-branch signs and flyers, and email to communicate the new service hours. Lori Beth added that the Library's email distribution reaches almost 100,000 of its customers.

Jason Kuhl ended the presentation by saying that the proposed service hours would become effective on Tuesday, September 7, 2021. He reiterated the financial information presented earlier by Sara Nielsen and said that although

the Library used zero-based approach and implemented serious cost saving measures when creating the current budget, 97% of revenues are still projected to go toward operations in FY22. Peer libraries (including St. Louis County and St. Louis Public) do not open all of their branches on Sunday despite having much higher per capita revenues. He added that the Library needs to be the best organization it can be within its available revenues, but to understand the limitations of those revenues and not to forget long-term sustainability.

Joann Leykam asked for more specifics about the staffing budget and how the branch groups were determined, specifically why the Cliff View branch was not included in Group 1. Sara Nielsen explained that Group 1 branches include the existing regional branches plus the Corporate Parkway Branch because it is the largest branch in the Wentzville area. Group 2 includes the current general purpose and express branches. Nevada Smith asked for examples of savings for facilities expenses. Laurie St. Laurent replied that we don't have specific financial information but we expect significant saving in the areas of utilities, cleaning services, and snow removal. Nevada Smith also asked when the library's service hours were last changed. Jason Kuhl responded that prior to the change in hours for Covid-19, a minor adjustment was made in 2018 [library records indicate the last major change to service hours was in 1994]. Further discussion revolved around Sunday service hours, data used in preparation of the hours of service proposal, and gathering feedback from the community. The Trustees indicated they would support the change in service hours if it was re-evaluated based upon customer comment and experience in six months.

The work session adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Lunatto
Recording Secretary

Approved:

Justin Collier
Secretary Board of Trustees

August 10, 2021
Date