

CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Minutes of February 9, 2021

The Catawba County Library Advisory Board met on Tuesday, February 9, 12 noon, in the Community Room of the Main Library in Newton.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Canrobert, Carmen Isenhower, Greg Kain, Kevin Moretz, Tamara Shavers and Siobhan Loendorf, Library Director.

In attendance virtually through Zoom were Honey Estrada and Carol Preston.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

N/A

GUESTS PRESENT

Kelly Sigmon, Community Engagement Specialist

CALL TO ORDER

Kevin Moretz, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 10, 2020 meeting were approved as written.

Director's Report

Staffing Update

Assistant Library Director – Jenny Gerami Markham

Candi Dula – Business Manager

Branch Services Manager – Shelly Orr

Strategic Planning

Wrapping up 2019-20 LSTA grant – working with a consultant who has guided the library through a comprehensive planning process to enable the library to engage community and stakeholders and evaluate library spaces to develop a robust and meaningful strategic and facilities plan, providing guidance and a touch stone for future services and outcomes. We have received the final facilities report and we are working with county leadership on a plan to move forward with presenting it to the Board of Commissioners.

COVID-19 Status

- The library continues to operate with normal hours.
- We are still following CDC recommendations for social distancing and for safety and sanitizing protocols.
- We follow strict cleaning and sanitizing protocols, frequently disinfecting high touch surfaces and continue to isolating returned materials 96 hours, we have set up cleaning stations in the computer lab and patrons are responsible for cleaning their own station.
- We are not currently offering meeting room use or in-person programming. We have opened the meeting room use up to partner organizations such as AARP and the Red Cross Blood Mobile.
- Library staff have been supporting the Public Health department by helping to make vaccination appointments.

For a couple of weeks, library staff assisted in answering the vaccine appointment line and now we have a dozen staff working to call back people who have registered on the Catawbavaccine.org site to schedule their vaccination appointments. This is a great example of the County joining forces to do what matters most, do it right and doing it together.

Programming

Spring into Reading

Our Spring into Reading challenge using the online platform, Beanstack, runs seven weeks, beginning on Groundhog Day (February 2) and ending on the first day of spring (March 20).

The challenge has two parts:

- 1) Kids are asked to read a total of 120 minutes each of the 7 weeks. They can earn virtual badges in Beanstack as they track their reading progress.
- 2) They're encouraged to attend 5 of the 7 virtual STEAM programs we're offering as well. They can earn a virtual badge for each program they attend.

If they complete the reading challenges and the STEAM program requirements, they'll be entered into a drawing to win a cool, 3-D-printed monster! To register for the virtual STEAM programs, visit <https://tinyurl.com/SpringIntoReading>. To log reading time and completed STEAM participation, register at <https://catawbacountync.beanstack.org/reader365>

Materials for the STEAM challenges were distributed as kits made up of basic household items.

The STEAM challenges are as follows:

- Week 1: Shadow Puppets
- Week 2: Borax Crystal Snowflakes
- Week 3: Ski Challenge
- Week 4: Save Han Solo
- Week 5: Bug Out Robots
- Week 6: Origami Rainbow Flowers
- Week 7: Pi Day

Zoom Story Times with Hickory Ballet and Performing Arts

The library has been partnering with the Hickory Ballet and Performing Arts to conduct special Ballet Story Time programs where children have the opportunity to experience how Ballet is storytelling through dance. The performers come dressed in full costume and they read a classic story with the children and then teach them some ballet dance steps. We are currently working on facilitating three outdoor Ballet story time programs in local parks. We have confirmed one performance at the Claremont amphitheater for Sat 3/20 @ 3pm. We are working on arranging one at the Conover amphitheater for Sat 3/20 and we would like to do the third presentation at the Southside park amphitheater on either Sat 4/17 or Sat 4/24.

Homework Gap – in collaboration with the State Library of NC

Jenn Schraw has taken the lead on the Homework Gap project working in collaboration with the State Library. We are working with a local pastor to connect with disadvantaged families with school age children. We have been assigned a Digital Navigator who is a graduate student at UNC-CH School of Information and Library Science. The program will run for 8 weeks in March and April, meeting weekly on Tuesday nights. Participants will also be able to reach the digital navigator during weekly office hours for help and support throughout the program.

New Seed Library

Seed libraries are a community-sourced way to share seeds; gardeners “borrow” seeds from the library at planting time. At the end of the growing season, they save seeds from the plants and return a portion of the seeds to the library. Heirloom varieties are especially appreciated. The seed library will open in early March and will be housed upstairs at the Main Library in Newton.

Youth Council Homework Helpers

The library is partnering with the Cooperative Extension's Catawba County Youth Council to provide drop in Homework help for students at four libraries. Here at Newton on Mondays and Wednesdays, Also at St Stephens and Sherrills Ford on Mondays and at Conover on Saturdays.

AARP Tax Help

AARP Tax assistance will begin on Tuesday, February 2 and continue each Tuesday through then end of March. People will make an appointment to drop-off their stuff and fill out a form then they come back a week later and someone will walk them through their completed tax return.

Grants

Community Navigators:

Anna Conrad and Mallory Sherrills are both Masters of Social Work students with Appalachian State University. They have been working with the Library since August and are just getting back to work for their second semester. This semester they will continue to work with library patrons – helping them navigate community resources but they will also deliver two training classes to all library staff. One will be on Mental Health First Aid and the other class will be on Empathy Fatigue and Self-Care. They will also be creating a printed directory of community resources using the online guide they created first semester for library staff. This printed directory will take the place of a stack of agency brochures and will be pocket size so individuals can take a copy and browse it later. Then hopefully, if they see a service they need, they can ask at the library for assistance in getting connected to that service.

NC Cares Wi-Fi for All and Tablet Lending

- Part one of the Wi-Fi for All project was to establish free internet access at outdoor locations in areas where internet is not readily available. We have established free internet at seven locations. Hickory Soup Kitchen, 2 locations of Hickory Housing (now Nu Dimensions), Centro Latino, Plaza Latina, Central Rec Center in Newton, and the Town of Catawba, Town Hall. This is free internet available to anyone from these parking lots. In this past month there have been 1,167 unique users accessing the internet at these locations.
- Part two of the Wi-Fi for All project included the purchase of 53 Samsung Tab A 8" Wi-Fi enabled tablets that will be circulated by the library. Since these began circulating Nov 2. We have circulated them 188 times in that same timeframe we have checked out 159 Wi-Fi hotspots and 74 laptop computers. That is about 5 technology items checked out every day.

Library Endowment

- Account at NCCF has balance of approximately \$57,914.24

- **Library Giving Day April 2021**

Last April the library participated in the first annual Library Giving Day and we would like host that again. It will be on 4-7-21 this year and we will be looking for ideas to host a signature fundraising event. The Newton Friends of the Library have already committed to \$500 that we can use as matching funds in a challenge to donors.

Advocacy Focus

1. Restore State Aid to pre-recession levels of 15.7 million recurring.
2. Fund the NC Kids Digital Library at \$250,000

Next Library Board Meeting: Tuesday, May 11, 2021