

PROVIDENCE COMMUNITY LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2020

PCL October 2020 Business Board meeting called to order at 6:03 pm by Patricia Raub, Board President.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Tony Aguilar, Anita Bench, Kendra Brewster, Avital R. Chatto*, Joan Dagle, Jordan Day, Deborah Del Gais, Jean Lamb, Rochelle Lee, Sarah Morenon, Joseph Morra**, V. Raffini, Paige Raposa, Patricia Raub, Adriana Vargas**, Pam Vogel, Zachary Weinberger, Cyndie Wilmot****, Lynn Zagoudis-Eastridge

Total 19 members

*Avital R. Chatto joined the meeting at 6:19 pm

**Joseph Morra joined the meeting at 6:07 pm

***Adriana Vargas joined the meeting at 6:09 pm

**** Cyndie Wilmot attended October Board meeting; inadvertently she was not admitted as a meeting panelist

Member(s) Absent:

Andre Herrera, Caleb Horton

Total 2 members

Current Board composition = 21 members

PCL Staff Present:

Michael Bordonaro, Sue Gibbs, Sara Huber and Cheryl Space

Approval of September 20, 2020 PCL Board Minutes:

Discussion of PCL September Business Board meeting minutes included correction to Board minutes:

Rochelle Lee -- Correct name listed (Avital) for vote to elect Adrianna Vargas to PCL Board.

Motion to Approve September 2020 PCL Board Meeting Minutes:

Patricia called for a vote to approve September 2020 Board Minutes with the above correction; the motion was not seconded.

Yes 15 No 0. Abstained 2 Unable to Vote 2. Total Votes 19
_____ (J Morra, P. Raposa) (C. Wilmot, A. Chatto)

Mission Moment:

Raffini spoke about her experiences working with the South Providence Community Library about two years ago while directing Violet's Village, a pilot community program centered on

self-esteem, life skills, knowledge and family support specifically tailored for African American youth. Violet's Village pilot program was funded by a LISC RI grant.

One story Raffini highlighted described how rewarding it was to work with the South Providence Library staff. When program expenses began to outweigh funds available to support youth, South Providence library staff (Tien) generously provided program space to do activities, welcomed interaction between library staff and youth participants and extended the program's limited budget by not charging Raffini for use of the library.

While that story was one instance of the library's support for community based programs. Raffini also stressed how, in many ways and on numerous occasions, PCL's local libraries make a big difference in their neighborhoods, providing support to residents, youth and a wide range of innovative grassroots initiatives. Also, Raffini expressed appreciation for her relationships with library staff and recalled her activism back when neighborhood libraries faced potential closings.

President's Report:

Patricia discussed several housekeeping matters. A brief overview of reminders include:

1. Please contact Patricia or Rochelle before a scheduled meeting if you are unable to attend. It will be helpful if Patricia is aware of who is not coming and what types of issues are affecting Board attendance.

For reference:

Patricia's contact information: praub86@gmail.com email (401) 225-6472 cell

Rochelle's contact information: rochelle1951@gmail.com email (401) 837-9600 cell

2. With the size of the current Board roster, please raise your hand to speak to ensure that those who wish to speak are acknowledged; at times, Patricia may not be able to see everyone on the Zoom screen.

Patricia Raub gave her own mission statement about PCL's work.

First, Patricia talked about PCL's impressive, three part virtual series on African American history and civil rights in Providence. Led by Keith and Teresa Stokes, each session was informative, interesting and timely in terms of today's dialogue regarding social justice.

Second, the virtual presentation had an average of 200 participants, made possible likely due to the convenience of accessing virtual events. Typically, events inside library buildings won't accommodate large groups due to space constraints. Also, the convenience of virtual events helped expand interest and participation in PCL's series on African American history.

Finally, Patricia commended PCL staff who helped organize the program, mentioning Michelle Novello, Lee Smith, Stephanie Shea and David Sok in particular.

Executive Director's Report:

Cheryl echoed Patricia's comments regarding PCL's African American History in Providence series and how well received it was. PCL is exploring ways to keep these lecture series going in the future.

Cheryl highlighted recent news and activities, not included in November's Executive Director's Report, (included in Board package). An overview of Cheryl's comments include:

Recent grant award - PCL received a new \$8k grant from the Nordstrom Corp Foundation to create, "Take and Explore", youth program kits which can be recycled. This grant will cover quite a few kits and will enhance PCL's youth programs.

Air Quality and Building Ventilation - improvements are underway in several PCL libraries including Knight Memorial which has poor HVAC system and ventilation conditions. PCL recently purchased 25 HEPA air purifier filters to be placed in high density locations, (circulation desks, computer labs). Each library will get a walk through with PCL staff and a professional air quality company who will evaluate the air quality conditions in each library.

Update on PCL library hours - new library hours began on October 20th and will be very similar to pre-COVID library hours.

At PCL's smaller libraries, operating hours will include a one hour closing for staff lunch or dinner breaks to allow for stable work groups to function in compliance with CV-19 safe operating protocols.

Larger libraries will close on Friday afternoons but provide curbside pick up and Wi-fi cafe for patrons. In turn, library hours on Saturday will increase, opening from 10:00 am-5:30 pm.

PCL also requested a waiver from the state's minimum operating hours of 64 hours per week to 61 hrs per week (between PCL and PPL combined). PCL's waiver is pending approval.

Cheryl expects PCL's current library hours to remain in place until next June.

Computer Labs - Computer labs are up and running at each library. PCL's CV-19 safety resources and practices for computer labs are working well. Between safety glass, PCL's outdoor wi-fi and 22 new Pro tablets and laser pointers for staff use has enhanced the safe use of the computer labs.

Outdoor and Virtual Learning Programs - PCL outdoor and virtual programs are going very well. Innovative programs at Olneyville, Washington Park were mentioned;

PCL's Latino resources team - this new team continues to make amazing progress on PCL's efforts to create a website and FaceBook page in Spanish, tailored for Spanish speaking patrons. The website and FaceBook page will complement and reflect the layout and information on PCL's main website.

Michelle, Jan and Stephanie, PCL clerks, specialists, a Spanish speaking librarian and resource consultants have been instrumental in moving this project forward. Completion and roll out of PCL's website and FaceBook in Spanish will be soon.

Community Partnerships - Cheryl has been working on upcoming initiatives including:

Working with Bill Stein and Crystal from his staff at Hope of Hope CDC, (sponsored the *Shower to Empower* program formerly at Knight Memorial Library), about partnering on a pilot project to enhance non-traditional library security and human services to patrons.

Cheryl would like to use PCL funding for security officers and instead hire Peer Mentors to not only provide security but also use their training in non-violence, trauma informed care, public benefits, (food, IDs, community programs and housing etc.), to support community members. House of Hope is very interested in the idea, has a history of working with libraries and discussions between PCL and House of Hope are ongoing. PCL's security dollars will be leveraged with Peer Mentors who will provide way more than basic security functions. The pilot would be launched next spring.

Cheryl is exploring an expanded partnership with College Unbound. Last summer PCL hosted several free College Unbound courses. The pilot would be at the South Providence library, offering college courses for community members and PCL staff interested in earning a bachelor's degree. Discussions are underway, including an Memorandum of Understanding between the two entities.

Cheryl introduced Francesca from PVD Young Makers, who partnered with PCL, Providence Summer Alliance and others during PCL's 2020 summer youth program.

Board Comments & Questions

Jordan Day asked about upgrading air filters in the libraries to address air quality issues at each library. Cheryl explained that there are technical challenges that impact the type of filters that can be installed but each library has a building plan in place to manage air quality challenges.

Zachary Weinberger asked about the planned uses for the \$125k CDBG grant awarded to the Fox Point Boy's and Girls Club to make improvements in PCL's Fox Point Library space, (paint, carpet and doors). Sue and Mike will be assisting the Boys & Girl's Club staff to complete the renovations once HUD releases federal CDBG funding for this year.

Jordan Day - asked about the name of the engineering firm doing PCL's air quality building inspections. The company's name is Automatic Temperature Control. They have a long history of working with PCL on HVAC systems with a lot of success. Jordan asked to be kept abreast of progress with PCL's air quality inspections and findings. Cheryl and Sue agreed to do so.

Finance Committee Report:

Sue Gibbs discussed PCL's September 30, 2020 financials which are for review but not for a Board vote, pending additional information and affirmation from sources like the City and the State. Major highlights include:

PCL's allocation of \$610k SBA loan has been included in the September 30th financial statement to cover 1st quarter payroll expenses. Payroll to date, like most line items for expenses are on track for first quarter at 24%.

Revenues for program expenses includes a \$50k grant for teen space improvements, a prior award of \$30k for additional teen space improvements and also \$20k for shelving at Mt. Pleasant Library.

Books and materials are getting up to speed in Collections which was slightly delayed due to staff vacancies and other concerns

Security is running higher than prior years because of additional hours during the CV-19 pandemic. In a separate line item, \$60 k has been budgeted for CV-19 in supplies and the YTD drawdown is as expected at 25%.

Ocean State Library dues went down to \$16k which will offset expected reduction in the state's Grant-in-Aid award.

PCL's Wi-Fi access project is complete. Total expenses came to \$63k funded by a \$60k grant.

Board Comments & Questions

Zachary asked if the budget in discussion reflected PCL's cash position. Sue stated that it is not because of the timing of funds that come in quarterly or even less frequent. Typically, to cover cash flow shortages, the City will advance funds on an interim basis.

Pam Vogel mentioned that PCL's budget for fund development is lower this year as fundraising will be impacted by CV-19 and other likely constraints. Pam reminded everyone that this year, she expects it will be harder to raise funds and asked for ideas to strengthen PCL's future fund development activities.

Motion to Approve September 30, 2020 PCL Finance Committee Report:

Pam Vogel, Board Treasurer, asked to postpone a Board vote to approve September 30th financial statement until PCL's November's board meeting. At that time, PCL's Finance Committee will have approved this fiscal year budget and September 30th financial statement. Members agreed to postpone a vote until November.

Pam and Sue reminded new Board members to review their board materials and all questions or comments are welcomed.

Facilities Committee Report

KML - fire and electrical upgrades using funds from a 2018 \$390k Champlain Foundation award is nearing a construction start. Sue gave an overview of the engineering, permitting, design and bidding process. A total of three bids were submitted and at \$257k, AM Electric was awarded the contract. PCL's consultant issued the Notice to Proceed to AM Electric who will begin preparations to start. Sue expects this work to take about six months.

Fund Development Committee Report

Michael Bordonaro spoke about the work being carried out in fundraising. PCL is entering the busiest time of the year for fundraising. Highlights of his discussion include:

PCL's Fall appeal is in progress; it will be organized into 5 donor groups to strengthen donor engagement. Goal is \$100k, an increase of \$20k from last year. Letters will go out in November.

A special follow up postcard sent to donors from PCL's Spring appeal to update donors on what PCL accomplished with their donation.

PCL's Giving Tuesday campaign on Dec 1 will focus on recurring gifts. Michael discussed various ideas and approaches to ways PCL can best reach donors, promote the library's messaging and expand PCL's fundraising options.

Towering Stories, (formerly Over the Edge), is rescheduled for 4/24/21. Michael is meeting with colleagues in fundraising such as AFPRI, United Way RI and the RI Foundation to discuss PCL's Towering Stories campaign and has received favorable feedback. Michael will report back in November on next steps with these

The co-chairs of PCL's Towering Stories fundraising event facilitated a Jeep lease raffle to raise money. The drawing will be on Feb 14, 2021. The fundraising goal of the raffle is \$30k.

Guest Presentation: Francesca Del Prete, PVD Youth Services Specialist gave an excellent summary of the program outcomes and highlights. Copies of the slide presentation will be sent to Board members. Everyone thanked Francesca for the information and observations from the program evaluation of PVD Young Makers summer projects.

Board Comments & Questions

Tony Aguiar - complemented Francesca on the interactive features of the PVD Young Makers website, Francesca's engaging presentation and other board members also complemented

PVD, (and Francesca), for providing a highly successful summer learning experience for youth. PVD Young Makers has ongoing partnerships with all nine PCL libraries and supports Recreation Centers.

Joan Dagle - asked Francesca if data collected provided information on the number of Spanish vs. English language attempts to login to PVD's website. Francesca stated PVD staff will see if it's possible to track that information for future data reports.

Marketing & Advocacy Committee Report: Tony noted that Rep. Batista is a State Representative, not a City Councilperson as mentioned in the October Marketing & Advocacy Committee Report. Tony will send Sara a corrected version of his committee report.

Public Comment: None

Motion to Adjourn

Jordan Day motioned to adjourn the meeting; Tony Aguilar seconded the motion.

Vote was taken and approved unanimously.

PCL September Board meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm by Patricia Raub, Board President