



Library Board of Trustees
Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Via Zoom
Monday, October 19, 2020, 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Trustees Present

Jennifer Appleby
Ailen Arreaza
Rob Harrington
Joe Helweg, Chair
Gloria Kelley
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Brandon Neal
Amy Hawn Nelson
Charles Thomas
Ed Williams
Dr. Ricky Woods

Absent

Staff Present

Elyse Berrier
Kevin Bittle
Shelley Book
David Dillard
Michael Engelbrecht
Seth Ervin
Jenni Gaisbauer
Lee Keesler
Julia Lanham
Meryle Leonard
Pamela McCarter
Angie Myers
Emily Nanney
Chantez Neymoss
John O'Connor
Holly Summers-Gil
Ann Stawski
Tony Tallent

Others Present

Mark Kutny
Susan Patterson
Toni Freeman
Shana Plott
Robin Rogers

Joe Helweg welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time. He specifically recognized Pamela McCarter for her work with the Diversity and Equity Action Team and, Rob Harrington and Caitlin Moen for the Racial Equity Task Force and the Library team for a successful re-opening.

Mr. Helweg represented the Library and Library Board at the Board of County Commissioners meeting on October 6, 2020 and shared the important work being done.

Minutes

Mr. Helweg requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on September 21, 2020. On a motion by Dr. Ricky Woods and seconded by Ailen Arreaza, the Trustees unanimously approved the September 21, 2020 meeting minutes.

Chair Report

Library Area of Impact

Mr. Helweg turned it over to Angie Myers to present the Library Budget and Fine Free Overview. Angie Myers presented the following report:

Library Budget & Fine Free Overview

- Library Budget Overview
 - County funded: 90%
 - Other Governmental (Federal & State) funded: 2%
 - Library funded: Restricted 3%
 - Library funded: Unrestricted 5%
- Fine Free Initiative
 - Barriers Caused by Fines
 - Economic Impact of Fines
 - National & State Trends
 - Next Steps/Investment Needed

Funding Source	\$ Value (\$41.6M Total)	% of Library Budget	Level of flexibility to move dollars around?	Is this “use or lose” funding?	Critical Items Funded
County	\$37.5M	90%	Very limited & discouraged	Yes	Salaries & Benefits; Library Collections; Facilities; Technology
Other Governmental (Federal & State)	\$0.8M	2%	None	Yes	Specific Projects (Federal); Library Collections (State)
Library Restricted	\$1.3M	3%	Very limited	Varies according to grant flexibility	Library Foundation Salaries & Operations; Specific grants/projects
Library Unrestricted	\$2M	5%	High	No	Library Collections; Facilities; Marketing & Advertising; Employee Learning & Development; Innovation; Professional Services; Technology

Library Budget Overview – County Funds

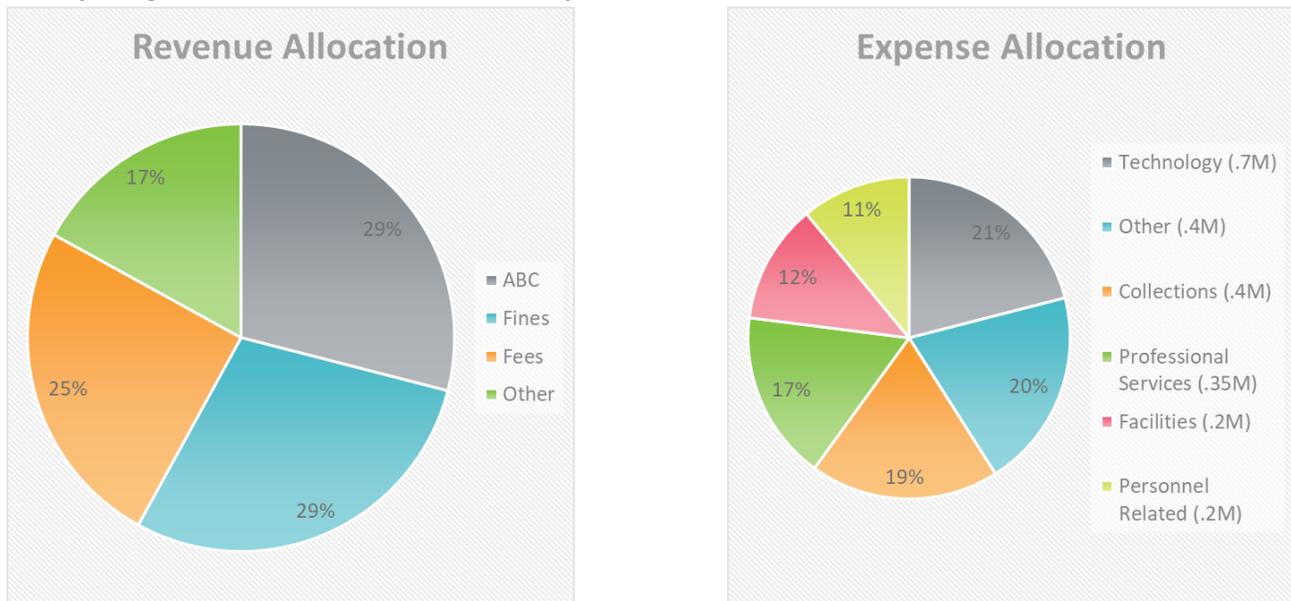
- 90% of Library Budget

- \$37.5M
- Single year funding
- Strategic Business Plan Alignment is imperative
- “Use or Lose” funding
- No ability to generate Fund Balance
- Limited flexibility; including ability to move funding between expense categories

Strategic Business Plan Goals (FY 2020 – FY 2022)

1. Increase access to resources, knowledge, and services to broaden economic opportunity
2. Improve educational outcomes
3. Establish the Library as Public Commons -- (the physical and virtual space where residents and organizations connect with Library resources and with each other to strengthen our community, and where the public life of the community and its residents is facilitated, advanced and celebrated)
4. Increase organizational capacity, excellence, and sustainability

Library Budget Overview – Unrestricted Library Funds



FY 2021 – COVID19 Impact

- 50% reduction to unrestricted library revenue
- Fines on hold for 6 months due to COVID19
- Must turn overdue fines back on and “normalize” by January 2021 to meet budget projections
- Fine Free is the top Budget Priority for FY 2022

Fine Free Overview

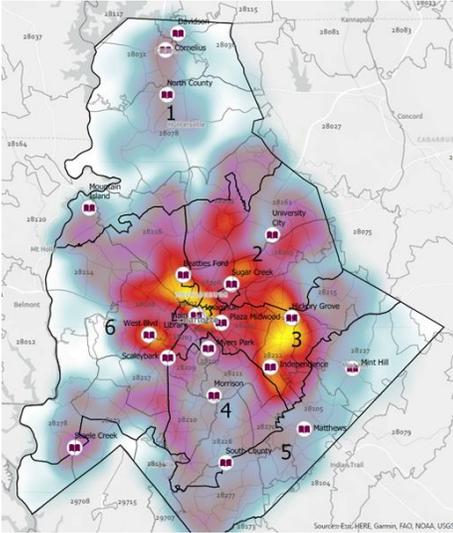
Why are fines a problem?

- Barrier for accessing Library resources
- Disproportionate impact creates an equity issue
- Enforcing fines means charging citizens for the very materials their tax dollars purchased
- Evidence supporting little effect on the timely return of Library Materials
- Public Libraries are meant to be free

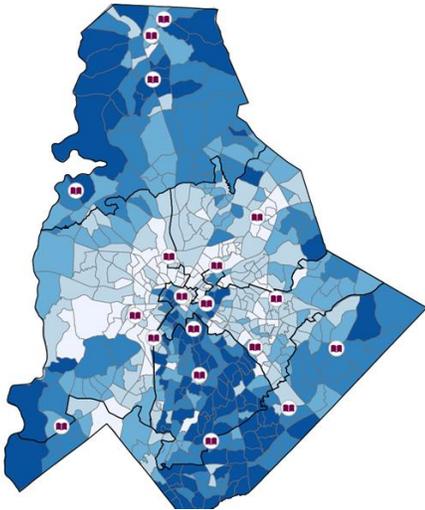
Economic Impact of Fine Free Over the Last 3 Years

- \$965,484 has accumulated in outstanding overdue fines
- \$1,318,489 has accumulated in outstanding fees
- 49,642 Library users have balances exceeding \$10, resulting in being blocked from further checkout of library materials

Where are the people who are blocked?



Heat spots are where fine balances are, mapped by longitude and latitude of library patrons.



Median Household Income



Statewide Trend – Fine Free NC Libraries

- Cabarrus County (2020)
- Carteret Public (2020)
- Chapel Hill Public (2020)
- Durham County (2020)
- Farmville Public (2020)
- Gaston County (2020)
- Gibsonville Public (2019)
- Greensboro Public (2020)
- Hickory Public (2019)
- Mooresville Public (2020)
- Robeson County (2019)
- Wake County (2020)
- Wilson County (2020)

National Trend – Fine Free Libraries

- South: Wake County, Richland County, Memphis, Nashville, Miami-Dade, Charleston County, Fort Worth
- West: Albuquerque, San Diego, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Denver, Boise, Sno-Isle, Seattle
- Midwest: Chicago, Saint Paul, Cedar Fall, Lansing, Kansas City, St. Louis, Dayton, Cleveland, Toledo-Lucas, Columbus
- East: DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Albany, Anne Arundel

How will Fine Free work?

- Eliminate Overdue Fines on all Materials
- Forgive Outstanding Fines and Fees Balances
- Track reactivated customers and recovered materials as success metrics
- Recovery Model – Fine Free does not mean responsibility free

Encourage return of library materials without punitive measures

Build procedures to encourage all returns, not to penalize late returns

Modify billing process to recover materials and/or charges for lost items rather than fine balances

Fine Free - Investment Needed - \$1 Million

Sustainable Funding requested for:

- Library Collections (\$400k)
- Marketing & Advertising (\$250k)
- Library Facilities (\$250k)
- Learning & Development (\$100k)

After a robust Board discussion, Charles Thomas suggested creating a sub-committee to address the Fine Free approach through advocacy with our County partners and the Board agreed with this recommendation.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Dr. Ricky Woods proposed beginning the Library's budget planning earlier, in September and October, so that trustees and staff can educate county commissioners on those needs and opportunities. Angie Myers reported that by the November Board meeting Library staff should have a good idea of initial FY 2022 budget priorities.

Angie Myers provided the following updates:

Budget Adjustments

- Our budget was reduced by \$1,250,000 due to Mecklenburg County canceling Phase II of the MeckTech program because of the aggressive timeline surrounding CARES Act funding
- \$396,600 from an IMLS Federal grant to Professional Services and Technology related to the Neighborhood WISP program
- \$40,000 from Foundation Contribution to Library Collections to fund the Mobile Library collection
- \$25,000 from Foundation Contribution to Library Collections to fund Community Read
- \$8,951 from Fund Balance to Programming for Active Reading
- \$5,000 from Foundation Contribution to Programming for the Story Walk program
- \$551 from Fund Balance to Programming for the Alpha & Omega Active Reading program

Budget Transfers

- \$16,052 from Salaries & Benefits for Active Reading to Programming for Active Reading
- \$5,000 from Programming for Engage 2020 to Collections for Engage 2020 (this was a correction from last month)

Dr. Ricky Woods added that time is of the essence for advocating for our budget requests and that we should begin ASAP. Mr. Helweg agreed and requested that Ms. Myers create a document that the Board of Trustees could use for general budget advocacy with County leaders.

On a motion from the Finance Committee, a roll-call vote was taken and the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Budget Adjustments.

Real Estate Committee

Brandon Neal turned the presentation over to David Dillard to discuss 2 action items coming out of the Real Estate Committee:

- The first action item is to authorize the Library CEO, in partnership with Mecklenburg County Asset and Facility Management, to advertise for, negotiate and execute a professional engineering services contract with a Commissioning Agent for the new Main Library, McGlohon and Duke Energy Theaters projects.

On a motion from the Real Estate Committee, a roll-call vote was taken and the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the above action item.

- The second action item is to approve selection of Facilities Master Plan consultant and authorize the Library CEO to execute a contract for services.

On a motion from the Real Estate Committee, a roll-call vote was taken and the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the above action item.

Chair Report

Legacy Audit

Mr. Helweg reported that in early July 2020 Library CEO Lee Keesler commissioned a team of four Library staff to audit all commemorations, namings, artwork, collectibles, physical images, etc. to determine if their history, meaning and/or presence were aligned with the Library's position on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

The audit team began its work in early July 2020 and completed the task July 31 as requested. In the course of its work, the team identified and evaluated nearly 200 items, identified high, medium and low priority actions, and made recommendations for their removal, relocation, etc. if appropriate. Informed by the team's recommendations, the Library CEO is recommending the following actions for approval by the Library Board of Trustees at today's regularly scheduled meeting:

1. Re-name the current Morrison Regional Library the SouthPark Regional Library.
2. Remove and dispose of the photographs of the Morrison family farm that are displayed at the Morrison Library.
3. Remove (already done) and dispose of the lithograph of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. found on the wall in the Howell Family Mecklenburg Room located in the Carolina Room.
4. Remove and dispose of the bust of Zebulon Vance in the Carolina Room.
5. Remove and dispose of the medallion of Zebulon Vance in the Carolina Room.
6. Remove and dispose of the bust of John Charles McNeil in the Carolina Room.
7. Remove and dispose of the Beaver Dam Plantation photograph at the Davidson Library.
8. Remove and dispose of the Josephus Daniels Charitable Foundation brass plaque in the Main Library.
9. Remove and dispose of the Charles Dickens artwork at the Mint Hill Library.
10. Remove and dispose of the "Aladdin" wood carving at South Boulevard Library.

In each of the items above an effort has been or will be made to contact the families or individuals who made the initial gifts and explain the Library's decision to take action. Communication with affected parties will be conducted respectfully and discretely.

On a motion by Joe Helweg and seconded by Charles Thomas, a roll-call vote was taken where the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the 10 actions listed above.

Racial Equity Task Force

Rob Harrington provided the following update:

In our last meeting we approved the establishment of the Racial Equity Task Force with 3 focus areas:

1. Expanding diversity and inclusion throughout the Library system
2. Removing the effects of systematic racism and social injustice within the Library
3. Join with others outside the Library to champion anti-racism, equity, and social justice in Charlotte Mecklenburg.

Next steps included:

- Identifying a list of candidates to recruit to the team. The co-chairs would recruit 12 members in total -- 8 Trustees, former Trustees, and members of the community, and 4 Library staff. The goal is to begin meetings in November and meet regularly until Spring of 2022 when this team would make its complete set of recommendations to the full Board of Trustees.
- Engaging a facilitator to assist. If Trustees have ideas for the facilitator, please let Caitlin Moen or Rob Harrington know ASAP.

Library Foundation

Jenni Gaisbauer provided the following update:

- The response to Verse & Vino has been strong and we are expecting over 1,200 people to attend
- Common Spark Update
 - A donor contacted the Foundation today to say that she would like to donate \$25,000 worth of stock to support our new Main Library project because of the great work we do in the community and because we have Snohetta designing our Library.

CEO Search Process

Mr. Helweg introduced Shana Plott and Robin Rogers from Coleman Lew Canny Bowen and asked them to provide an update on the CEO search process. They highlighted the following:

- Completed a robust listening tour that included over 120 stakeholders
- Completed the position description
- Currently sourcing candidates
- Created and executed a comprehensive marketing plan
- Following a timeline where we would present candidates to the search committee in late November
- Goal is to hire a CEO in February

Mr. Helweg thanked the CEO search committee which includes himself, Rob Harrington, Jennifer Appleby, Charles Thomas, Ailen Areazza, Gloria Kelley, Leslie Johnson and Jennifer Green.

On a motion by Mr. Helweg, seconded by Brandon Neal, the meeting adjourned at 5:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lenoir C. Keesler, Jr.
CEO