

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

***The Somerset County Public Library System provides:***

- *public internet access*
- *materials and programs for reading, viewing and listening enjoyments*
- *materials and programs that excite the imagination*
- *information to resolve issues and answer questions*
- *classes and instruction to assist patrons develop their skills to search for, locate, evaluate, and effectively use information, AND*
- *comfortable and safe physical and virtual spaces*

**BOARD OF SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, April 14, 2010; 3:00pm - 5:30pm**  
**Crisfield Library**

Present: Board Members Deborah Parker, President; Peter Stanford, Vice President (arrived at 3:15); Donnie Price, Treasurer; Kat Harting (arrived at 3:15), John Samus, Geraldine Shelton, and George Milbert, Jennifer Ranck, Director; Rose Donoway, Princess Anne Library Branch Manager; Gabe Stuckey, Corbin Library Branch Manager; Jan Gorely, Administrative Assistant. Public Attendees: Kim Lawson, Richard Crumbaker, and Mr. Marquis.

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

President Parker called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM. Mr. Price moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the Crisfield Library Project. Ms. Shelton seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Samus, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Mr. Milbert, yes; Ms. Shelton, yes; Mr. Price, yes.

Mr. Milbert moved to end the executive session. Mr. Stanford seconded the motion. Roll Call: Roll Call: Mr. Samus, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Mr. Milbert, yes; Ms. Shelton, yes; Mr. Price, yes; Ms. Harting, yes; Mr. Stanford, yes. Executive session ended at 4:40 PM.

President Parker read the following statement:

“Today we are pleased to make an announcement of the site of the future home of the Public Library in Crisfield. The Library Board has struggled with this decision over five years. We have listened to stakeholders, consulted with experts, and deliberated with all seriousness and concern. The options of staying at the current location or moving to the site of the new city park had both attractions and detractions. There is a history of how we came to this decision.

A cross-section of citizens from Somerset County from government, schools, health department, Board members, UMES, library staff, and Eastern Shore Regional Library and State Division of Library Development and Services representatives, met at a Planning Forum in May 2004 to work together to create a 2004-2007 Strategic Plan for the library. Included in the topics discussed at that meeting was the need for a capital improvement process to anticipate and plan for facilities needs for the library. The dramatic difference in library facilities was noted between those available in Princess Anne (where the library is 10,868 square feet and built in 1988) and in Crisfield (where the library was built in 1930 and expanded a few decades later to its current 3,249 square feet). The Crisfield library has only about a third of the space that the Princess Anne library has, however the populations the two libraries serve are roughly equal (MD Dept. of Planning Data Services 2005 estimate: Crisfield, 2808; Princess Anne, 2800). While the Princess Anne library had facilities improvement needs, none was determined to be as critical as those at Corbin Memorial, where, for example, meeting room space is non-existent.

Accordingly, the Library's 2004-2007 Strategic Plan, approved by its Board of Trustees, directed library staff to make the expansion or replacement of Corbin Library a priority. Early steps to that end including soliciting grant funding from the Eastern Shore Regional Library, the MD Division of Library Development and Services, and the MD State Legislature. With those funds, a long-range Library Facilities Study was commissioned and completed in 2006. That study documented the need for an extensive upgrading of facilities in Crisfield in order to be able to continue to provide high quality library services in that region. Since then, the Board has been consulting with library experts, government officials, and local residents to determine the best course of action, factoring in available property, available funds, existing community patterns of use, and future needs.

With this history the Board has deliberated thoughtfully on this matter. With the support of state, county, and city monies and a sizable donation, the library system is able to purchase a new site. This site selection decision was not made lightly. We used over a dozen different criteria to evaluate the sites.

In a number of criteria both sites were evaluated as about equal. These included the importance of eliminating hazardous materials (which would be eliminated at either site), the safety of pedestrians and staff, availability of utilities, and the views of public officials. We heard citizen concerns about the dangers of pedestrians crossing the four-lane thoroughfare and are aware that the park site will necessitate some provision for crossing that street. This will be necessary for the park as well. We share the concern for safety and traffic that will need to be considered at the park location.

In the area of public opinion, as was reported in the local papers, those attending the public forum seemed to prefer the Main Street location. As a Board, we listened to the concerns and tried to incorporate their thinking in our decisions. The current location is within walking distance of the elementary and high schools. The park location is about a half mile farther. That is probably not a terrific impediment for the older students but would be more difficult for the younger children. With increased public transportation, this might be alleviated. It is a pleasure to walk to the current library and we are committed to building a library that you will want to walk to, albeit a little farther. We are aware that the park location, like the current location, is subject to flooding. When the new hospital building was designed, it also had to take this into account and it is not an insurmountable obstacle.

For the rest of the criteria the park location seemed more favorable. They included access via automobile, capacity of the site to accommodate current and future needs with minimal restrictions, developing a generally rectangular footprint, potential joint-use of the site with other community, cultural, educational, or public organizations, speaking to the community of the library's role in society, on-site parking, visibility of the site, views from the site affording the surrounding natural environment, and aesthetics. Because the park location would be directly visible as people come into town it would speak to the importance of the library as a respected and valuable resource in the community. With the bay view, the location could afford patrons, on a beautiful day, an opportunity to pick up books or resources and head to the park to enjoy the sunshine and read. On inclement days, we could imagine the patrons looking out the windows at the gorgeous view. The anticipated structure would not be entirely on one floor, but it would by no means be a high rise, better to describe the two story building as a low rise, and with the adjacent park, not blocking the view.

As you can see, some of these criteria were more significant than others and we have weighted them accordingly. We have listened to the public as well as the public officials; we have consulted with library and architectural advisors from across the country; we have deliberated on these matters very carefully. The opportunity afforded by this new

facility is enormous. The programs that will be possible because of the space are terrific. We are concerned not only about today and tomorrow but what this library can offer citizens in the next twenty, thirty, fifty years. We know that those who are regular library users will see the advantages of the new building and will continue to use it. At the same time we look forward to those who have not been regular patrons seeing this building and taking advantage of its resources.

The Corbin Memorial Library has served the Crisfield area well for 80 years. The Library Board recognizes its unique history and it is our intention to pursue all options so that the building can remain open to the community for library related purposes.

We are reminded of the County's motto: *semper eadem* and we are committed to never changing in our dedication to providing the best library services to the community. This is an exciting opportunity for the citizens of Crisfield and Somerset County. We dream the possibilities, but we are going to need the commitment of each of you to make it a reality. One sage citizen told us, "We will love the new library, wherever it is." And if you are disappointed or enthusiastic, we ask that you support this great facility in Crisfield."

After the Collins Street selection statement was read by President Parker, Mr. Crumbaker asked that given the opposition of some of the citizens in the community, did the Board think that that would have any impact on fund raising efforts for the new library. President Parker stated that she did not think this to be the case. Mr. Marquis stated that he felt that there would be a big backlash from the community and that he still did not believe that the City of Crisfield is allowed to sell the land on Collins Street because he believes that the land was purchased with grant money. Mr. Lawson stated that the land was not acquired with grant money, a block grant or legacy grant funds. Mr. Crumbaker asked President Parker if any Corbin heirs have been located. Ms. Parker stated that it is the Board's intention to keep the Corbin Library open for library-related purposes and that the new library will not be open for a while.

After this discussion, Mr. Crumbaker, Mr. Lawson and Mr. Marquis left the meeting.

President Parker asked for a motion made to approve Collins Street purchase. Motion was made by Mr. Milbert, seconded by Mr. Stanford, motion passed unanimously.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Approve minutes from the regular meeting of February 18, 2010.

Approve minutes from special meeting of March 4, 2010.

Approve financial reports for the period from July 1, 2009 through February 2010.

Approve financial reports for the period from July 1, 2009 through March 2010.

President Parker asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Motion was made by Mr. Samus and seconded by Mr. Stanford, motion passed unanimously.

### **FISCAL REPORTS**

#### **Budget Update – Jennifer Ranck**

Ms. Ranck reported that she had submitted an addendum to the FY2010/2011 library budget submission asking for an additional \$50,000 in funds for the Princess Anne Space Reallocation project. Some immediate concerns are relocating the air handling units to the library's attic, replacing the boiler, constructing a new room that would be attached to the existing building and adding external gutters to the building.

Ms. Ranck also informed the Board that the State Appropriations Committee voted NOT to accept the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommendation to put an \$800,000 cap on the capital grant projects for libraries.

### **LIBRARY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Jennifer Ranck**

President Parker asked for a motion to approve the Director's February and March 2010 written report. Motion was made by Ms. Shelton and seconded by Mr. Milbert, motion passed unanimously.

### **Branch Highlights**

Ms. Donoway reported that a member of the Princess Anne Police Department attended a branch staff meeting to discuss security and safety issues with the staff and how we can keep ourselves and our patrons safe. A Volunteer Interest Form was created and will be available to interested patrons during National Library Week.

Mr. Stuckey reported that the Volunteer Interest Form will also be available at the Corbin Library and about on-going computer classes and the upcoming adult summer reading club. The Crisfield Police were also invited to speak at the branch meeting but did not show up.

### **Princess Anne Space Reallocation Update**

Ms. Ranck stated that she has been in contact with Mr. Cavanaugh and Mr. Dize concerning the plans that were submitted by Studio JAED outlining proposed changes to the Princess Anne Branch. They were happy with the plans and Studio JAED will present their final recommendations in late April or early May.

### **Eastern Shore Regional Library Update**

Ms. Ranck informed the Board that the Eastern Shore Regional Library (ESRL) Board of Trustees has hired June Garcia to conduct a nationwide search for a new Administrator following the sudden death of the previous Administrator, Raineyl Coiro.

### **Somerset County Library System – Employee Handbook Revisions**

Ms. Ranck asked that the review of the revisions to the Employee Handbook take place at the June meeting in light of all the other business that has recently occupied everyone's time.

### **Crisfield Library Anniversary Open House**

Plans are underway for an Open House to celebrate the Corbin Memorial Library's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The tentative date is Friday, May 21 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Invitations will be sent out to interested parties and various County and City officials.

President Parker asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Stanford made the motion, seconded by Mr. Milbert.

### **Adjourned at 5:40 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Ranck  
Director