

Board of Library Directors of Cheltenham Township

March 22, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Julie Haywood, Jesse Gallagher, Jessika McLaughlin, Nathan Schultz, Myron Goldman, Courtney Heinerici, Mary Kay Moran (Executive Director), Maddie MacKenzie (Administrative and Communications Associate).

Consent Agenda:

- a. President's Report
- b. Director's Report
- c. Statistical Report
- d. Friends Reports
- e. January Minutes
- f. Finance Reports
- g. Committee Reports

Questions and Comments: Myron Goldman noted that the 2022 audit to be completed in 2023 was marked higher in the budget than the original estimate. The Board discussed the increase in cost for the 2022 audit from Maillie as included in the 2023 budget. Despite the increase in cost, CTLS has a discounted rate and Maillie was still the best option, and the three-year contact guarantees the same price for three years. Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that the Township is working on a grant that would allow them to put a heating system in the La Mott Community Center and keep it open year-round. The Board discussed the variation in MCLINC operating costs across the months when the community center libraries are open (check recording)

Motion: Myron Goldman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, Jessika McLaughlin seconded the motion, and the Agenda was approved.

Sunshine Announcements: Personnel: The Executive Director goals were approved by the Board.

Risa Robinson (Head Librarian of the Glenside Branch): Presented by Mary Kay Moran. See attached report.

Commissioner's Report (Matthew Areman), Written Report Presented by Julie Haywood: CTLS was well represented by Julie Haywood and Mary Kay Moran, who presented the Library System's facilities plans & needs at the Township's most recent Public Affairs meeting. Julie Haywood reached out to Mathew Areman and Dan Norris about having an informal get-together with the Library Board to foster a working relationship with the Township Commissioners. The Township received the proposals from the architects, and Matthew Areman anticipates they will hold a public meeting this spring to present the facilities proposals.

Strategic Plan (Report from the Library): Mary Kay Moran and the CTLS head librarians have created a new yearly staff evaluation form, centered on development, goals and accomplishments, and will be beta testing it with several staff members. CTLS staff are creating a culture statement to be presented at Staff Development Day. Azsa Hill has created a tech team that is looking into updating library technology to improve accessibility. Laila Virgo-Carter has continued to expand the Library System's teen outreach

and programming, and the children's librarians are reaching out to preschools in the East Cheltenham and La Mott area. The libraries have added an outreach agenda item to their monthly meetings to monitor progress with outreach goals. CTLS has created a community outreach events calendar for the staff, who need to attend at least one community outreach event a year. One of the system's goals this quarter was to create a spreadsheet with ideas for attracting diverse candidates, some of which have already been incorporated into the hiring process and job descriptions. The SPLIT Team is creating Dewey charts for sensitive subjects that will be placed throughout the stacks. The Strategic Plan Leadership Team has had a planning session for the second quarter and is on track looking toward the third quarter. Mary Kay Moran has a meeting on Monday with Amanda Standerfer, the Strategic Plan consultant, to start developing an evaluation tool for outputs and outcomes. CTLS will post a snapshot of the Strategic Plan progress and activities on the staff intranet once a quarter, and Julie Haywood suggested that the snapshot could also be shared with the public.

New Business:

External Affairs: see attached charter.

- **External Affairs Committee Charter: See attached Committee Charter.** Jesse Gallagher presented the Board with an overview of the External Affairs Committee Charter.
 - **Motion:** Myron moved to approve the External Affairs Committee Charter with the changes that have been suggested at this meeting, Nathan Schultz second the motion and the charter was approved.
 - **Board Comment:**
 - The Board agreed to change the membership language from the Board Chair to the President of the Board will serve as an ex officio member of the committee.
 - Julie Haywood noted that the committee will add the amended date of the bylaws, January 25, 2023, to the footnote on amendments to the bylaws.
 - Nathan Schultz requested to change the language of the section with the External Affairs Committee will develop and oversee programs and community outreach to programs and community outreach of the Board to clarify that the Board is not running CTLS programs. The Board agreed to adjust the language.
 - Julie Haywood voted to approve the changes to the External Affairs Committee Charter, and all members were in favor. Jesse Gallagher will make those changes to the charter and send it back to the Board and it will be posted on the Board Google Workspace.

Internal Affairs Committee:

- **Internal Affairs Committee Charter: See attached Committee Charter.** Myron Goldman presented the Board with an overview of the Internal Affairs Committee Charter and minor changes to the charter. The charter will now read, "the committee will have a minimum of two and a maximum of three voting members" to be consistent with the language used in other documents. For "the Board president is an ex officio member," they will add "not voting." The date of the amendments to the bylaws will be updated to read January 25, 2023.

- **Motion:** Julie Haywood called for a **motion** to approve the charter with the changes Myron Goldman proposed. Nathan moved to accept the charter, Myron seconded the motion and the Motion carried.
- The Internal Affairs Committee will make those changes to the charter and send it to the Board, and it will be posted on the Board Google Workspace.
- **Financial Policy:** The Internal Affairs Committee recommended that the Board approve the Financial Policy.
 - **Motion:** Myron Goldman moved to approve the Financial Policy, Jesse Gallagher seconded the motion, and the policy was approved unanimously.
 - Julie Haywood noted that the policy had been reviewed by the external consultant from Meristem Financial. The Financial Policy will be posted on the Google Workspace.
- **Treasurer's Surety Bond:** Per State Code, the Library Board Treasurer needs to be bonded. Mary Kay Moran heard back from Rebecca McGarry with Nova Insurance Partners, who work with Cheltenham Township, that after conferring with her group of experts, they concluded that the bond amount should be in the range of 10-15% of the libraries annual budget. With those numbers, CTLS is looking at an annual cost of \$263-\$394 to secure the surety bond.
 - The Internal Affairs Committee recommended that the Board approve the policy of a surety bond of 10% of the budget.
 - **MOTION:** Myron Goldman moved to approve the 10% Surety Bond, Jessika McLaughlin seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- **Check Signing Threshold:** Myron Goldman reported that banks no longer require two signatures for checks. The Internal Affairs Committee recommended that the Board approve the policy of requiring only one signature for checks \$5,000 and under, which covers 99% of checks issued by CTLS.
 - Mary Kay Moran reviewed CTLS's well-established internal controls that have been approved by the accountant with the Board. CTLS Checks are locked up, and the library director does not have the key. One staff member approves the checks, another prints the checks out, a third person signs the checks, and a monthly P&L goes out. Julie Haywood emphasized that the public understand that because CTLS has established internal controls, the Board is comfortable only requiring one signature for checks under this threshold. Nathan Schultz further noted that this is consistent with the industry standard.
 - **Motion:** Myron Goldman moved to accept one signature for checks for \$5000 and under for already budgeted expenses, Nathan Schultz seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

June BOLDOCT Retreat: The June BOLDOCT Retreat will be held Sunday, June 11 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Glenside Library. Potential topics from the survey and self-assessment for the retreat sessions include: an overview of CTLS's collection development policy with Mary Kay, advocacy 101, and budget advocacy. The retreat will also have dedicated work time to use the Google Workspace and Google Drive. Possible additional topics include communication tips related to strategic plan, progress with Board goals, and goals in general. Jessika McLaughlin will send out the save the date to the Board and expects members to reply with additional topics or comments within a week.

2023 Board Calendar: Julie Haywood explained that the Board Calendar is intended to provide Board Members with an organized look at key Board-related activities and timelines for meeting those activities. Jessika McLaughlin sent out the 2023 Board Calendar and is looking for feedback from the Board on the timeline dates and activities within a week.

High Level Summary Annual Report: Mary Kay Moran presented a High-Level Summary of the Annual Report to the Board, also posted on the Google Workspace. After opening and increasing library hours again after the pandemic, CTLS saw an increase in about every statistic reported to the state from 2021 to 2022. Mary Kay Moran will add a column to the Google Workspace document with pre-pandemic numbers from 2019 for Board members to reference. In 2021, Polaris did a re-profiling of ILS that required the removal of patrons who have not used their library in the previous (pre-pandemic) 5 years, which decreased CTLS's number of registered users. Mary Kay Moran summarized that overall, CTLS is doing well with circulation and programming, exceeding required collections expenditures, and the Annual Report did not reveal anything unexpected. Myron Goldman and Mary Kay Moran discussed the changes to the makeup of the state formula used to calculate the operating revenue in the Annual Report.

Standards: CTLS files the Annual Report with the state to confirm that the Library System meets all the criteria, based on official census data, to receive state aid, including expenditures, staffing numbers and operating hours. The La Mott Free Library fell short of having 20 hours per week open to the public, but the state approved a waiver to account for that standard. The formulas and standards used to compile the Annual Report change every year, and each statistic and number must be updated each year. CTLS gathers statistics throughout the year by tracking monthly forms submitted by the librarians and conducts midyear reviews and collections expenditure checks during the fall to ensure that the Library System is meeting its internal yearly targets and is on track to meet state standards.

Town Hall during National Library Week: Board members discussed the plan to hold the Town Hall as an annual state of the library report during National Library Week in April. The Town Hall will provide the public with an annual update on the strategic plan, with an additional focus on facilities needs this year. Julie Haywood proposed having stations with youth librarians, adult services librarians, and a Library Board overview. The External Affairs Committee with Jesse Gallagher and Courtney Heinerici will coordinate with Mary Kay Moran and confer with Julie Haywood for Board input as needed.

Facilities: Mary Kay Moran introduced the possibility of installing a split system in the East Cheltenham Library to allow us to heat just the library and extend the time the library could be open in the interim between the Township's facilities decision and the time the plans are enacted. With a split system, the library could open in April when the water is back on and close in November when the building winterizing process begins. The Board discussed the cost, timeline, return on investment and the possibility of holding a specific fundraiser and agreed to investigate the costs of installing a split system. Mary Kay Moran will get an estimate from TRIAC when they visit East Cheltenham to check the mold levels. TRIAC expects the air conditioning unit at East Cheltenham will continue to work for another few years.

Questions/Public Comment: Teresa Camerota asked whether the split system discussion would apply to La Mott as well. Mary Kay Moran explained that the Township has informed the La Mott Community Center that they are working on a grant to replace/repair the heating system and allow the Community Center to stay open year-round, so this would just be a possible solution for the East Cheltenham

Library. Teresa Camerota asked whether CTLS supports the year-round opening of the LM library, and added that their La Mott group is looking forward to holding opening events, story hours and special events to promote the library. Gerry Brown asked if CTLS will be increasing La Mott's weekly hours to 20. Mary Kay Moran responded that we would like to and are waiting to hear from the Township if they will have staff in the building. Julie Haywood added that the Library Board is in favor of opening the East Cheltenham and La Mott libraries for as many months as possible given the facilities concerns.

Education:

- **Short History of CTLS:** Mary Kay Moran guided the Board through a short history of the Cheltenham Township Library System. Throughout the 20th century there were several independent public libraries operating in Cheltenham. When the state began giving aid to public libraries in 1968, libraries had to have a central nonprofit associated with the municipality to receive it. This organization, the CTLA, dispersed the funding equally to each library, governed by their own individual library boards. In 1966, The La Mott Reading Room, located in the La Mott Community Center, joined the CTLA as a children's branch of the Elkins Park Library. In the same year, in order to fund a new library building, the Glenside Free Library sought to receive Title 2 funds (like the Keystone Grant now). To receive these funds, the CTLA needed municipal backing. Cheltenham Township signed an ordinance, outlining how the Library Board was to be organized, the BOLDOCT adopted the bylaws, and were given fiduciary power over the system. In 1978, the East Cheltenham Library moved into the Rowland Community Center. 1981, the Elkins Park Library building opened. In 1987, the La Mott Reading Room increased their footprint, which allowed them to add the materials and hours necessary to become the L Mott Free Library.
- **Library Standards:** Mary Kay Moran informed the Board that there are no federal standards for public libraries. Pennsylvania does not have standards for staffing and collections, apart from the standards to qualify for categories of state aid. CTLS qualifies for the Incentive for Excellence of Pennsylvania standards for public libraries, including participating in Access Pennsylvania, having a collection development policy, meeting required levels of collections, expenditures, staffing and, system director certifications, etc., per capita, according to official census data. Pennsylvania does count CTLS as an integral part of the local government. Because CTLS meets or exceeds all of the excellence category standards, the library system receives higher levels of state aid.

Communications Toolkit: Mary Kay Moran has created a folder in the Google Workspace called the Communications Toolkit with talking points any Board member can use. The talking points cover the Strategic Plan and provide explanations and responses on events and issues happening in the library world, including challenges to library materials, programs and displays. Mary Kay Moran explained to the Board that public and school libraries are fielding more challenges than ever in American history from organized groups and campaigns on social media. These groups start local chapters that suggest books and passages to challenge and have written instructions on attending and disrupting school and library board meetings and running for elected office. Other area libraries like Central Bucks and Indian Valley have had troubles and lost funding. So far, Cheltenham Township has received very few disputed items. The talking points in the communication toolkit aim for a more progressive and gentle way to try to persuade and educate people about how we develop our collections and programs in an enriching, engaging and inclusive way. CTLS strives to be inclusive of all members of the Cheltenham community

and make sure the libraries are up to date and diverse. The Library System should provide “windows and mirrors”, for community members to see themselves reflected in the libraries and windows to diversity and lives and identities different than their own. CTLS wants the libraries to be the community’s living room; places where people of all identities feel safe and comfortable to spend time and engage with each other.

Mary Kay Moran outlined CTLS’s procedure if someone would like to lodge a complaint to the Board. They can visit our website or come into the library and pick up a form for reconsideration. As a library, CTLS forms a committee of relevant staff, reviews, read or views the material and then decide how to proceed. The committee then sends a letter with the decision to the complainant. If they still are not satisfied, they can then bring the matter to the Library Board. Other libraries have been creating statement of concern forms for events or programs. If a person is upset about a display or an upcoming event, they can fill out the form, which then goes directly to the library director. CTLS’s collection development policy weighs heavily for residents in Cheltenham Township or business owners in Cheltenham.

- **Public Comment:** Teresa Camerota asked about the censorship issue and the disputes about Critical Race Theory in libraries and schools. Julie Haywood explained that the term has been misused and equated as a stand-in to object to Black History in schools.

Outreach and Closing Comments: Julie Haywood shared the La Mott Times, a newsletter and list of activities, and has been sharing the newsletter and calendar with local elected representatives. Julie Haywood and Mary Kay Moran are hoping to coordinate a time with the Cheltenham School District for Mary Kay Moran to share the work that CTLS, the youth librarians, and Laila and the Teen Advisory Board have done in the school district. Jessika McLaughlin made a dashboard for the Board to track the progress of Board, Strategic Plan and committee goals, which will be coming to the Board soon.

Upcoming Meetings:

- The next Governance Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, April 10 at 6:00 PM.
- The next Internal Affairs Committee Meeting will be held on Zoom on Monday, April 10 at 4:00 PM.
- External Affairs TBA.
- The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 24 at 7:00 PM, location TBA.

Motion: Myron Goldman moved to adjourn the meeting, Julie Haywood seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned.

No executive session was held after this meeting.