

Minutes
Board of Library Trustees
Main Library
Monday, July 23, 2012

Board Members Present:

Brenda Simmons-Hutchins, Chair
Erin Vance Skinner, Vice-Chair
Christina Stallings, Secretary
Mark S. Wood
Ronnie King
Jackie Perry
John Gibson
Rita Cannon

Board Members Absent:

Jim Selzer
Gerald Reid
Council President Bill Bishop, Ex-officio
Councilman Ray Holt, Ex-officio
Mary Mickel, DCPS Representative, Ex-officio

Others Present:

Barbara Gubbin, Library Director
Andi Hammond, Executive Assistant to
the Director
Carolyn Williams, Deputy Director
Lisa Peterson, Technology Systems
Administrator
Kathy Lussier, Assistant Director of
Community Relations and
Marketing
Michael Sullivan, Administrative
Supervisor
Mark Merritt, Deputy Director

Luis Flores, Assistant Director of Facilities
& Planning
Richard Mott, Manager for Strategic
Initiatives
Suzanne Hamrock, Senior Accountant
Ava Barrett, Administrative Supervisor
Harry Reagan, President of the Friends
of Jacksonville Public Library
Judy Klein, Friends of the Murray Hill
Library
Rhonda Sarli, HR Business Partner
Teresa Stepzinski, Times Union Reporter

Call to Order

Chair Brenda Simmons-Hutchins called the meeting to order at 9:10am; there was a quorum present.

Introduction of Guests

Chair Simmons-Hutchins welcomed Ms. Teresa Stepzinski, reporter with the Florida Times-Union, and Ms. Rhonda Sarli, HR Business Partner.

Discussion

Chair Simmons-Hutchins reviewed the purpose of the workshop. A motion was passed at the July 12 Board meeting: to hold a workshop within two weeks to review the FY 2013 budget and hours of operation that have been proposed, as well as any other issues Trustees may have regarding the FY 2013 budget and operating plan. Because the FY13 budget proposal was created in response to a last minute request from the Budget Office, the intent of the meeting was to review the budget and ensure that Board members have a full understanding as to how the cuts to the budget were made. Chair Simmons-Hutchins asked if there were any additional agenda items to be added; Trustee Wood responded that he would like to discuss what would be done if any amount of funds are restored to the budget. He asked that these items be prioritized.

Director Gubbin reviewed the impact statement document; she noted that this document will be used in meetings with councilmembers. There are currently meetings set with Council President

Bill Bishop and Councilman Bill Gulliford; a meeting has been requested with Councilman John Crescimbeni. Trustees provided feedback about some edits that need to be made to the document to make it more impactful.

Director Gubbin reviewed how staff decided cuts should be made. She stated that there are two areas from where funds can be cut: staff and materials. Cutting staff means that service hours must be reduced or locations must be closed because locations are already operating on limited staff. She noted that reducing hours and/or closing locations would result in savings in both janitorial and security costs, but the savings are minimal. She reviewed that staff proposed in February reorganizing the library into a regional system in response to the initial budget cut requested by the Mayor's office. Service hours were also reduced and the materials budget was cut. The request in May for additional cuts resulted in further reduced service hours and materials budget. She noted that when the latest cuts were requested, for a total of \$4.66M, the materials budget had already been cut by \$500,000 and the direction from the Board at past meetings was not to cut the materials budget further; the materials budget has been cut by 50% since 2005. There has also been feedback from the Board, the community, City Council, and the Mayor's Office that closing libraries is not an acceptable option.

Trustee Wood responded that he did not feel it is the opinion of the Board that closing libraries is not acceptable, but more the feedback received from City Council. He and Trustee Gibson expressed their support of closing library locations if needed. Trustee Gibson noted that there is a point when hours will be reduced so much that the library will not be able to offer acceptable service to the public. He stated that he would like the library to focus on the core services and reduce fringe services. He also noted that the Capacity Plan included recommendations to repurpose several libraries. Chair Simmons-Hutchins noted that repurposing branches is contingent upon opening a new, larger branch in that neighborhood. Director Gubbin noted that if there are further cuts, the next step is to close locations or further reduce the materials budget.

Chair Simmons-Hutchins asked what the plan is for ensuring a quality collection given the proposed cuts to the materials budget. Director Gubbin responded that there is a collection development policy in place that will continue to be followed; she noted that quality will remain the same but quantity will decrease. The biggest impact will be on availability. She noted that fewer copies of materials will be purchased which will lead to longer hold times for customers. She noted that the library purchase books in four formats—hard copy, audio-book, e-book, and e-audio book—and the prices of e-books are much higher than that of hard copy. She noted that the library no longer buys TV series; media represents around 50% of total circulation. She also noted that replacements for lost or damaged materials will not be purchased as often. Director Gubbin pointed out that the materials budget is 50% less than it was in 2005. She reviewed the difficulty in purchasing e-materials: three of the big publishers won't provide e-materials to libraries; others lease e-materials to libraries at high cost and for limited check-out. Manager for Strategic Initiatives Richard Mott noted that e-material circulation has increased 80% in the last several years but the budget for e-materials has remained flat.

Trustee Wood asked if other options for cutting \$4.66M were considered by staff prior to submitting the budget to the Mayor's Office. Director Gubbin responded that staff did not consider other options due to the time constraint of 48 hours to develop the proposal. She noted that since the FY13 budget has been submitted to the Mayor's office, staff have been looking at other operating hours to ensure that the schedule best fits the needs of the community. Staff are also looking what will be done if the hiring freeze continues and vacancies accrue. She noted

that the Board needs to begin talking with the community, City Council, and the Mayor's office about what another round of cuts will mean for the library system.

Vice-Chair Skinner asked Director Gubbin to review why Mondays were chosen as a day to close. Director Gubbin responded that there are several reasons: the day that is closed must be a two-shift day, currently those are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday; Monday is the day that many other companies and organizations are closed if they are closed during the week; many legal holidays are observed by the City on Mondays, this would allow less impact on customers; and there was consideration for staff, working to give them two days-off in a row.

Trustee Gibson asked what would be done if any funds are restored to the budget. Director Gubbin responded that it would depend on how much is restored. Materials are a good area because that budget has been cut significantly and any amount can be added. Staff knows how much it costs to operate each branch on Sundays and Mondays; if that amount is returned, service hours can potentially be added. Automatic book returns can also be added to several locations to help staff be more efficient.

Chair Simmons-Hutchins reviewed the major areas of discussion: two options of where funds can be cut, the financial impact of closing branches, strategy for cutting the materials budget, staffing, and what to do with restored funds.

Trustee Stallings asked what the goal is when meeting with City Council members. Chair Simmons-Hutchins responded that the goal is to let them know what the impact of the cuts will be and what can be done if funds are restored to the FY 13 budget.

Trustees asked that a survey be developed to ask customers which of the proposed cuts will most impact them and to where funds should be restored.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:00am.



Brenda Simmons-Hutchins, Chair, Board of Library Trustees

Christina Stallings, Secretary, Board of Library Trustees

Date Approved by the Board of Library Trustees

Aug. 9, 2012

