



Attendance: P. Dembe, Chair; C. Arlene; D. Allie; J. Chizick-Agüero; J. Cooper; M. DiBerardinis; T. Dichter; G. Generals; R. Heim; J. Maddox; M. Rashed; S. Sanchez; S. Simons; J. Soroko; B. Sutherland; E. Tomlin; N. Torres; D. Wilson

Staff: S. Reardon; J. Benford; J. Bogoni; C. Caputo; D. Dreher; D. Edwards; A. Gerz; D. Henderson; C. Kowalski; S. Moran; A. Nurkin; J. Pecora; S. Pollie; L. Walker

I. Call to Order / Chair’s Remarks – P. Dembe

P. Dembe called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed the Board.

II. Consent Agenda – P. Dembe

P. Dembe called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

III. President’s Report – S. Reardon

S. Reardon shared the Library would be moving into the “yellow” phase of reopening in response to COVID-19 on June 5, 2020 along with the City. She noted staff has been provided with a survey to determine who will be able to work onsite and who will need to continue with work from home. To prepare for staff returning to onsite work, the Library has procured face masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer, but there is a delay for disinfecting wipes as they are in extremely high demand currently.

In response to the recent Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests, she shared the Library issued a statement in support of BLM, and she shared the Library has received welcoming responses from the public, but has heard no response from staff. She went on to share, the only Frankford Library was damaged during the protests and the Library with the community quickly responded to the facility. She also shared the National Guard is temporarily utilizing the Wadsworth Library while they are stationed in that neighborhood.

Next, she noted libraries throughout the country are opening to the public with modified services, which the Library will do once the City enters the “green” phase. She shared there will still be no public in the buildings while the City remains in the “yellow” phase; however, curbside service will begin. She shared the Library will be promoting this service.

It was noted before opening the physical locations to the public much work needs to be done with reconfiguring the spaces to enable safe social distancing and establishing guidelines on service such as time limits for patrons. J. Benford emphasized there are many factors still to be worked out and much preparation still needs to occur.

With regard to the FY21 budget for the Library, S. Reardon shared due to the budget cuts, over 250 seasonal and temporary employees were laid off. The Library will also only be providing five-day service as of July 1, 2020. Currently, the budget for the state has yet to be determined.

S. Reardon shared DiverseForce assisted with the public statement in support of BLM protests. She also shared they are continuing the cultural assessment of the Library and will be narrowing the candidate list for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer to ten candidates in order to begin the interview process.

IV. Buildings Committee – P. Dembe

J. Pecora shared the Library is currently working on setting up a phone system which can handle incoming and outgoing calls, is cloud-based, and is a toll free number. This will allow staff to make outgoing calls for phone banking purposes with regard to Library activities and services.

Additionally, he shared the Library is preparing a small number of neighborhood libraries as polling sites for the upcoming election; property management staff are assessing damage to facilities due to the storm on June 2, 2020 and currently there is no power at the Chestnut Hill Library and the Roxborough Library; and various facilities projects such as the lift installation at Philadelphia City Institute Library and the roof and masonry work at Overbrook Park Library are in process.

With regard to the FY21 budget, he noted the Library has no capital budget, and so, work is being done to determine if the City will have an emergency capital fund agencies can make requests to.

V. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee -C. Arlene / S. Olanipekun-Lewis

C. Arlene asked if any Trustees are interested in participating on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) to reach out to him. He went on to note systemic racism impacts Library's operations and there is work to do to change that.

VI. Virtual Programs – P. Dembe

a. Adult Programs – A. Nurkin

A. Nurkin stated the Library is currently offering programs on numerous digital platforms while staff continue working from home; they are providing author talks, story times, cooking lessons, poetry readings, financial empowerment workshops, job trainings, and more. He shared staff is also continuing with Census 2020 projects and work.

He noted digital access is a challenge for the Library still as many in the city do not have equitable access to the internet and the proper equipment and devices. He stated the Library is hoping to start modified in-person programming in the fall once the City moves into the "green" phase; however, though virtual programming is now fully integrated into Library services.

A. Nurkin stated "Hear Me Out" a new program focused on civic dialogue across the state with multiple library systems participating will be announced this summer and begin online.

b. Youth Programs – C. Caputo

C. Caputo shared staff quickly pivoted to digital programs for youth on an array of social media platforms.

Summer of Wonder, she shared, would be entirely online ending in August. She noted Reading Champ guides would be distributed at Play Streets, food distribution sites, and more in order to connect with those who do not have digital access. Furthermore, she noted the Library is collaborating with Philly Cam to air recorded Library programs on public access TV.

Also, it was shared Read by 4th, will be developing summer learning supports for K-2 students as requested by the City.

With regard to the fall, it was shared LEAP will have a significant online presence and due to budget concerns it is uncertain how the program will be in-person.

It was asked if the Library would be providing any programs for voter registration. A. Nurkin shared in August in collaboration with the Committee of Seventy, the Library will providing programs on how to vote from home and the such.

VII. New Business – P. Dembe

S. Reardon shared due to budget cuts, eighty full-time positions will need to be removed. She explained forty of those positions are currently open, and so, they will remain vacant, and the other forty positions will be accounted for through attrition as many staff are due to retire during FY21.

J. Cooper shared there are currently four open vacancies on the Board and he asked for Trustees to reach out to him with candidates.

D. Dreher shared the Rosenbach is facing challenges due to COVID-19, but are offering online courses and programs and they have digitized materials, including children's resources. He shared the virtual Rosenbacchanal exceeded its goal.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:21 a.m.