



PICKENS COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
5:00 PM June 14, 2023
Hampton Memorial Library, Easley

IN ATTENDANCE - BOARD: Ms. Susan Childers, Chair
Ms. Rebekah Hemphill, Vice Chair
Ms. Karen Culley, Secretary
Ms. Lori Osborn

IN ATTENDANCE - COUNCIL: Chairman Chris Bowers, District 5
Vice Chairman Roy Costner, District 4

EX OFFICIO: Ms. Stephanie Howard, Library Director
STAFF: Stacey Roberson, Executive Assistant

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a notice of the meeting was sent to newspapers and a copy of the Board Agenda was sent to the Presidents of all Friends Groups.

Ms. Childers called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM

PUBLIC COMMENT –

NEW BUSINESS–

Ms. Susan Childers thanked the Council members for attending. Susan Childers told the board that we were meeting to discuss a sustainable financial plan for the library to complete the renovations. Ms. Childers reported that we do not have the available funds that we thought we did, and we actually only have \$2.4-\$2.5 million. Councilman Bowers reported that the Council members discussed the library at their previous meeting, and they pointed out that the library building liability is actually on the Council. Mr. Bowers stated that it is recommended to have 10-15% of the operating budget sitting to cover emergencies. He also stated that 6 years ago, County Council told the Library Board to save money for reserves, but there wasn't a line item added to account for the savings, and this led to the accusations and misconceptions. Councilman Bowers proposed to leave the library on millage, amend the budget, and allow Council to loan money, proposed amount of \$1 million, to the library, to begin with Phase 1. Council asked County employee project managers to look at the proposal from LS3P to find some savings and they were able to find some potential spots where working with previous vendors might save money. Councilman Bowers proposed that the Director, the Board, and the team from County could work together to come up with phases for the project, and the Board would help drive the priority of the phases. Mr. Bowers stated that the 3rd reading of the budget is on the 19th, and if the Board agrees to his proposal, he will need support from the Board at this meeting. If the proposal is approved by the Board, and then by Council, the Library budget would need to be amended to account for the loan and would be listed as Debt Services.

Councilman Costner stated that \$1 million is what is being offered because county staff stated that \$3.5 million is what is needed to take care of issues and finish the projects. Mr. Costner stated that Council will work with the library to get the rest of the funding needed and Council will let the library pay back at whatever speed we need.

Lori Osborn asked if there could be a line item for the money that comes from millage. Councilman Bowers stated that the library should see the revenue from millage, and that the amount could be found on the County website. Karen Culley asked what happens if the revenue is short and the library can't pay the loan back. Councilman Bowers stated that the time for the life of the loan could be increased, the millage could be increased, or the payment could be lowered, and the Council would vote on which option would be best to proceed with. Mr. Bowers also stated that the library cannot be funded for less than what it was funded 2 years ago, so the budget would at least match what it was 2 years ago.

Karen Culley asked if a representative from the architect firm would be involved in the process under this proposal. Councilman Bowers stated that they would because they are the experts for now and everyone needs to have the same vision. Karen Culley asked what would happen if there were a disagreement between the library and the county project managers. Councilman Costner stated that he thinks the disagreement might be which phase to work on first. The Director asked if disagreements would go before the Board since they are borrowing the money. Councilman Costner stated that the Council wants to make sure that the library branches across the board are taken care of versus all the money going to the project at Easley.

Councilman Bowers stated that if the proposal was approved, the \$1 million wouldn't necessarily be available on July 1st because it will take some time and they don't want to loan more money than what can be spent in the Fiscal Year. Mr. Bowers stated that he would word the motion as loaning up to \$1 million to allow for loaning smaller amounts for phases if needed. Mr. Bowers stated that the \$1 million would be on top of the \$2.5 million that the library already has saved. Mr. Bowers stated that a line item needed to be added for capital improvement to account for the \$2.5 million that has been saved. Mr. Bowers stated that the County defines Capital as construction, major repair, vehicles, HVAC, and copier.

Ms. Howard asked if the interest rate would stay at 4.5% or if it would change. Mr. Bowers stated that once the interest rate is locked in, it is set for the life of the loan up to \$1 million. If the library needs additional funds afterward, approval would be needed to release more.

Lori Osborn stated that the Treasurer said that the library doesn't collect interest on what has been saved, and Councilman Bowers stated that we should be, and he will check on what is happening to that interest.

Councilman Bowers stated that he thinks if Phase 1 is a success with the \$1 million over 5 years, that the library will be able to utilize that progress to justify the next phases. Mr. Bowers stated that if this proposal gets approved, it will make the budget clear, get things rolling on the renovations, and the county will have the stability and growth to keep the demand of this project going.

Lori Osborn motioned to proceed with the proposal from Council to list line item of capital improvement for the \$2.5 million already saved and to list a line item of debt repayment with up to \$1 million borrowed from Council. Karen Culley seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously on the proposal.

Lori Osborn motioned to adjourn the meeting and Susan Childers seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be at 6:00 PM on Thursday, July 20, 2022, in Easley.

Minutes prepared by Stacey Roberson, Executive Assistant.