



**PIKES PEAK LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**April 21, 2021 4 pm**

**[VIRTUAL MEETING \(ZOOM\)](#)**

**Call in: 1-253- 215-8782 or 1-312-626-6799 or 1-669-900-6833 or 1-346-248-7799**

**Meeting ID: 999 9730 6850**

**Passcode: 399338**

**BOARD MEMBERS, PIKES PEAK LIBRARY STAFF & OTHERS PRESENT**

President Wayne Vanderschuere, Vice President Scott Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer Dora Gonzales, Trustee Debbie English, Trustee Cathy Grossman, Trustee Mina Liebert

Chief Librarian and CEO John Spears, Director of Public Relations and Marketing Denise Abbott, Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Directors President Stephen Adams, Director of Family and Children's Services Melody Alvarez, Chief Safety, Social Services & Security Officer Michael Brantner, West Region Director Michael Doherty, Executive Assistant Laura Foster, Senior Librarian Christa Funke, County Commissioner Carrie Geitner, Penrose Library Manager Alicia Gomori, Chief Development Officer and Foundation Executive Officer Lance James, Manitou Art Center (MAC) Executive Director Natalie Johnson, Chief Human Resources and Organizational Development Officer Heather Laslie, Organizational Development Manager Cody Logsdon, Training Supervisor Sarah Marshall, Chief Information Technology Officer Rich Peters, Chief Communications Officer Michelle Ray, Chief Public Services Officer and Deputy Chief Librarian Teona Shainidze Krebs, Chief Facilities Management Officer Gary Syling, Chief Financial Officer Mike Varnet, Internal Communications Specialist Jeremiah Walters, County Commissioner Holly Williams, Alicia Dougherty, Kim Dealy, Beth Fisher, Thea Jackson, Liz Phillips, Kristi

Absent: Trustee Dr. Ned Stoll

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Vanderschuere called the April 21, 2021 regular meeting of the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Trustees to order at 4:02 p.m.

**DECISION 21-4-1:** Ratify decision of Board President and CEO to hold the April 21, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees online.

**Motion:** Debbie English made a motion that the April 21, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees be held online as stated.

**Second:** Cathy Grossman seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously.

**ITEMS TOO LATE FOR THE AGENDA**

There is one item that falls under Correspondence that will be added to the agenda.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Correspondence**

**Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**

Chief Financial Officer Mike Varnet received a letter from Michele Mark Levine of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) as notification that Pikes Peak Library District's 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

qualifies for the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 29<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. Several Trustees thanked Mr. Varnet and the Finance Department for their excellent work.

## **Presentations**

### **Staff Promotions and New Hires**

Director of Family and Children's Services Melody Alvarez introduced Christa Funke, the new Tween Senior Librarian.

Director of the West Region Michael Doherty introduced Alicia Gomori, the new Penrose Library Manager.

Chief Communications Officer Michelle Ray introduced Denise Abbott, the new Director of Public Relations and Marketing.

### **Leadership Program**

Organization Development Manager Cody Logsdon and Training Supervisor Sarah Marshall provided an overview of the Leadership Program that is available to District staff. The program began in the Fall of 2019 with 8 participants; the Spring 2021 program includes 33 participants. Two significant changes to the program are that part-time staff are now able to participate and staff are now able to apply for the program versus having to be nominated as in the past. The topics covered in the program include an Introduction to Leadership, Teams & Teamwork, Organization Communication, Conflict Management, and Employee Motivation. The program is a 38-hour commitment with several required assignments including interviewing a leader and an approved book presentation. Participants benefit from connecting with and learning from their peers, receiving a certificate of completion, and including the certification in their professional profile. An advanced Leadership Program is being considered for those who have completed this program.

Dora Gonzales appreciates the changes to the program that allow for any staff member to apply.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alicia Dougherty, a resident who lives east of Powers Blvd., asked that the library consider expanding service to that area of town. She indicated the population of young families with children in that area has expanded greatly, however the High Prairie Library is the only District location in this area. Although she appreciates that the Mobile Library does provide service in the area, it is not the same as browsing at a physical location. Ms. Dougherty also expressed her concern about the mask policy, as her children will not wear them. She inquired as to why PPLD has stricter rules than the state and expressed her disappointment that the PPLD policy remains in place. President Vanderschuere thanked Ms. Dougherty for her input and stated that the Board of Trustees and Library Leadership recognize the growth in the area in which she lives. A goal of the District's Leadership is developing a Facilities Master Plan that, over the next couple of years, will guide the District's growth and include a facility in the area in which she lives. He invited her to remain as the mask policy will be discussed later in the meeting.

Beth Fisher provided a public comment at the March 17, 2021 meeting, has read the minutes from the March 17 meeting that are included in the April 21 Board meeting packet, and indicated that it is unclear why there has not been a change to the policy. She asked why PPLD continues to follow a policy that is stricter than others and conflicts with Colorado state orders. Ms. Fisher's daughter Faith spoke, sharing that she has asthma, is unable to wear a mask, and wants to be back in the library instead of having to stay outside. President Vanderschuere thanked Beth and Faith for their comments and indicated the mask policy will be discussed later in the meeting.

Thea Jackson provided a public comment at the March 17, 2021 meeting and returned for the April 21, 2021 meeting to share that the Cheyenne Mountain Library has worked with her to arrange visits to that Library after normal operating hours for her family. They are very excited to be back in the library, and she attended today to express her thanks to Tiffany Paisley, Cheyenne Mountain Library Manager, for the special arrangement. Having this access has made a huge difference, and the effort to accommodate her family has touched her heart. Ms. Jackson asked when she could use the studio again and indicated she would be interested in setting up a time after hours if needed. President Vanderschuere thanked her for her comments and stated that accommodations are available at all libraries for anyone who makes a request.

Kristi shared that she reviewed the packet and is confused about why PPLD would continue with a policy more restrictive than the state. Colorado Springs Mayor John Suthers has stated he will not implement a city-wide mask order once the Governor's order expires, and she does not understand why PPLD would not follow suit. Kristi feels this is a subjective decision that unfairly excludes people with medical restrictions and that the library is not a high-risk facility. President Vanderschuere thanked her for her input.

Chief Library John Spears thanked those who have made comments and stated that there was no official county or state mandate when the PPLD Board of Trustees made their decision. Conversations with El Paso County Public Health informed PPLD's decision to follow the CDC guidelines. Currently, PPLD is working to balance differing guidelines from Colorado Public Health, El Paso County Public Health, and the CDC. The Governor's guidelines do allow for local governments to implement stricter guidelines, and as a special district, PPLD has the authority to make that decision. PPLD's guidelines align with or are less restrictive than metro county libraries in Colorado, with the exception of Douglas County.

Commissioner Carrie Geitner shared her appreciation for the public comments made and stated that just because PPLD can implement stricter guidelines does not mean that we should. There is plenty of conflicting information available to justify taking any position. Public comments made at both this and the March Board of Trustees meetings have brought up important concerns, and she feels that the PPLD policy is inappropriate and an overreach of our authority, reminding the Board of Trustees that they are appointed by officials of the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County who are elected by the public. Access to a public facility should not operate under a different set of rules. Functioning without a mask mandate can be done safely. Commissioner Geitner encouraged PPLD to take this seriously and stated she wants the Board to vote on this decision today. President Vanderschuere responded that a vote cannot be made today as it is not on the agenda. In response to Chief Librarian Spears comment that accommodations are available to anyone who asks, Commissioner Geitner shared her belief that accommodations should not be necessary for children under 11, it should be standard practice.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **Decision 21-4-2: Minutes of the March 17, 2021 Meeting**

The minutes of the March 17, 2021 regular meeting of the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Trustees were included in the Board packet.

**Motion:** Debbie English made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2021 regular meeting of the Pikes Peak Library Board of Trustees as presented.

**Second:** Cathy Grossman seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Consent Items**

No consent items were presented.

### **Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

### **New Business**

#### **Decision 21-4-3: Manitou Springs lease**

Chief Librarian John Spears explained that the Manitou Springs Library has been operating within the Manitou Art Center (MAC) since March under an approved preliminary lease. The lease provided in the Board packet will supersede the preliminary lease, has been approved by the MAC Board, and has been presented to the Internal Affairs Committee of the PPLD Board of Trustees.

**Motion:** Dora Gonzales made a motion to approve the Manitou Springs lease as presented.

**Second:** Mina Liebert seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **Decision 21-4-4: Manitou MOU**

The Manitou MOU is the partnership agreement that PPLD has with the MAC and specifically addresses the use of meeting rooms, the obligation of staff from each organization, and the use of maker space equipment. PPLD cardholders can use the maker spaces without MAC membership during the Library's open hours. Chief Librarian John Spears commended West Region Director Michael Doherty for working with the Executive Director of the MAC, Natalie Johnson, to develop the MOU, and thanked Mike Varnet and Rich Peters for reviewing the document. Data is being collected on class attendance, the use of the maker spaces, the time of use, whether those using the spaces are PPLD cardholders or MAC members, and the ZIP codes of PPLD cardholders who are using the spaces. The MAC maker spaces include studios (clay, textiles, and welding) that are popular with patrons and are not available elsewhere in the District. Trustee Cathy Grossman believes collecting this data will inform plans for a potential return to the Manitou Springs Carnegie building as well as planning for future facilities within the District. Chief Librarian Spears indicated that the MAC has seen an increase in membership since the partnership began. Data collected will inform if there is a need to re-evaluate costs associated with the relationship between PPLD and the MAC.

**Motion:** Scott Taylor made a motion to approve the Manitou MOU as presented.

**Second:** Dora Gonzales seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **Decision 21-4-5: Paid Medical Leave policy**

Chief Human Resources and Organizational Development Officer Heather Laslie explained that the update to the Paid Medical Leave policy is necessary to remain compliant with the Colorado Healthy Families and Workplaces Act which states that paid medical leave needs to be available to all employees, including those who work less than 20 hours per week.

**Motion:** Cathy Grossman made a motion to approve the Paid Medical Leave policy as presented.

**Second:** Debbie English seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **Discussion: ADA accommodations**

Chief Safety, Social Services, and Security Officer Michael Brantner explained that this document includes how PPLD is handling accommodations, what those accommodations are, how we determine the accommodations that are offered, and how the process works.

Accommodations are a result of concerns brought to our attention by patrons. The list of accommodations has grown as new situations arise and PPLD modifies its practices. It is important to understand that PPLD's philosophy is that the library is here to accommodate and allow access to all patrons. PPLD must make sure that we can guarantee the safest environment, and it is a balancing game. President Vanderschuere recognizes that there has been continuous improvement over the last few months and complimented staff on being flexible and adaptive.

There has been no further contact regarding concerns about interactions with PPLD Security Officers that were mentioned in the March Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Brantner explained that touching a patron is only allowed in a medical emergency or if directed to do so by a 911 operator.

Chief Librarian John Spears shared that public comments made at the March Board of Trustees meeting led to opening library locations after hours and on Sundays for patrons who cannot wear masks. Chief Librarian Spears indicated that there are several patrons who have shared that the Library District is one of the few places where they feel safe.

Trustee Debbie English indicated that the mask policy was the primary conversation at the April Governance Committee meeting and thanked Michael Brantner for providing this summary. Ms. English thanked everyone who has taken the time to attend the Board of Trustees meetings and provide comments.

Commissioner Williams acknowledged the difficulties surrounding mask requirements and appreciates the Security update that was provided. Similar challenges exist elsewhere in El Paso County, and she is aware that there are members of the community who have remained silent about the need to wear masks. Commissioner Williams encouraged the Board and PPLD to move forward, consider the feedback received in the Board meetings and by other means, and hold a wider discussion. President Vanderschuere thanked her for her input and confirmed that discussion will take place.

## **REPORTS**

### **Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District Report**

The Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District Report was included in the Board packet. Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Directors President Stephen Adams stated that many members who are book dealers may have allowed their membership to lapse due to book sales being suspended during the pandemic. Membership is expected to increase again as book sales return.

### **Pikes Peak Library District Foundation Report**

The Pikes Peak Library District Foundation Report was included in the Board packet. Chief Development Officer and Foundation Executive Officer Lance James reported that the 2021 Library Giving Day exceeded everyone's expectations. A total of \$15,000 was raised in 2020, from approximately 125 donors. Although gifts are still being received, the 2021 campaign currently reflects 985 gifts that total over \$97,000. Of the 985 gifts, 700 are first time donors to the Foundation. Mr. James is hopeful that there will be similar results for the year-end campaign.

### **Financial Report**

The Financial Report for the period ending March 31, 2021 was included in the Board packet. Chief Financial Officer Mike Varnet indicated that both revenue and expenditures are tracking at approximately the same rate as in 2020.

### **Public Services Report**

The Public Services Report was included in the Board packet. Chief Public Services Officer and Deputy Chief Librarian Teona Shainidze Krebs pointed out that the statistics comparison between 2021 and 2020 is skewed due to the District closing in March of 2020 for the pandemic.

Director of the Southeast Region Abby Simpson, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Shirley Martinez, and Social Worker Kayla Rockhold are working closely with El Paso County Public Health to arrange vaccination clinics at a few of the District libraries. El Paso County Public Health will be providing training to staff about the vaccine and how to help patrons navigate the vaccination process.

Ms. Shainidze Krebs shared her appreciation for Public Services staff who have worked so hard to provide services to the community. Family and Children's Services Director Melody Alvarez and Chief Safety, Social Services and Security Officer Michael Brantner received special thanks for their efforts in making in-person programming available again in some of our libraries. More in-person programming is being planned. Ms. Shainidze Krebs commended Chief Communications Officer Michelle Ray for keeping up with all the Public Services requests while

managing the Public Relations and Marketing Director responsibilities, including media requests, in addition to her own during the hiring process.

### **Support Services Library Reports**

The Communications Report, Facilities Report, Human Resources Report, Information Technology Report, and Safety, Social Services & Security Report were included in the Board packet.

### **Chief Librarian's Report**

Chief Librarian John Spears reported that capacity in Libraries is increasing, that cleaning responsibilities are being transitioned to patrons, and that study rooms are opening this month.

Mr. Spears is collaborating with the Director of the Estes Valley District Library to send a letter to the American Library Association (ALA) prior to their vote on the *Resolution to Condemn White Supremacy and Fascism as Antithetical to Library Work*. The intention of the letter is to express their belief, along with other Colorado Library Directors, that the resolution infringes on intellectual freedom and that the rights of people to hold dissenting views needs to be honored.

Chief Librarian Spears announced that two PPLD staff members have been nominated for Standing Committees of the Internal Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). Mr. Spears has been nominated to the standing Committee on Metropolitan Libraries and Ms. Shainidze Krebs has been nominated to the Standing Committee on Library Services to Multicultural Populations. Eligible voters have until May 24, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. CEST (Central European Summer Time) to cast their vote. The 2021 Conference will be held virtually, with hopes that the 2022 Conference will be held in-person in Dublin, Ireland. Participation in this conference is primarily funded by the Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District and the Pikes Peak Library District Foundation.

The Manitou Springs City Council selected Ratio Architects to create 2-3 designs for the Manitou Springs Carnegie building renovation for submittal to the City Council. Although PPLD is included in the discussion, the decision will be made by the City of Manitou Springs.

PPLD looks forward to a mask policy change being implemented by the end of May. PPLD's current mask policy has been modified to raise the age of those required to wear masks to 5 years to align with local school district requirements. Further changes are being discussed, including raising the age requirement for wearing masks to patrons older than 10. A decision is expected to be brought to the Board of Trustees at the May 19 meeting.

### **Board Reports**

#### **Governance Committee Report**

Governance Committee Chair Debbie English reported that the Committee met on April 6, 2021. Discussion items included creating a means for the public to communicate with the Board of Trustees through the webpage. This feature has been created and is now available on the [PPLD Board of Trustees webpage](#). A retreat for the Board of Trustees will be held later in the year. Ms. English asked that Trustees contact her with their availability in the next few months in order for a date to be selected that works for everyone.

#### **Internal Affairs Committee Report**

President Vanderschuere reported that the Committee met on April 6, 2021. The Committee approved the Manitou Springs lease and the Manitou Springs MAC MOU to be brought to the Board of Trustees as a decision item.

#### **Public Affairs Committee Report**

Public Affairs Committee Chair Mina Liebert reported that the Committee met on April 6, 2021. Exploring next steps in investigating a mill levy increase was discussed.

## **Board President's Report**

President Vanderschuere shared that he attended the Board of County Commissioners meeting regarding the Proclamation Recognizing National Library Week.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Vanderschuere adjourned the April 21, 2021 meeting of the Pike Peak Library Board of Trustees at 6:16 PM.

The full packet of materials for this meeting of the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Trustees is available at <https://ppld.org/board-trustees>

**Providing resources and opportunities that impact individual lives and build community**