

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

The St. Charles City-County Library District Board of Trustees met in person on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in Community Commons Room 240/432 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, April 9, 2021, at 1:23 p.m.

Board Members present:

- Staci Alvarez
- Justin Collier
- Joann Leykam
- Georganne MacNab
- TJ Rains
- Nevada Smith
- Gail Zumwalt

Board members absent:

- Renee Tillman

Library Staff present:

- Jan Bardon, Marketing & Communications Manager
- Tiffany Barke, Chief Talent Officer
- Zach Campbell, Library Technology Coordinator
- Lori Beth Crawford, Chief Communications & Engagement Officer
- Aaron Eller, Regional Branch Manager, Middendorf-Kredell
- Asia Gross, Regional Branch Manager, Kathryn Linnemann
- 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
- 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:

- Five citizens attended the meeting in person
- Eleven 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.

Preliminary FY22 Budget Discussion

At their March 2021 meeting, the Trustees set a projected tax rate of \$0.1930 for FY22 budgeting purposes. Julie Wolfe explained that 2021 is a tax reassessment year and she anticipates the Library will likely need to rollback its tax rate even further to stay within Hancock Amendment limits. She noted that revaluation data has not yet been received from the St. Charles County Assessor's Office and that the projections presented at this meeting will likely change before the May 26th budget work session. Julie added that the Board will set the Library's FY22 tax rate at their September 2021 meeting.

Ms. Wolfe presented a revised tax assessment income worksheet with the tax rate rolled back further to \$0.1925 and also incorporating the 1.6% collection fee charged by St. Charles County to all taxing entities. She explained that St. Charles County real and personal property revenue is the Library's primary source of income and it is

important to have an accurate revenue prediction because it is the basis of the initial budget. As of the April 13 work session, the FY22 preliminary revenue budget is \$20,226,979. This number includes local and state tax revenues.

Ms. Wolfe presented a second document, FY2022 Preliminary Revenue Budget, to the Trustees. The document compared FY20 actual revenues, FY21 forecast revenues, and FY22 projected revenues broken down by the categories of tax revenue, state aid, grants, investment earnings, charges for services, donations, intergovernment exchange, rent, and other. She noted that the FY21 budget did not include state aid, but it has since been reinstated and included in the preliminary FY22 budget. Julie added that for FY22, surplus funds have been built in to the budget in order to set a reserve for capital projects, large grants are not expected, and investment earnings are expected to be low. Charges for services has been reduced in consideration of the removal of fines and reduced passport services. She noted that the library is currently working to determine when passport services will be reinstated. Donations and rent are minimal and intergovernment exchange is sharing electronic resources with local school districts.

Jason said that one of the primary questions staff are working though is when the Library will expand service hours. We have been under a hiring freeze for the past year and staff are looking at the minimum number of staff needed to keep buildings operational. Additional information will be brought to the Board as more information becomes available. Jason added that he would like to have a discussion at a future work session about Library hours and sustainable operations as they relate to our funding levels. Julie added that salaries and benefits are 65% of overall expenditures.

Carol Schrey reviewed the preliminary FY22 Materials budget. She noted some challenges in planning for the FY22 materials budget, such as: growth in Overdrive use combined with the increased costs and need to repurchase licensed eBooks and soon eAudiobooks; increase in cost of physical books; increased cost of processing provided by vendors; new transportation charges being implemented by vendors; "catching up" on movies that were not released in FY21; and difficulty in predicting customer behavior.

The Library's biggest increase in eMedia use has been Overdrive with an increase of 18% in FY20 and another record-breaking year expected in FY21. Customers are also using holds on Overdrive materials more, which means we buy more copies of the same title. Over the past 24 months, expenditures have increased to keep up and we are spending more to get less. The average cost of an Overdrive item in FY20 was \$39.19 and one year later the average cost is \$40.05. When an Overdrive item is purchased, the Library has access to it for a finite period of time which is determined by the publisher. In January 2022, the Library will begin repurchasing 24-month licenses on eAudiobooks, which cost \$55-\$65 dollars.

FY22 materials expenditures for physical books and audiobooks for adult, teen and youth will be flat or will decrease due to increased eMedia costs. The Library plans to invest more in two newer collections, Readalongs and World Language items. The electronic resources budget will also be impacted. Staff are conducting a careful review of electronic resources to make sure customer needs are being met. The Library will be dropping lesser used resources and switching to less expensive but similar options. Staff are also unsure of post-pandemic price increases from electronic resources vendors. Many vendors froze pricing in FY21, gave access to additional databases, or allowed home access and those perks are being called back. The Library will not renew subscriptions to foundation databases (Foundation Center, Foundation Directory Online, Grants to Individuals, and GuideStar Resources). We are confident that staff will be able to meet most needs with other options or direct customers to neighboring libraries with nonprofit departments.

The Library will join the MOBIUS consortia in FY22. This resource sharing tool uses our catalog to connect with 78 other academic, special, and public libraries across Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, to easily borrow more than 29 million items. As a member of the consortia, we expect to improve the customer experience over

traditional ILL by being faster and having more favorable lending times. The cost to join MOBIUS is between \$17,000-\$18,000 and an annual membership fee would be included in the annual materials budget after that. Carol concluded by saying that the FY22 Materials budget includes enough funding to maintain current wait times for eMedia and physical items, provides a carefully curated collection of eResources to meet customer needs, and introduces a new resource sharing service with MOBIUS.

The Trustees asked questions about cap-limits for subscription based services. The Library has an annual platform fee with Overdrive and a cost-per-circulation model with Hoopla. Gale and EBSCO, our research database services, have traditionally had bigger annual increases. Jason added that MOBIUS allows our customers to borrow books from 78 other libraries, just as if they were borrowing from one of our branches. The cost to join MOBIUS is roughly the same as the nonprofit databases that we are eliminating, but gives all of our customers wider access to materials.

A budget work session is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., to review the preliminary fiscal year 2022 budget in detail. The Library's FY22 budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval on Tuesday, June 8, 2021.

COVID Protocols

A discussion on COVID protocols since the return to in-person services in March 2021 was held. Jason reported that a handful of citizens had contacted the Administration office and emailed the Board of Trustees regarding the new requirement to wear masks in Library buildings. Jason said that the Library has to balance the personal freedom of individuals to make decisions for themselves and their families with how we serve the community as a whole - the same balance we have to consider for all library policies. Staff saw guidelines on CDC and the St. Charles County Health Department websites, both of which recommended that everyone needs to wear a mask in public spaces. He noted that the Library did not have this requirement from June 2020 to November 2020 and our experience from that time points to the need for the requirement.

Laurie St. Laurent reported that Library staff have been working to provide services to customers of various abilities and needs throughout the last year. Alternatives to in-library services, for those who do not wear masks, include curbside/drive thru pickup of materials and other items such as printed documents, tax forms, and photocopies; customized arrangements for access to Library materials including author-based book bundles or carts of materials for customer selection at curbside; remote information services, personalized technology support by phone, chat, email, or curbside; remote printing; staff will fax or scan documents for customers; checkout of laptops/chromebooks to use outside of buildings; and wifi signals that are available outside of buildings. She also noted that the 24 hour holds hoppers are now available at the Kisker Road and Corporate Parkway Branches. Jason added that requiring masks is consistent with what other large libraries in Missouri are doing and has been thoroughly reviewed by legal counsel. The Trustees had no questions or comments.

The work session adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Lunatto
Recording Secretary

Approved:

Justin Collier
Secretary Board of Trustees

May 11, 2021
Date