

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
February 10, 2016**

Chair Charles Fegan called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**I. Public Comment:**

- 1. Public Comment:** Deb Smith-Cohen, President, Fairfax County Public Library Employees' Association. (Attached.)

Chair Fegan thanked Mrs. Smith-Cohen, and noted for the record that the Library has a memorandum of understanding with the County, and in that memorandum of understanding, our board has no control over days off for county employees. Mr. Fegan introduced the next speaker.

- 2. Public Comment:** Dennis Hays, Chairman, Fairfax Library Advocates

Chair Fegan thanked Mr. Hays for his support.

**II. Minutes:** A motion to approve the Minutes of the January 2016 meeting as submitted was accepted.

**III. Chair's Report**

**Opening Remarks:** Chair Fegan said that this evening we were to present to Mr. Heinrichs a plaque to honor him for his services. Chair Fegan said that he was in communication with him and that he would not be able to be present this evening, but that he hopes to attend the next board meeting to receive the plaque and to thank the board members for their support while he was a member.

Now, this is a citizen board that serves without pay, loves the library, and strives for its improvement day-by-day. When you look at the roster, you will observe that most of our members were not on the board at the time of the beta situation. This is good for it helps you to go forward with a fresh start. As with all plans there are pluses and there are minuses, but the past is the past. We must realize what the responsibility of this board is and what the responsibility of administration is. When we respect that, both sides move forward and the public wins. We must also realize that with a new Director, new ideas will, hopefully, come forth. It is our responsibility to work with that Director and to give the best service to our community with the funds allocated to it.

As you are aware, the Deputy County Executive has retained the services of Jane Goodwin. Jane, I welcome you back to the system. For many years I was privileged to serve on this board during Jane's tenure with the library. She did a phenomenal job. Thank you, Jane. She is a county consultant and a special assistant to Deputy Molchany now. Her title is Acting Deputy Director, but she doesn't come under our board.

The announcement for the Director has gone out and hopefully, will bring results. The announcement is on the Library homepage. I also found it on the American Library Association's page. The Library Board has the responsibility for retaining the services of an

individual to be the Director. I believe that as the news of our Board and how it has acted in such a positive manner gets out to the public, we will have a plethora of excellent applicants.

This Monday the Deputy County Executive invited the Chair and the Vice Chair of this board to take part in the panel to review applicants for the Deputy Library Director. I thank you, sir, for inviting us to serve on that. I am sure he is going to address that later in his remarks.

You will note from your material on the agenda, Deputy Molchany will also be giving a report on the latest developments in the Tysons area. I received a request from several members of the community concerning this, and I discussed it with Deputy Molchany and I knew he was much more knowledgeable on this than I am, so I will pass this matter to Deputy Molchany. I know many citizens have asked me about this. If need be, the Chair, at some later date, may appoint an ad hoc committee to review this situation. At this time, this does not seem necessary. Many of the concerns about the involvement of this Board in this matter seem unnecessary at this time.

The budget hearing is coming in April. I have asked that someone from Administration arrange for a time for the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Library Foundation to speak at the hearing. Roberta Connors has been kind enough to arrange for such a presentation on Thursday, April 7, at about 1 P.M. in the afternoon. It is a good sign if as many as possible board members are present for the presentation.

One Board member suggested that, if possible, we arrange for a bookmark of sorts for the budget and work with friends to arrange citizen support. This sounds like an idea that should be pursued. Since Mrs. Millhouser came up with this excellent idea, may I ask her to give some ideas for its implementation? Speaking of the budget, at this meeting, the finance committee will give us an excellent overview of our finances to date. And a projection of what funds will go unspent in June. I was privileged to attend a very excellent finance committee meeting prior to this meeting. Mr. Heinrichs has left the planning committee and in his place, I have appointed Will, so that takes him from the Publicity committee, so Fran, I would ask you if you would Chair that committee, and I would ask our new board member, Mrs. Janega to serve on that board with you. When we get a new board member from South County, we will have that new person serve on that board as well.

I received a letter with very sad news. A very good friend of mine, Dr. Joseph Sirh is resigning from the board. It will be effective when Supervisor Herrity appoints his replacement. I have served with Joseph many, many, many years. He is a perfect gentleman, an excellent member of the board, and Joseph, I really hate to see you depart. I always refer to him as my dear friend Joseph.

I have also been informed that Sam Clay does not wish to have a celebration or party for a retirement. This is Sam's wish and we will respect and honor this. I do think it would be proper for the Board and others who have served with him to create some type of memory book to honor him. Once again, I would like to have the Publicity Committee handle this. Since Will has been moved, Fran is now Committee Chair. I would like each of you to hold March 22 open, just in case Sam does change his mind. Sam has served this county for

many, many years and he has done an excellent job. I consider him a friend and I know he has not always agreed with me and I have not always agreed with him. And we've always said how we have felt, but we have always stayed friends. I would hope that the board can come up with some way of acknowledging this and once again, we ask the Publicity Committee to help with this.

#### **IV. Committee Reports:**

**A. Library Foundation:** Mr. Jasper: We did not have a meeting to attend; therefore, I have nothing to report at this time.

**B. Finance Committee:** Mrs. Delaney: The Finance and Budget Committee met to receive an overview of the third quarter budget review that will be submitted tomorrow. The committee further reviewed the LOB and as the LBOT prepares to present the budget and speak before the Board of Supervisors, the LOB document has trends and metrics that will support our request. The committee voted to make a request of this board to draft a document that outlines our budget priorities and supporting data to enhance our budget request to the Board of Supervisors.

A motion was passed to approve the request to draft a document outlining the priorities of the budget request.

**C. Planning Committee:** Mrs. Dando: We have been very busy in the last month. I have a couple of updates and then a request that I am going to ask of my fellow board members. Since the last update, we have been focused on preparing the website for publication. I want to thank Katie Strotman and all of the members of the administrative staff who have supported both the drafting and the putting together of the draft website; as well as the logistics that go into creating locations, and times, and schedules for the interactions that are going to be a very intensive period on March 17 through 19. That's the date range of the next site visit of our vendor, CIVICTechnologies. There is going to be quite a lot of activity to include some of the focus groups, stakeholder interviews, public forum meetings and so forth. So you can imagine in a very tight schedule during those days, that there is a lot of behind the scenes work and, honestly, it has all fallen on Katie's shoulders and the people she has enlisted to help, so I just wanted to say thank you for that. I believe the website is very close to completion. We'll be sure to let you know as soon as it's live.

Tomorrow, we have an important event. With those scheduled stakeholder interviews and focus groups and so forth, we need to make sure that we have the right people that are going to give us deep, rich, and meaningful feedback and input that we can use. So we have a conference call with the Planning Committee. Anyone on the board who is not a member of the Planning Committee is welcome to come at 5 o'clock tomorrow to the Fairfax Government Center, Room 232, I believe, 5:00 to 5:30 P.M. to observe the call and then our Planning Committee members, some of them will be present in person and some them will be calling in, but the call will be on a speaker so everyone can hear both sides of the conversation.

The purpose of that call is to make sure that the stakeholder group categories and the focus group categories that CIVICTechnologies is proposing are, indeed, the categories

and interest groups that we want to get the feedback from; that there is no gap in the survey and the physical survey of groups; and that there is general agreement from the Planning Committee that those are, indeed, the groups with which we want to move forward.

There is a very tight turnaround for their site visit in March, so the other thing that I am asking the planning committee to do and, also, I am asking every board member to do is to consider individuals that you would recommend for the focus groups and the stakeholder groups. And forgive me for being really candid, but for turnaround time, it would be most helpful if we had individual names. For example, a general suggestion such as, "Maybe we can have someone from the Social Workers' office participate." That's great, but if you have a contact there, have a name you took the time to find, and have a recommendation, then that would be the best input that we could have.

The documents that have been shared include an email, that is, CIVICTechnologies' email that any public person, board member, Planning Committee member who would like to submit names and contact information, please identify which stakeholder group or focus group you think they would be helpful with. You are welcome to submit them to that email. And if you have any questions or if you are not able to attend the call, but you have some suggestions, or if what I am saying here seems vague and you need more detail, you can feel free to contact me directly. But if you just would like to submit a suggestion, I would really appreciate if you would do that directly. It would just save us some time to do that directly through the email. The email address is: [fairfax@librarystrategy.com](mailto:fairfax@librarystrategy.com). It's a really important event tomorrow, 5:00 to 5:30 P.M. For now, that's all I have.

As soon as we have our locations and the schedule and the stakeholder groups and so forth set, I will make sure that we have it in writing. Of course, some of those events are private. They are going to be between the interviewee and the interviewer. Some of the other events such as the Public Forums, we want as much participation as possible. So I'll make sure to provide the information in writing as soon as possible.

**D. Ad Hoc MOU Committee:** Mrs. Smolen: There is nothing from the MOU Ad Hoc committee. I will say that I am hopeful once we have a Deputy Director, perhaps we can meet and move forward on this. Maybe even for next time.

**V. Director's Report:** The Executive Summary was given by Deputy Dave Molchany.

A. Executive Summary

**1. "The Boro" in Tysons Corner**

Mr. Molchany: In your packet you'll find several items. The first one is "The Boro" in Tysons Corner. This is a new development in Providence District and the Board of Supervisors approved the proposal on January 12. The project is going to add fourteen new buildings in the Tysons' area. The developer will design and build a 19,000 square foot library as a part of the proffer arrangement. Nothing has been decided beyond that. It's something that we will look into more detail as time goes on. It's exciting news for the library to be near a metro stop in the middle of a growing urban area. It doesn't have any impact on any other libraries in the area at all. The library is not in phase 1 of the project and when developers start projects like this, you never know how it is going to go,

but they are now projecting about four to five years out that they would actually be doing this with us. It could be longer so we just have to see how the development progresses.

Mr. Ewing: Dave, four or five years out from the start of the project?

Deputy Molchany: Yes, from when they actually break ground and get started. As you know in development projects, there are all kinds of preliminary things that happen before we ever build any building. So you just have to sort of stay with the project and see what's going on. There have been questions about the Tysons proffer design manual. The primary purpose of the design manual is to provide information that will streamline and aid the library design process by establishing criteria and standards for building features. It's not meant to capture every detail. The Tysons proffer design manual is slightly adjusted. And basically the adjustment is because the Tysons library will be in a high-rise building so it will be different from our other libraries and, also, it will have a different type of parking arrangement. Those things are considerations that will have to be looked into as we design the library. There is not a whole lot of information now. Basically, it is something new and something that is just starting.

But if you want more information, I can certainly bring people from the county to talk a little bit more about this. We can have someone from the Office of Community Revitalization as part of the Tysons project come in. Also, if you want to talk more about design, we can certainly have Capital Facilities come in. If you just tell me what you are looking for, I can certainly arrange for more detail. This is the very beginning of a project so there are not a lot of decisions made yet. It's also pretty far out.

Mr. Ewing: That's my question. What's the runway on this? Are we talking a decade before they break ground?

Deputy Molchany: No, they'll be breaking ground sooner than that. When they get to our building is the question.

Mr. Ewing: I know the developers want to break ground sooner than later, but when are they anticipating?

Deputy Molchany: I don't have that information. I can get it for you.

Mr. Ewing: We're at least four years possibly five to six off to start.

Deputy Molchany: For our portion, we probably wouldn't be considering our library for four to five years out from the way it's scheduled.

Mr. Ewing: At a minimum. I'm not familiar with this project.

Deputy Molchany: I'm not familiar with this one. I know it's done in phases. So our phase is not the first one.

Mr. Ewing: They have a lot of work to do before they get to a final design approval and that could take many years, so I'm trying to get a sense of is the runway for it.

Deputy Molchany: And for that we could certainly have someone come in from one of our Public Works groups and explain the project if you would like more information on that.

Mr. Ewing: I can get it separately.

Deputy Molchany: O.K. Planning and Zoning can come in. Whomever you would like, if you would like more information. But it's something that just got started; something to watch; something we want to be involved in. But it is a proffer, so basically they've said 19,000 square feet will be for our library and that's, basically it at this point.

Mrs. Delaney: Where does that 19,000 come from? Who made the decision that would be the appropriate amount?

Deputy Molchany: It's their proffer. However they agreed on their proffers. I don't get involved in any of that. That's something that's done by Planning and Development.

Chair Fegan: I believe it's based on the population in Tysons.

Deputy Molchany: I don't know. I can't comment on that.

Mrs. Levy: Can you give us an idea of what library has 19,000 square feet?

Deputy Molchany: I don't really know. Jane?

Mrs. Goodwin: A community library is 15,000 to 17,000 square feet. But in a building that's in a high rise, you have to account for elevators and stair steps down, so that takes up some of the space. That would be about the size of Dolly Madison.

Mr. Ewing: These are big packages. I have seen a lot of these projects in Tysons scrubbed. We're talking real thick and the proffer on a loan can be 500 pages. In general there's a lot going on. You've got traffic studies and all kinds of things so it's a pretty intensive project and this is 4.25 million square feet. What is the total number of buildings? Fourteen?

Deputy Molchany: This is a huge project and the land development process is very complex. There is a huge amount of people involved from multiple departments. When we finally get to our space, we will probably have Capital Facilities involved with us. We'll probably also be dealing with other people involved in the project. There is a lot of negotiation that goes on. The entire process, just to get to this point, is very long. And the proffer process itself is also very complex. Basically, they try to get amenities that are going to benefit the community. So that's probably the best I can answer that question.

Mrs. Millhouser: Dave, you know there were community meetings that were held in Reston, which generated a lot of really great ideas. And I'm wondering how will that be able to be incorporated or at least tapped into so that we're not reinventing the wheel?

There isn't going to be a community to come out because there is some kind of developing along the way. There were great ideas and we wouldn't want to lose them. If we could have that report and see what is in the Reston discussions that is not in the Boro plans. I glanced at some of the documentation.

Deputy Molchany: Which is pretty scant. Because mostly what has been put up by our Public Affairs Department which has gotten bits and pieces from other folks. There is a difference between the Reston project--that's something the county is doing and is very involved in. This is a private developer. However, obviously what we learn in any of our library facilities can be used in whatever we are planning next.

Mrs. Millhouser: We wouldn't want to just leave it up to not a lot of involvement. And one other thing that I was thinking that I was pretty enthused about the idea of a book drop that you can drive up to. But for years we've been talking about, or staff have been talking about the idea of conveyor belts from our book drops to the workroom and we've never done that in the library even though we've talked about it. That would be a cool place to do that. It's a modern, new thing. Of course, any new library would be a great place to do that. Especially looking at staff costs, this is a way that you could probably save on that. So just ideas that people who are involved in libraries could input, that might not otherwise get in there, is what I'm thinking about.

Mr. Ewing: I think we are getting a little ahead of ourselves, in my opinion, respectfully. First and foremost, we want to push for the best location. And my opinion, that would be ground floor and that's going to be a struggle. There's a website, theborotysons.com, and it's their website. I'm sure Planning and Zoning has a plethora of documents available that are approved, at least, in concept. There's definitely a lot of heavy lifting that we need to do to move this project forward and have input. There's going to be a tremendous amount of need to collaborate, shall I say, with their developers for what we consider the best use for this. But it's going to be tough. That's some expensive space on the ground floor. We don't want people to have to go up. So it will be a challenge, I think, if the proffer is not location specific or anything.

Deputy Molchany: I don't have the details at all. So that's something that I would have to talk to about with our Planning and Development folks.

Mrs. Levy: I just wanted to say Kathy Kaplan sent the board members an email three or four weeks ago and she actually linked to a lot of the documents. I found it very useful to go into her email and look at her links because she zeroed right in on the library parts. And some of the documents are quite lengthy. If you still have that email, take a look at those links because they are very helpful.

## **2. County Insurance as it Relates to Volunteers and Friends**

Deputy Molchany: The next thing was insurance as it relates to volunteers. Risk Management from the county supplied a very brief statement. Basically, there was a question about Friends, volunteers and county insurance and the response, more or less, just clarifies it: "Individual volunteers are covered by a separate county liability insurance. But that does not include organizations, so the Friends are not covered under the county insurance."

If you have specific questions about that, you can give those to me and I can talk to Risk Management. And if need be, someone from Risk Management can come and address your questions. I think that's the best way to handle this because the response is very brief. You may have very specific questions and I'll be happy to try to get those answered for you.

Mrs. Levy: Maybe the Risk Management people could come to the Friends meeting that's going to be on March 13 at Woodrow Wilson. Since it's the Friends Groups who are affected, maybe we could get that information on who that person would be.

### **3. Update on Deputy Director Interviews**

Deputy Molchany: The interviews for Deputy Director. We did our first round of interviews this past week and we will have our next round, our second round. We are planning for, hopefully, next week sometime. We are targeting the 19<sup>th</sup> right now. I wanted to tell you just a little bit about the panel. We had myself, Jane Goodwin, Kirk Kincannon, who is the Park Authority Director, Kristen Leonard who is the Neighborhood Community Services Director, Charles, and Karrie who were on the panel. Hopefully, we will get our second round going in the near future, and then, we make our selection. The first round went very well.

### **4. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library Closed**

The last thing, Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library is closed. It closed on January 31<sup>st</sup>. We have temporary space and it should reopen in March. Dolly Madison is offering additional hours during the renovation period and the renovated building should be open to the public again in 2017 in the summertime.

Pohick library renovations are progressing smoothly and on schedule.

John Marshall library renovation is moving forward again and is anticipating construction to begin in early 2017, so that's good.

The lines of business overview for the library was done this past week. The Board of Supervisors very gracious to us as we did our LOB. There were a lot of questions. The actual library LOB, the big presentation by the library, will be on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Right now, I believe it's scheduled for the morning. I say, believe, because the schedule changes. March 4<sup>th</sup> is the date that's being targeted. So the best thing to do is look online and it will show the time slot that the libraries have. They do multiple departments in a day and so you just need to watch for when Library is actually going to be there. Everyone is invited to come and listen to the LOB presentation. It's a good way to listen to questions from the Board of Supervisors, the things that they hone in on, and the things that they seem interested in. It's a really good way to get a sense of the way they are thinking as the different departments present. They've gone well so far. The Board has been excellent. The Board has been very, very kind to staff with the questions and with the back and forth. So I think it's been a good process so far.

Oh, yes, we have a new Administrative Assistant, Ms. Vogel.

Chair Fegan: I do think we should have a vote of thanks for Roberta Conners who filled in during the interim and who did an excellent job. A motion was passed to thank Roberta Conners for assisting the Library Board of Trustees while the Executive Assistant to the Director position was vacant.

**VII. Consideration Items: None**

**VIII. Action Items: None**

**IX. Roundtable:**

Mrs. Levy: I'm always first. I had one question. As things are changing in Administration, is there going to be a new staff organization chart for Administration?

Deputy Molchany: Yes, and actually, I can talk about what it is. It's already been changed.

Mrs. Levy: Is it on the website?

Deputy Molchany: No, not yet. The Deputy Director has three divisions that report to them and the division folks are Katie, Melanie, and Margaret, who you all know. So that's really the only change. Beneath the three of them, everything is staying the same. The Deputy Director will work directly for the Library Director. Actually the Foundation will be something the Library Director looks out for as well. There is a little bit of a different reporting arrangement. More or less, that is the structure. We are working on org charts and we are looking for a simple org chart that will be put on the county's website so that you can see it. We have much more detailed org charts, which are probably too much for the website itself.

Mrs. Levy: Thank you. That's helpful.

Dr. Sirh: I took years deciding what to do for my volunteer work. Back in January 2016, former supervisor, Elaine McConnell and I had a meeting with Pat Herrity and I mentioned briefly that I have to resign in order to spend more time out of state. So I would like them to search for the proper person to fill my position. At the same time, I sent a letter to our devoted Chairman of the Library Board, Charles Fegan. It was back in 1992 when Supervisor Elaine McConnell asked me to serve the library when I was working at Fairfax Hospital. I always liked the library system from when I was a child back in Korea. It particularly impressed me. The only decent library was USIS, who donated a special library. Anyhow, it took so many years, I did my tests and then I came here. I was so impressed with the volunteers, Friends, and staff. Everyone involved in the library system are great staff. I think our library system is the best library system in America. Our County library system is unique in area and location. The citizens should be appreciative and enthused about it. I deeply appreciate it.

Our Library Board and staff care for each other. They dedicate their time and effort in order to operate and serve for our citizens of Fairfax County. My hat's off. I appreciate it. Lastly, six months after I came to the Library Board, our Chairman came into office. His dedication and his fantastic leadership are beyond calculation. I sincerely appreciate his dedication and his friendship. Thank you.

Mr. Ewing: Thank you for your service and you are going to be missed.

Mr. Jasper: I just wanted to say to Dr. Sirh that we're definitely going to miss you. And thank you for all of your help and assistance during your tenure and say to you that we hope nothing but success in everything you decide to do in the coming years. Thank you.

Mrs. Dando: I too, would like to extend best wishes to Dr. Sirh and thank him because when I came on board, not too long ago, he was particularly kind and welcoming and I really appreciated the gestures of welcome that he extended to me when I came on board.

I would also like to say that during our snow events, I really missed the boat. I went to the Kingstowne branch. I went and looked at the Hot Pick shelves and I could count this many, six, on the shelves. So I took a picture and tweeted it out. I was way ahead of the trend of saying, "Oh look empty shelves, empty grocery shelves, empty library shelves." Because I know all of my friends replied, "Oh my, that's great!" But it was lovely. It was full. The library was buzzing. It was full. Kingstowne, I think, is always full and buzzing, but it was, particularly, on this day and I was able to find something to take home with me, but I was shocked because I thought, "Oh, well, I'm going to have some time to really pick what I want." But I thought, "Oh my goodness, this is fantastic." I know what that does though. As much as we love the excitement and so forth; staff have their own personal needs that they need to take care of as they are preparing for snow events for their home and their families.

I really wanted to say thank you for all of the service that they provided for all of Fairfax County during that time.

Mrs. Delaney: I think my comments are going to be almost identical to yours. Everything I had in my head, you almost just wrote it for me, so thank you for that. So first, Dr. Sirh, thank you so much for your time with this board. We are losing a beloved member and I certainly appreciate the opportunity to have served with you, so thank you.

Also, I was going to comment on the shelf status as well. My family and I, we went to Chantilly library first that morning. It was the same day as the storm. I think the first flurries were falling on our way home. Literally, we were getting the last little things off the shelf before the staff packed up to go home at noon. It was definitely comparable. I had that thought and thought it was a clever one, "It's just like the grocery store, so bread, milk, eggs and books." That's what we need to stock up for so it was good to see. It was good to see that we are, indeed, an essential service.

Mrs. Smolen: I also wanted to say thank you and also say that as a member of less than a year, your length of service is tremendously appreciated and impressive. I went to the Oakton Friends annual meeting this past month. It was just so impressive--the level of energy, commitment, and new ideas flying around. It was really nice to see.

Mrs. Millhouser: Also, my complements for your service. I think most of the time that I was an employee and, then, on the board, you were always here.

I'd also like to pass along similar remarks and complements to the library staff. I know at T.J. they did a lot of juggling of staff schedules to accommodate the problems with delivery; to make

sure that they had people to process the bins. The only thing on the bins in delivery is holds. And when the holds are gone that whole shelf gets barer and barer and barer. And then, all of a sudden, tons of holds come in and you've got to have people to take care of them. Staff did a tremendous job on making that happen. I know just walking around, I would hear people say, "Are the holds here yet? I have a hold." "Not yet, not yet." Today, there were just tons of them and I think it's been like that not just today. Great job to the staff.

Mr. Donovan: Sir, it's been an honor and a pleasure to work with you. Thank you.

Mrs. Levy: Now that he's made his announcement, I would like to thank Dr. Sirh for his assistance to me and welcoming me.

Just before I left, I was looking at Facebook and somebody had posted an amazing picture of the holds at Kings Park. I guess it was today and all of their hold shelves were full. They had overflow on carts waiting for people to pick up. I can't remember which page it was on, but it was very impressive. It could have been any branch, but I wrote down Kings Park.

And finally, I wanted to mention, that every February, the county has length of service recognition and I wanted to point out that this year, there was one library staff person being recognized for 35 years of service to the County. There were seven people for 30 years of service to the County, one person for 25 years, and then twenty people for 20 years; twenty-two people for 15 years; and eighteen people for 10 years. The years of service are really quite tremendous. I think it's a lovely thing that the county recognizes people's years of service. I'm grateful to all of these staff people who stuck around a long time, and shared their expertise with all of us.

Dr. Sirh: One last thing was I was cleaning my den and I found a Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees Manual from 1992.

Chair Fegan adjourned the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

**Members Present**

Charles Fegan  
Karrie Delaney  
Priscille Dando  
Michael Donovan  
Darren Ewing  
Will Jasper  
Suzanne Levy  
Fran Millhouser  
Dr. Joseph Sirh  
Miriam Smolen

**Members Absent**

Sheila Janega

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:

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Jane G. Goodwin  
Acting Deputy Director

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Charles Fegan, Chairman  
FCPL, Board of Trustees

**Deb Smith-Cohen**  
**Fairfax County Public Library Employee Association President**  
**Statement to Library Board of Trustees**  
**January 2016**

Happy New Year to all. I am Deb Smith-Cohen and I've just become the 2016 President of FCPLEA. I've been with Fairfax County Public Libraries for nearly 10 years and worked in several branches. Currently, I'm the Asst. Branch Manager at Patrick Henry Library in Vienna. I've met many of you before and a few of you have even worked with me! I look forward to learning from and working with all of you.

2016 will mark big changes and opportunities for FCPL. Changes are stressful, but can also be energizing. Like you, library staff were disappointed and anxious on hearing that the search for our new Director could not be concluded as planned. Like you, we are eager for as much information as possible to understand how the new searches for a Deputy Director as well as a Director will be pursued, what timelines exist, and how interim assignments will be made.

Having two regional branches under renovation with the associated distribution of staff from Pohick and (beginning in February) Tysons-Pimmit may create opportunities for branches receiving additional staff (including Patrick Henry). We can benefit from working with "new" colleagues. Experience and ideas can be shared and we can increase our ability to provide programming or outreach to the public. Whenever staff get to interact with different colleagues, either through overtime assignments, program swaps, or networking at committee meetings, especially face to face, we are sure to come away with new energy, new ideas and new insights. Perhaps most importantly, the better we understand not only our own branches but the variety of needs and solutions at other branches, the better we can contribute to the larger success of this library system.

Other issues that are on our minds include, as always, the prospects for an increased budget to allow us to provide more – and more varied -- content in all formats, as well as better services. Staff crave appropriate opportunities to share stories about our current passions and our future dreams for this system. I am reading a book (no surprise) titled *Whoever Tells the Best Story Wins* and finding new insights, some of which will be familiar to you, about how we can get our stories out and heard with the greatest impact.

We are excited about the potential of the Community Survey Project as outlined for you and for branch management staff last month. The chance to participate in this project in multiple ways as staff is much appreciated and will certainly enrich the results and contribute toward the identification of high impact, actionable shifts in our service priorities.

Finally, I want to be sure to follow my predecessor Jennifer McCullough's best advice to me. She said, "Whenever you are interacting with our Trustees, remember that they are volunteers performing a time-consuming service. Their commitment to FCPL is as deep as ours. Always remember to thank them." So: On behalf of FCPLEA, for your time, your commitment, and the chance to share staff insights and concerns with you, I thank you.

