

## **Kent County Library Board of Trustees**

### Minutes of the August 3, 2021 Virtual Meeting

Present: Elisabeth Tully, President; Valerie Overton, Vice President; Jay Silcox, Treasurer; Bronwyn Jones, Secretary; Erin Counihan, Trustee; Judi O'Brien, Trustee; Arnessa Dowell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Staff Member

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Ms. Tully reviewed the purpose of the meeting, noting that there was not a quorum available for a July meeting, and there were a few items which needed to be voted on related to the revised staff guidelines.

Ms. Tully passed the floor to Ms. Dowell.

#### Director's Report

Ms. Dowell noted that there were five different items which required specific board action, and a sheet reviewing the changes as well as the reasons for the changes had been circulated prior to the meeting.

#### Pay Period Hour Increase for Senior Team Members

Ms. Dowell informed the trustees that senior team members were often accruing significant amounts of compensatory time due to increased responsibilities.

Mr. Silcox expressed concerns related to the increased costs for regularly scheduling an increase in hours. Ms. Dowell replied that the numbers had been reviewed, and while there was an increase in the salary expenditures, it was not outside of the budgeted amount.

Ms. O'Brien questioned if a fixed increase in hours was necessary, or if there was a way to approach it on an as-needed basis. Ms. Dowell replied that senior team members were consistently over their scheduled hours within a week, and that this created stress for other team members, in addition to the individuals themselves.

Mr. Silcox expressed interest in a cost comparison between the scheduled hours and accrued compensatory time.

Ms. Tully questioned if there was further clarification needed, or if the trustees present were prepared to make a motion. Ms. Jones commented that she would like each item voted on separately.

Ms. Jones moved to approve increasing senior team members to an 80 hour pay period. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### Rollover of Leave

Ms. Dowell reviewed the current rule related to leave rollover between fiscal years, which was that up to half of the annual leave allotment could be rolled over as annual leave with any additional annual leave converted to sick leave with written permission of the director. Ms. Dowell noted that she was requesting permission to roll over annual leave in excess of half if there were extenuating circumstances which may have interfered with an employee's ability to use their leave during the year.

Ms. Tully questioned what other libraries on the eastern shore do related to leave rollover. Ms. Dowell commented that she did not know off-hand the rules for each system off hand, but said that she would inquire with the other directors. Ms. Tully noted that such a system may cause conflict if some employees were viewed as being favored with leave carryover.

Ms. Jones requested a clarification of leave use and why leave could be converted to sick. Ms. Dowell noted that sick leave was treated as time served by the state if an employee retired.

Ms. O'Brien noted that carried over annual leave represented a financial liability for the library as it would need to be paid out if an employee left the organization.

Ms. Tully noted that she would like to see a clause added related to end of service so that employees could not use leave to negate notice requirements.

Mr. Silcox moved to accept the leave rollover change as presented. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### Extra Personal Day

Ms. Dowell noted that staff had requested that birthdays be a day off within the staff guidelines, noting that a lot of staff already requested their birthdays off, and that this would reinforce a cultural change to make employees feel valued within the organization.

Mr. Silcox reviewed things which had been done by the trustees in the past six months to demonstrate that employees were valued within the organization. Ms. Tully reiterated these efforts, and asked about the financial impact of an additional personal day. Ms. Dowell noted that the funding existed for all the financial changes which occurred, and that the financial impact was relatively small since personal leave was not a payable liability, and it was a single day for all employees.

Ms. Overton asked if the staff was in agreement that they wanted their birthday specifically off. Ms. Dowell said that they were in agreement. Ms. Overton discussed organizational history and how oncoming employees would not be familiar with that history. Ms. Overton questioned if other libraries had similar policies. Ms. Dowell said that she would investigate.

Ms. Tully called for a motion.

Mr. Silcox moved to adopt a new rule for addition of a personal day specific to the employee's birthday. Ms. Jones seconded the rule. Ms. Tully called for discussion. Ms. Jones commented that she thought the day should not be specific to the employee's birthday. Mr. Silcox commented that he was leaning towards improving morale, and that there was a relatively small cost from the perspective of the overall budget. Ms. O'Brien seconded Ms. Jones' comment, and noted that she would rather add a personal day instead of tying it to the individual's birthday as a specific day does not offer much benefit to employees who do not want to use it on that day.

Ms. Tully asked how personal days are different from other leave types. Ms. Dowell reviewed personal leave noting that it could be used with no notice or explanation.

Mr. Silcox revised his motion to add a personal day for all employees with no restrictions on use. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion. Ms. Tully called for discussion, asking what control the library had if a significant portion of the employees wanted to utilize their personal days on the same day. Ms. Dowell noted that this has not been an issue in the past, and that personal leave was meant for emergency situations. Ms. Tully called for a vote, and the motion was approved unanimously.

#### Quarterly Formal Training Days

Ms. Dowell reviewed that there had historically been a lack of formal training days, and that this was an effort to address the ongoing need for training and team building. Ms. Dowell noted that the intention was to schedule the days quarterly to receive consistent training and work towards creating a seamless line of customer service, and address safety and wellbeing of staff and patrons.

Ms. Tully noted that the library would be closed for these dates, so there would be the addition of four days in which the library was unavailable to patrons. Ms. Dowell replied that it would be, but scheduling the days consistently made it more predictable for patrons.

The trustees discussed the positive and negative effects of scheduled training days. Ms. Tully requested to see the topics of proposed training days, and a schedule for the training. Ms. O'Brien requested that the rule be articulated to avoid staff absences on in-service training days.

Mr. Silcox moved that the proposed rule for scheduled quarterly training days be approved and added to the schedule. Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion. Ms. Tully called for discussion, seconding Ms. O'Brien's comment that staff will be required to be present. Ms. Tully called for a vote, and the motion as approved unanimously.

#### Four Week End-of-Employment Notice for Senior Team Members

Ms. Dowell informed the trustees that two weeks was not enough time for the transfer of responsibilities and training necessary for someone to perform the new duties. Ms. Tully noted that this would need to be four weeks exclusive of leave they may use.

Ms. Jones questioned if this would apply to all employees. Ms. Dowell replied no, but senior team members had a heavier responsibility load which would require more time for training and transfer.

Mr. Silcox moved to accept the new rule defining a minimum of four week end-of-employment notice for senior staff and two weeks for other staff, exclusive of any terminal leave. Ms. Overton seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Ms. Tully called for additional business. None was brought before the trustees.

Ms. Tully noted that the next meeting would be at the end of August and was anticipated to be in person. Ms. Overton noted that a portion of the meeting would be in closed session.

Ms. Tully moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Silcox seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on August 30, 2021 at 4:30 pm.