

***November 21, 2023 Board of Trustees***

- ✓ Barbara Bolton ✓ Gail Bowden ✓ Chris Britt ✓ Todd Bruce ✓ Lenda Carrillo ✓ Margaret Egli  
 ✓ Barbara Forney ✓ Dan Gannon X Michael Guttman ✓ Will Majarian X Brenda Mercomes  
 ✓ Claire Murray ✓ Barbara Necarsulmer ✓ Loren Pearson ✓ Brad Peiper X Leah Reynolds  
 ✓ Lee Sausen ✓ Corrine Sweeney ✓ Collis Townsend ✓ Jeff Yetter

*17 present (20 Trustees)-Quorum achieved*

Guests: Chris Manna and Mary Hutchins

<b>Agenda items</b>
<b>OPENING OF MEETING/PUBLIC COMMENTS</b>
Brad opened the meeting at 5:01 p.m. There were no public comments.
<b>PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS</b>
Brad will give comments about the CCLS Board meeting held this morning in the Library at the end of the meeting.
<b>MOTION TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 2023 BOARD MINUTES</b>
Brad asked for a motion to approve the October minutes. Barbara Necarsulmer made the motion which was seconded by Barbara Bolton, and the motion passed.
<b>DIRECTOR’S REPORT</b>
Chris began by explaining the State of PA EITC program and the potential benefits to the Library and donors. Individuals and businesses can receive tax credits by supporting Library programs and Maker Space. The paperwork to qualify is in process and takes about sixty days. Once we have been accepted we can roll out this tax saving benefit to both businesses and individuals. Chris asked Margaret to work with Mary to send out an email to the Longwood Rotarians. The application deadline is July 1 <sup>st</sup> and a donation must be made in 90 days. Chris announced another initiative whereby Kennett Consolidated School will use our Maker Space. Students will be eligible for college credit from Temple by volunteering in Maker Space at the Library. All Library staff supporting this endeavor will require clearances. Kennett School has already established a template and the Library will sign off. Next Chris reported on Library stats. Our WiFi usage is the highest in the county outside of the District Center. Visitation is up 109%. Our circulation numbers are the third highest in the County. Computer usage is 4 times higher than the previous year. He noted that our Library received an award for Best Public Construction in Eastern PA over \$10 Million. Next Chris reviewed a sampling of Library programs which include a popular Italian Cooking program, Where Do Old Books Go? Crochet with Cat, Track and Build, and Sunshine Yoga. Chris is asking for help regarding adding us to GSA list for supplies, print solutions (Loren is working on), a strategic plan for 2024, development of a crisis communication plan, and volunteers to patrol the building from

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4:00 PM to 7 PM when school is out. Longwood Gardens will provide us with volunteer software to help manage this. Chris mentioned that the public is invited to an environmental Town Hall presented by the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance regarding the Red Clay Creek Restoration Plan on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Next Chris informed us that the Annual Appeal letters will hit mailboxes by December 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition, Mary will be asking all vendors for a donation or sponsorship. Sponsorship forms are also located at the circulation desk. Chris was pleased to report that 7,241 children have been registered in the Imagination Library since November 2022, which represents 25.41% of all eligible children in Chester County. Next Chris addressed budget considerations for 2024. We need to move ahead with the room rental process with Liz Megill. Due to budget constraints, we may need to freeze salaries and if required we may have to reduce Library hours. The KCSD interns, EITC monies, du Pont foundations, grant efforts and sponsorships can help reduce budget deficits. Landhope Farms has agreed to sponsor our Alice magazine. Chris suggested we may host a spring gala fundraiser. Chris also presented us with a list of his upcoming visits and events. There were scheduled meetings with both New Garden Township and Pocopson Township. Howard Pyle will be displayed in the Art Gallery starting November 30<sup>th</sup>. WSFS visits on December 20<sup>th</sup>. The Friends Meet and Greet is Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. The Upland Event takes place the following day on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Chris will visit the Ronald McDonald House for ideas on November 28<sup>th</sup>. The Health Literacy Committee meets for the first time the same day. Lastly, the Customer Service Story of the Month involved a group of home-schooled youths who visited the Library and Maker Space. They were so impressed that they want to come back for team group sessions.

**PRESIDENT’S REMARKS**

Brad reinforced that the Executive Committee meetings held every Monday morning at 11:00 AM are open to all Trustees. The EC Committee however does not meet on the Monday morning prior to the Board Meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Finance (Lee) - Lee provided a summary of October financials. The Library ended the month with cash of \$1,230,199 and a net operating loss of \$170,810. Currently there are two outstanding Township commitments from New Garden and Pennsbury. Lee is forecasting an annual loss of between \$120 to \$150K. December numbers hinge on the success of the Annual Appeal. Lee reported that there have already been three working meetings for the 2024 budget. Lee indicated that cuts would need to be made. What is the Board willing to tolerate in terms of budget cuts? Brad reminded us that our original plan recognized that it might take 3 years to get back to a balanced budget after construction. The entire building effort delivered a spectacular result, however going forward we must operate in a sustainable manner. We need to have a plan for 2024 which includes approaching foundations and driving the revenue side. What levers can we pull on the cost side to reduce expenses? Chris proposed not spending the required 12% of Library materials, which could save around \$50K in 2023. The risk to not meeting this goal is about \$6K, which would not hit until 2025. Chris mentioned that

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Auditorium issues continue to be a time drain on the staff. Brad agreed that getting the building working is a top priority.

NBC (Brad & Loren) – The six benches are in place on the Front Entry Plaza. There will be an additional handrail on the Chevron steps. Kennett Borough may subsidize this cost of \$15K. The landscape wall on the property line restoration has been completed. Final paving is being done on the site. The good news is that some of these expenses can be submitted to RACP. Brad reviewed the operational checklist which has been substantially reduced. Although significant progress has been made, however there are still four water leaks which need monitoring. The AV system in the Auditorium is not functioning properly, therefore HSI is involved. The punch list has been reduced from 1,100 items down to 60 open items for a value of \$237K.

Capital Campaign (Jeff, Mary) – Jeff reported that the Match Campaign is going well and has generated \$60K so far. The Committee is working on eight large prospects. The Capital Campaign will end in January of 2024, because we need to shift our focus to programming. Next Jeff addressed the status of Grants. Jeff believes that we are fairly close to receiving reimbursement for \$2.8 Million in RACP. We were approved for a total of \$3.92 Million. The good news is that we have up until 2028 to identify expenses that qualify. Jeff mentioned that we are waiting for the Kennett Borough to increase their liability insurance so that we can receive the funds. Jeff told us that the LSA grant of \$799K is being held up due to rule changes. There is a re-scoping of reimbursement items that need to be escalated before receipt. Jeff is hoping that the logjam can be broken. In addition, receipt of these funds is also dependent on Kennett Borough signing an agreement.

Nominating (Collis, Barbara Forney) – Collis reported that the committee consisting of himself, Barbara Forney (Chair) and Corinne Sweeney are looking at a new process and developing a strategy to balance volunteer engagement. In light of Jeff Yetter’s upcoming retirement from the Board in January 2024, Collis thanked Jeff for his tremendous contribution of time and talent as our Kennett Township Appointee. The Nominating Committee is endorsing Patti Morgan Miller to replace Jeff to serve as the Kennett Township designee on the Board of Trustees. Previously she had served on the KL Board as a New Garden Township Designee. Collis put forth a motion to endorse Patti Morgan Miller’s application to our Board. Barbara Bolton seconded the motion, which passed. The next step is formal approval from Kennett Township.

Personnel (Leah) – No report.

Communications (Claire, Amanda) – Amanda provided emailed stats showing the dramatic increase in usage of all Library services from October 2022 through the end of October 2023. The Committee will present their next quarterly report at the December 2023 Board meeting.

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Friends of the Library (Gail)- Gail announced that the Friend's will host a Meet and Greet on Friday, December 8 <sup>th</sup> . The event will include a Tour plus a movie. Gail was pleased to report that the Friends and the Friends Board are growing. Barbara Bolton will replace Gail as the new liaison to the Kennett Library Board.
<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>
Brad gave a recap of the CCLS Board meeting which was held at 8:30 AM today. Two citizens present at the meeting expressed concerns regarding the CCLS financials and how the funds are funneled to member Libraries. Joe Sherwood of CCLS said that he would provide more details regarding the distribution of County funds. He claims that the County Libraries receive a larger share due to providing control services and IT support for member Libraries.
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
Barbara Necarsulmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m which was seconded by Barbara Bolton.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Egli, Secretary