

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2020
LOLITA K. ADAIR BOARD ROOM – MAIN LIBRARY

President James Casey called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library to order at 9:03 am in the board room of the Main Library. The following members of the Board answered the roll call: James Casey, Angela Neeley, William Rich, Bernard Rochford, and Ray Weber. Jill Darlington and James Frola were absent. Present from Library staff were Pam Hickson-Stevenson, Michelle Scarpitti, Lisa Peercy, Carl Roxbury, and Barb White.

Mr. Weber moved, seconded by Mr. Rochford, to adopt the agenda. The roll call vote followed: Mr. Casey, Ms. Neeley, Mr. Rich, Mr. Rochford and Mr. Weber all voted aye. The motion carried. 20-07
AGENDA

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that it was a hectic morning, but it is good for us to be here. She then presented the rich history of libraries in Summit County, showing when the branches were established and when the current buildings were built. Coventry and Manchester merged to form Portage Lakes branch in 1961. North Hill dates back to 1927, Highland Square to 1930. The newest branch is Springfield-Lakemore, which was established in February 2018. She was not sure when the shopping complex was built. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that she was able to get a message to a contact at Goodyear, who informed their CEO Rich Kramer about the 20th anniversary. He sent a very nice congratulatory letter, and he also informed all of their local associates about the event at Goodyear Branch. HISTORICAL
LIBRARY
INFORMATION

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said she thought it would be interesting to discuss the history of the number of times the Library was on the ballot. She thanked Mr. Hawk and Mr. Jennings for their records she accessed with a little tweaking. The Library has been on the ballot eleven times and has won nine of those elections. The current \$80 million bond issue that was used for all the building projects comes off the rolls this year. A failed levy attempt was made in November of 1961, but passed in May, 1962. Did not do a deep dive to determine the causes. The one that failed in 2003 involved a lot of publicity regarding Mr. Hawk's salary. Mr. Hawk also decided the thing to do was a stealth campaign, sliding under the radar. Mr. Weber asked if the Library was going to be on with the presidential election this November. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said "please no" A discussion was held and it was decided that a primary or special election would be the better time than a general election and that it was too late to plan for this November.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said she realized it is 2020, but the Library does not yet have all of the data compiled to present the 2019 statistics. It is early for that type of compilation. In addition, there have been issues with connectivity with Mobile Services and the new manager learning the position. Mr. Weber asked what was the population for the areas ASCPL serves vs. the general population. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that the official service population area is around 360,000 people so the 318,163 cardholders is a fairly high percentage. The state of Ohio does allow anyone who lives in Ohio to obtain a library card at any library in Ohio. She stated that she knew that there were people from Portage, Wayne, and other counties that have a card for Akron-Summit County Public Libraries. STATISTICS

The next slide showed some of the activity at the Library. The over 7,500 programs listed are only library programs, does not include outside events that rent space for meetings, etc. The Library does also keep track of the outside use, but they are not included in the count. There were almost 203,000 attendees for the library's programs.

The next chart shows what library people across the country know, the public uses libraries even more to save money when the economy is bad. In times of economic distress when people are laid off, downsized, dealing with a wage freeze or cut, so they cancel cable, Netflix, magazine and newspaper subscriptions. Those are all things they can get at a library. More recently the circulation numbers have declined, which correlates with the economy picking up. This is not an isolated issue. These numbers are matched by other libraries.

Mr. Weber asked if the numbers for earlier years – 2007 to 2009 were available. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that she could get it. He asked if the numbers would have been building in those years. She stated she thought they might have been, but didn't want to say that 2010 was the highest. The numbers get hard to read if there are too many bars on the chart. Mr. Rochford asked if the cuts as far as hours on Sunday might have had an effect on the numbers. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that the cuts to the budget for collection development has more of a long-term effect, it takes a while to recover from buying less books or less copies of a book. Normally another copy is purchased when the wait per copy reaches 3, during this period it was changed to 5. The number is higher for eBooks as the cost of them is higher than physical books. Mr. Weber stated that on the opposite side of that the Library knows what is checked out, how long it has been checked out. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that new copies are purchased if the covers get "icky", or weed them out and sell them. She also stated that staff have made concerted efforts through merchandising, programming, displays, community outreach, social media, working with customers to get their fines down to create a positive relationship with them. The staff have embraced the idea that the Library wants the customers to be in a relationship with us. The slate is wiped clean for children when they turn 18 if their parents took out cards in the child's name and abused the use of it by running up fines. Staff tries to make sure people know the Library wants to help them, but that it doesn't want to give away the store. The change in the fines policy also occurred in 2018, so that could also have had an impact on the uptick in circulation that year.

Mr. Rochford asked if there was a long wait list on a book, is there a way to make a recommendation of other books in the meantime, somewhat like Amazon does. One of the issues that library staff struggles with is maintaining customer privacy. If you don't do it at all, it hampers marketing. If you do some recommendations, some people may object. If you do it too much, it is creepy. Ms. White said that if a patron received an email saying we know you checked out such and such, we thought you might like this book, they might feel their privacy is being invaded.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that, by and large, the companies that cater to libraries don't have the budgets of Amazon and Google. Libraries also do not have the budgets to do a lot of slick advertising.

Registered Borrowers – the drop in 2011 was due to purging the rolls after an extensive period due to new software being installed and running for a test period to make sure all was okay. Borrowers are normally purged after at least three years of

inactivity. This Library is the first one she has worked that does not have an expiration date on cards.

The graphic shows how the use of library computers have dropped, but our Wi-Fi use has increased. She feels that people are still using our services; they are just not using our equipment.

Now to look at money. The Library currently has a 1.9 mills levy that passed in May, 2015 with nearly 70% of the vote. That was the highest margin in the history of the Library. It expires in 2021 and generates approximately \$15 million annually. The fact is that 55% of ASCPL's operating revenue comes from property taxes. This was stated earlier in the presentation, but she feels it is important to emphasize that percentage. If speaking to a receptive audience, she often tells them "imagine losing more than half of your personal/ household income; that is how devastating it would be for the Library if the levy did not pass.

FINANCES & UPCOMING LEVY

The Public Library Fund is another big part of the revenue. It is currently at 1.7% of Ohio's General Revenue Fund. That does not include fees; it is tax revenue only. It is a biennial budget process. In budget years, it is highly important to be in Columbus and talk to the legislators, but it is important in the off years also. The state is on a biennial fiscal year while the Library operates on a calendar year.

The rest of the money comes from fines, fees for tech zone and room space rental. Fines are only about 1% of the income.

When the PLF was established, it was set at 2.2% of the General Revenue Fund. It was cut to 1.66%, and then raised to 1.68%. Most recently, it was raised to 1.7%. Mr. Rochford stated that when they were doing some additional cuts they also talked about an outright cut. Libraries across the state urged their patrons to call and they shut down the phone switchboards. The Governor's email service crashed. There are a few older legislators around still that say "don't mess with librarians." As Ms. Hickson-Stevenson pointed out, the money that goes into the PLF comes from the state's revenue; the Library's fortunes rise and fall with the state. A point was made that the need goes up when things go bad, and there is even more need for operating funds. The board and Library need to keep in touch with the legislators and let them know how things stand. They tend to decrease the percentage when times get tough and the amount goes down, forgetting that when their revenue goes down, the Library's does also, even without a decrease in percentage.

The state budget is very thick, but libraries are only two lines in it.

Mr. Weber stated that when he paid his taxes he looked to see how much of his taxes went toward the library. It was not a large amount, but he felt proud of how much service people get from that small amount. He asked if it is stated somewhere that this is how much it costs per household? Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said that it is stated as so many dollars per \$100,000 home evaluation. Another tactic that libraries all over the state do is the take the amount – say \$49.00 and compare it to real life things, like a tank of gas, a gallon of milk or a loaf of bread, something people buy weekly.

One thing other libraries do, and that Ms. Hickson-Stevenson has done before is to take the annual report calculations made by looking at the categories of materials and find an average cost for an item, then multiply that by the number of circulations of that item over a year. If you have good artist or clip art, you can publish something that looks like a receipt and it lists all the items that circulated with the cost to the community if everyone had to buy everything that they had borrowed from the Library. It is very effective to show people when they consider the amount they are paying vs. the "bill". Sometimes even people that do not use the Library think "Gosh, think of all

the people who are benefitting from the Library. That is a very small price for a really important community good.”

Mr. Casey suggested if people wanted to cut something, cut their gym memberships they are not using and support the levy.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson introduced the Revenue and Expenditure chart. A levy brings in more money in the beginning than the expenditures and the surplus is banked. At some point in the trajectory the lines cross. Then the expenditure become higher than the revenue and the earlier banked funds are used to keep things operating until the next levy. The Library is getting to that point now. In those years where the Library was trying to cut back on expenditures there were many things that didn't get done, particularly capital needs. This will be discussed later, but there were deferred maintenance issues, combined with the ages of the buildings. Mr. Rochford stated that he didn't know the gap between revenue and general fund was as large as it is. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that when the Library was on the ballot in 2010 with the same millage as before, there was actually a million dollar loss due to property values dropping so much.

Just for information, she presented what peer metro libraries have received from their local levies. A discussion was held regarding the various amount of millage among them. The Columbus Metro Director makes more than Cleveland Public Director (which covers only the Cleveland Public School District). A comment was made that Cleveland Public Library has issues with security in their buildings. It is believed that they only have their own security staff, not local police presence as ASCPL does. This is looking at only at the millage, not the dollars. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson does not have the average cost of homes.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that Cuyahoga does not have any association libraries, where ASCPL has three, the highest number in the counties in Ohio. The others in Summit are 501C3 organizations. The question of merging is not something the Library would pursue; it is something the other libraries would have to go after.

ASCPL has the second lowest millage on the graph. Of the ones on the list, there are three that count the entire county as their service area. They are Youngstown (501c3), Cincinnati (county) and Toledo (county). They each receive 100% of their county's PLF and 100% coverage for their operating area. Theoretically, if you included Hudson and Peninsula, the home values are higher. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that Youngstown has a smaller population. Dayton does have a bond issue, the most recent. The data collected was only for operating levies.

Mr. Weber said that Cuyahoga Falls Library is not touched by this, but they come to Akron's libraries. It has been a practice for decades – the Library doesn't charge for out-of-district library cards, everyone pays property tax. Active library users are fluid in how they use their libraries. People who work in libraries are, almost without fail, exceedingly sharing and open, and she thinks it goes back to interlibrary loans of materials.

In recognition that Ms. Neeley might not know it, Peninsula Library receives a portion of the operating levies due to boundaries, as it cannot be separated from our service area. Therefore, residents of Peninsula vote on the levy. Akron put a levy on the ballot and started collecting. They get a portion of the operating levy and are enthusiastic supporters of us with yard signs and votes.

The next slide shows countywide agencies that are “competitors”, but that is loosely stated, as staffs support each other and all try not to be on the ballot at the same time.

Coming up with all of the school districts would be difficult to get them all. The board would like to know what schools would be on the ballot against us in 2021. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson will try to find out if there are any.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated she wanted to complement Mr. Roxbury on pulling all of the upcoming data together, as none of it existed before. He assembled it from multiple sources. After talking about capital needs earlier, this will give some great concrete information on why this is a concern.

CURRENT AND
FUTURE
NEEDS/DESIRES

The first slide is general information. The listing is in chronological order of when the buildings were built. There was a class of '99 when six branches and in 2004 five were built, including Main. The Library hasn't built anything new in 12 years.

GENERAL
INFORMATION

Mr. Weber asked that other than normal wear and tear, what kind of shape are the buildings in?

Mr. Roxbury stated that, on the whole, they are in good shape. The buildings do have issues, they show the wear and tear of 12 or more years – paintwork/case work??, carpeting, ??? roof. Some of that is coming home to roost. Actually, the two oldest buildings physically are in fairly good shape. Portage Lakes got a new roof a few years ago. Norton, because of its age, probably needs one. All of the roofs will be inspected in the spring to have a good idea of the condition of them. The question was asked if HVAC will also be inspected them. Mr. Roxbury replied yes and no – Some of them are getting to the end of life. They are outside all of the time. Not all of them run the same number of hours, and some buildings have 3 or 4 rooftop units. Some run harder than others because they cover larger areas. Mr. Roxbury will have all units checked by a mechanic.

The same chart shows the capacity of the larger meeting (community) rooms and the smaller conference rooms. The Main Library was not included as it did not fit the parameters of this chart as far as the meeting spaces.

The next chart shows the sq. footage and the age of the carpet. The Library has done some carpet replacement, but Mogadore and Odom are dealing with the original carpeting from 1999. The branches from the early 2000's also have the original carpeting with the exception of Tallmadge and the Main Library meeting room wing, which was \$48,000. Mr. Roxbury wanted to emphasize that the replacement estimates are just that, estimates. That needs to be kept in mind for all of the dollar amounts that are estimated.

The amount listed for Main includes the wing that has been replaced, as a total area was used in the calculations. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson subtracted that area out of the total and calculated that it would be over \$1,000,000 to replace the rest of the carpet at Main. It might be slightly less as this includes the hard surface areas that are tiled currently. That is why it is important to realize that they are estimates. It looks to be approximately \$50,000 a branch and over a million for the rest of Main. Tallmadge had the carpet replaced in its entirety, the rest were just the meeting rooms. This is part of what she has been emphasizing, which is the whole issue for deferring or delaying. Tallmadge did not wear well and it was a light color, so it looked terrible within twelve years. Mr. Rochford asked if carpet squares are used now to be easier to replace a damaged area. Mr. Roxbury replied that all of the buildings have carpet tiles now.

Good quality carpet is used, but it all depends on the color and fabric as to how long it will last. The carpet was cleaned recently, but have not had the money to have it cleaned as often as it should.

Next slide looks at paving, another costly subject. Portage Lakes was replaced in 2017. It was a full depth repair that cost a little under \$200,000. Green was repaired in 2019, and the board probably remembers the story that it looked like the contractors were walking on a waterbed after the asphalt was removed. Fortunately, that bid came in lower than anticipated and the Library had the capacity to cover the overage. There has been an agreement reached between the contractor, the consultant that oversaw it and the Library, so that is going to be closed out shortly. Mogadore is scheduled for 2020. That is going to be a challenge, as there is uncertainty about the drainage and that they might find some clay. It is known there will have to be some underground work to be done. Tallmadge, Highland Square and Kenmore are shared, so we are not sure of the amount of responsibility we have there. Although there are no lots or decks that Main Library is responsible for, there is an annual payment made to the city for parking reimbursement for the customers. She clarified that the costs are not immediately, this is looking at years ahead and what needs to be planned for in terms of expenses. Mr. Casey gave his thanks for the sealing and striping of the Maple Valley lot.

PAVING

Next discussion is the HVAC. Again, with the two oldest branches there is not a cost for them, as it is known that they will require major renovations. They are the most unique, being inclusive. They have what is called a hot back/cold back system where there is a heated section and a cooled section and the computer decides which way to send the air to either heat or cool. They are two of the most reliable systems the Library has, but they are also the most utility using systems we have. It is going to take a lot of engineering to retrofit with as much of the existing ductwork as possible. The boilers are getting near end of life, but the rest of the systems are not in terrible condition. The Portage Lakes condenser is rusty, but functions fine. The Library is not looking at replacing immediately, but will need to decide whether to repair/replace parts on the two oldest systems or update to more efficient models. Did not get an estimate on Main Library because it would be a shot in the dark. We do not know what the cost would be to lift the chiller off the roof and a new one up into its place. When we did the water tower in 2016, it was about \$45,000 just to get a crane out here and put it on the roof. Another option is that once Main Street construction is done, the Library connects to Akron Energy LLC Heating and Cooling System. The question is does the Library maintain it ourselves or let Akron Energy handle it. They are going to stub it out to near the property line when they do Main Street so we would have the option.

HVAC

Evaluations will be obtained. Hopefully will all be handled by one consultant. That does not mean immediate action will be taken.

Roofing: Mr. Roxbury has proposals from roofing consultants and is reviewing those, is close to a decision. The Library will be planning a roof evaluation project this spring.

ROOFING

We have a mixture of flat and gabled roofs at most of the locations. It depends on what mechanicals were designed at the time as to whether they are grounded or on the roof. Flat roofs are easy to walk on, so something could be stepped on that would puncture the membrane and cause a leak. They are easy to fix, but take a lot more wear and tear. Gabled roofs are not walked on as much, so they hold up better. Some are steel; some

are wood shingles or regular shingles. Regular ones are rarely walked on, so they are in better shape.

Mr. Rochford said he was approached by someone doing solar panels and asked if that was something that was ever considered. Mr. Roxbury said they had gotten a quote at one time under Mr. Jennings, but given the amount of wear and tear on the roof, he would hesitate to do it. Main Library is probably the only one with enough sq. footage of roof to make it worthwhile to reduce the energy. Otherwise, he would prefer to put them over parking lots or on the lawn areas. They can be serviced more easily and are not damaging the buildings. In most locations we have plenty of yard space. It could certainly be done over parking lots, but it gets more expensive to install. Mr. Rochford said the company that talked to him said they would come in and install with no upfront cost, but we would have to enter into a 20-year agreement to purchase the energy. He had no idea of the accuracy of their quote or if it would ever be considered. Mr. Roxbury said it was something that could be looked at, but he is hesitant to get involved in anything that long term, as regardless of the funding, that agreement stays in place and we have to pay the cost. Also, he does not know if we would be able to produce enough energy at any location to run the building completely.

Exterior Ground Signs: Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said that signs are very important for an organization like this. We have no electronic signs on Main Library, with the exception of the open/closed sign for the drive-up window, nor on Tallmadge, Fairlawn-Bath, Richfield or Northwest Akron. Richfield will not be able to have one, as long as their director of planning continues to state that he will not allow LED or signs like on the Knight Convention Center in the city. Fairlawn-Bath is on the border of the two cities. It has been several years since we have approached Bath about it and are not sure of the current zoning status, but they are a good candidate for a sign like that and are right across from Summit Mall, so are not sure what the issue is. Tallmadge was an issue of being in the historic district, but with all the construction going on, we need to check the zoning and see if we can get a variance. Something has to be done at Tallmadge, as it is a wooden sign and is in bad shape. Northwest Akron is a joint use facility, so it has to be discussed with the city to change that. The thing that gives pause on that is if it is a messaging sign that the Library paid for and allowed the Community Center to have their name on it, would the Library be compelled to allow them to use the video sign or could we reserve it just for the Library?

SIGNAGE

It was stated that these types of signs are better in high traffic areas, and some of them are in less traveled areas. However, it is a persistent fact that even people that use the Library do not know all that is going on in it. It is just one more avenue for communicating with them. It is a lower priority to branches like that than others such as Highland Square or Fairlawn-Bath. When we originally put them in, we were offered a more robust type of sign that was against city code at that time. Soon afterwards, the convention center put theirs up. One of the primary pet peeves is that the signage on Main Library is either bad or non-existent. We hear regularly from new customers that they drove around the block looking for the library. This issue is not included in this list. It was suggested that we put book bindings on the outside of the parking deck like the Kansas City Library.

Security Video System: They are very old, and with what feels like a growth in security issues the staff face – we had a domestic violence issue at a branch last week. It is not the first one either. The cameras can be helpful in that regard, but when they are the original black and white from 1999, they are not very helpful. This is not as expensive as some of the other capital things discussed, but it does add up. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated that she has concerns about the safety of the customers and

SECURITY
SYSTEMS

of the staff. We can see all of the cameras here at main in the security booth. The length of time the tape loop lasts depends on the traffic there. They vary from two weeks to a month. They are motion activated.

Lighting: The company that Mr. Roxbury talked with are like the solar company, they will replace the lighting in the building and we repay it in the savings we get in the electric bill over an extended period. He has been reluctant to do that. We have been doing this with contractors and we have control over what is installed. The savings are all the Library's. The two buildings that we did completely, PL and Norton, had T-12 lamps, which are now outlawed. All of the other buildings have a mixture of lights.

LIGHTING

We have been changing them to reduce the amount of time spent changing light bulbs, as we have thousands of them. So the more we get to an LED base for all of the buildings, the less the cost of buying lamps and installing them. There would be a savings all the way around, both in energy and maintenance. We are concentrating on outside lamps currently, as that is a bigger security issue in the wintertime, so as many as possible are being converted to LED. They are quick to replace, but the LEDs for them are more expensive because they are bigger in size. It is all limited by the amount of budget available. He confirmed that the cost for Norton and Portage Lakes was the entire fee for the changeover. The disparity in cost was due to having to change the tombstones at Portage Lake because of taking pictures. We can begin changing over Main Library, as they have begun making a T5 LED, which it was originally set up to use.

The next slides reflect a laundry list of requests suggested by the staff, with some editing. A variety of things are either needed and/or wanted to keep the library improving and as innovative as possible. This group will go over the list. A number of these were on the spreadsheets.

STAFF REQUESTS

The first one is a new fire panel alarm and sensor system. The problem with a lot of them is the age of the devices in the building. At Green Branch, there is a smoke detector that is "in alarm" mode. It is not known which smoke detector it is, so facilities have to go up there and physically touch each one until they find the one that is failing. In the building test ---?? Between that and the alarm panel ageing to the point of being nearly obsolete, the Library has to look at completely rebuilding or replacing some of the equipment. It is like computers, it has electronic technology and a limited lifespan. New equipment was able to be put in at Springfield-Lakemore because it was a new construction. When the staff comes into the building, they don't have to turn the lights on. When the code is entered to drop the alarm, the lights come on automatically. In almost all of the other buildings, there is a timer of some type, some of it is microlife (?), some are mechanical timers that turn off the lights. There are times when the lights are on and there is no staff in the building. Mr. Roxbury would like to move forward to putting the same thing in other branches. Lights will come on/go off with the code, the same for when the custodian comes in and leaves. The problem currently is that the alarm panels are so old that they do not have an output that can be used to trigger the lights, which is part of the reason he is asking for new panels to allow that functionality. Another is that facilities can't communicate with all of the branch systems. As they are isolated buildings, they can't be plugged into the network and looked at from another location. It is a nice to have, but it would give some large savings and ----. Like laptops, the technology becomes obsolete.

FIRE ALARMS AND SENSORS

Security systems and exterior signage have already been discussed earlier.

Interior signage, particularly at Main, is problematic on a number of levels. The current metal hanging signs have not been changed since the reorganization a few years ago and refer to areas incorrectly. At the service desk, some have used the laser printer in the tech zone to make signs – which is great but consistency is needed in managing it. We have talked for years about what type of signage to have. Sometimes there is a benefit to hiring someone who is a specialist to help figure out what to do as far as the designing and branding consistency. That would not be a big expense, but with commitment to other budget items, it is somehow difficult to spend on the occasional expenses.

INTERIOR
SIGNAGE

Roofs, Carpeting, HVA and Parking lots were discussed.

On the day of the ribbon cutting at Springfield-Lakemore, as soon as the ribbon was cut a council member/trustee asked, “When are we going to get a building, a real branch here?” This was added to the list not because of strong feelings one way or another, but that the question will have to be addressed. A decision will have to be made and will have to be dealt with. The second anniversary is approaching, so a study of the data as far as circulation and door counts needs to be done. Although there are five years left on that lease, if there is truly going to be a building, now is the time to start designing – in the next year or two at most. The timeline is already getting tight between the end of the lease and the length of time to open the doors to a new building.

SPRINGFIELD-
LAKEMORE
BRANCH

Bookmobile: average replacement cost is between \$200,000-250,000. There is no money set aside for that or for anything else other than the contingency to be used as the years go by. Whatever is done in terms of the levy and the PLF, Ms. Hickson-Stevenson would like to see money being set aside into a capital fund, a vehicle replacement fund, and a technology fund that could be dedicated to some special projects beyond the scope of the general operating budget. It is a kind of safety net to know there are funds socked away for future projects rather than having to scramble or to figure out where something is going to come out in the context of the operating budget.

BOOKMOBILE(S)

Michelle stated that it speaks to when you have this much money in the bank, that is what the intent is – that money was put aside for a specific purpose. We are not collecting money just to collect money. There is a timeline and planning can be started for a few years out. David was very good at doing it in his head, but it is easier and better for planning for everybody to be on the same page. It was pretty much a one-year plan for everyone else. It would be good to have it laid out.

One of the bookmobiles was purchased used from Wadsworth. Bookmobiles are designed and built at the manufacturers. One the Library has is a truck base and one is a bus base. The newest one here was here when Mr. Roxbury started 12 years ago. The biggest problem for them in Ohio is rust. The bookmobiles serve schools, community stops, AMHA housing developments. ADHD stops. Also, the generators wear out and have to be replaced. The mobile services staff have such a heart for serving those who might not receive library services if it were not for them.

Furniture Replacement – Furniture wears out, we have to plan for that.

Ethernet Cable Replacements – All locations.

Main Library Physical Reorganization – The main Library division managers are eager to undertake this. One of the things that has been discussed is doing away with

REORGANIZE

subject differentiation and getting things in Dewey order and making the collection more accessible to make it easier to get what is needed. There would still be subject specialists to help people find what they need, but would focus on the collection more as an entire unit, rather than being divided up. It would also have the benefit of having a reduction in number of service desks. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson has mixed feelings about it, as there is a proud tradition in Akron and at Main of having librarians who have specialties and dig in to get information for people. The way people seek information from a public library has changed a lot, there is not the same level of reference business there was in the past. She stated that there was a completely separate reference division that mainly did triage. It doesn't work that way today. The managers recognize the changing landscape of public library services. The librarians state that there are reference questions clumped at two ends of the spectrum. They are either so easy that it seems the patrons do not have access to the internet. Others are "nightmare" reference questions that seems the person tried to find answers themselves, and then called the Library. This is currently a big building with multiple service points that costs a lot of money to staff every hour that we are open. However, it is a huge project to reorganize and, in the opinion of much of the staff, it would make sense to have someone come in with experience with interior design. Staff could slog through it, but the cost is what would/could not be done while staff is devoted to that.

Museum: Dave Lieberth is interested in establishing a museum devoted to Akron. Main Library is one of his top choices for the location. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson thinks it is an interesting idea and is willing to discuss further. She does not agree with everything he wants to do, but it does have merit. Historical Societies all over the country are struggling – they are non-profit and do not have a sustainable source of funding to keep them going. Collections from historical societies might be rolled in. She would appreciate if this were not mentioned outside of the room, as she is not sure who else is aware of this. It would also be another reason for people to come to the library.

MUSEUM

Staff would love to expand the Makerspaces concept in a smaller fashion in branches that would have equipment and training needs.

ADDITIONAL
THOUGHTS

There was a suggestion for virtual conferences that we do not currently have the technology for, but would be a draw for people who want to hold meetings here. It is an option worth exploring at least.

Would love to see specialty cleaning increased, such a carpeting.

RFID and Material Sorting System – many libraries have gone over to this as opposed to barcodes. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson did some quick calculations – 2.4 million items x cost of RFID tags would be between \$500-\$800,000. It makes self-check and inventory much easier. We can function without it, but it would be much nicer with it. It has eliminated some staff positions, but it is not to get rid of staff but to make service more efficient. It would give us a little more freedom regarding filling positions.

Loaning mobile hotspots – Many libraries do this. Staff is often asked if we will be doing this. It is a popular service. Using T-Mobiles estimate – loaning 10 devices each out of the 21 locations. We do not pay for the device but for the contract. If we did this for a year, it would cost us \$75,000 a year. We have talked about it for three years, but cannot justify the cost.

SERVICES AND
INITIATIVES

Loaning laptops, having self-checkout and self-pick-up of holds have all been discussed. There are privacy issues to get around on the last item, and lockers in secure places with a code have been discussed.

Library Materials Vending Machines: NEOCOM has a connection with Portage County Library. Like a red box but free.

More digitization of history resources – has been hit or miss coverage by grants. It is a unique niche for libraries.

Outdoor Wi-Fi, Early Literacy Spaces and expanded library of things are all desired services.

Almost all related to software. The Library is really behind in terms of automated processes and procedures. Some things can be done in-house, but there is a lot out there that handles things without human interaction.

Security of materials – that is simply zip ties, but we ship so much that it would be a huge expense. We do not secure them at all now. It is known materials are missing, but are not sure when they are going missing. This is also another reason for RFID!

Staffing – There is no in-house function for grant writing for funds right now.

Sr. Citizen Specialist – with the emphasis on Age Friendly Akron and with Summit County considering it. We think it would be helpful. It is a position that could be filled in-house. We have been cultivating a relationship with Direction House.

Volunteer Coordinator – We don't have a volunteer program, but it would be a big job with 19 locations. The only volunteers are volun-teens that help with summer reading.

Social Worker – Another area for possible collaboration with other agencies. Help with homeless, train staff, have trained person to have office hours to refer people.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson stated she is sorry for talking so long, but feel it is critically important for the trustees to have an understanding of these things because the decision making comes down to the board.

Mr. Rochford thinks it is important as the Library looks at the next 5-10 years to what will be needed to accomplish much of what we need/want to do. Do we go to a higher millage, or do we go to a capital improvement.

Definitely worth exploring, but only hesitation is another levy campaign for which funds need to be raised. It is exhausting and draining, and if we have an operating levy next year, we would then be looking at maybe two years to work on a permanent improvement levy. It is a significant endeavor. There are advantages and disadvantages, one of which is that a permanent improvement levy has many restrictions for what the funds can be used. A general operating levy gives the organization a lot more freedom on how those funds are spent.

Mr. Rochford said he agreed with that, we could tell the public what we are going to do with it. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said we have an excellent track record.

Michelle – It plays as well that we have direction and discussion with the board; that the board elects to have these separate funds, this is how we are budgeting, we are approving these transfers, we want to have this amount as our intent where they can see year to year that we are fulfilling what we said was our intent.

Has any organization ever gone back and said they were going to use the money for something else? Yes, they have, and it is probably be easier to do at a library. They would probably be questioned, but it could be done as library boards have a lot of discretion.

Any other pieces of info or lines of thought you would like answered? Next steps?

ORGANIZA-
TIONAL INFRA-
STRUCTURE

With the changes contemplating at Main, would that open up floor space for other services we had talked about? - It could, yes.

Instead of having your own social worker, would you work with a satellite agency? Yes, and we will most likely have space opening up with old A-V materials going away. Streaming services are growing, including those we provide.

Do we have a device that takes VHS and puts it on different media? - Yes, it is in the tech zone, it is in real time.

In addition, we did not even discuss improvements in the tech zone.

Mr. Rich said the most important next thing is to figure out how much money will be needed if we do X, Y and Z; and if we also do A, how much more do we need? Then think about what is politically realistic. The economy is doing well right now, so we are in a different position right now than we were in the past. People feel differently about the Library than they do about the city. They love the Library, but that doesn't mean they are going to vote for that. Mr. Weber said they love it because of the board we have.

Mr. Rich said that the Library has a higher level of trust that they are going to use its money well. We are on the same level as a city or a governmental unit.

Mr. Weber: When we are going on the ballot, have we ever had any organized opposition? He doesn't recall ever seen a sign saying don't vote for the Library. Mr. Rochford said not since he arrived here. Mr. Weber said not in his memory.

Mr. Rochford remembered a lot of media angst during the most recent failure and knows it was around the director, and it was under the radar, but there were some real negative feelings. Knew that it was going to fail, based on articles in the newspaper. Knew there was some mistrust, Lolita had stated that there were some inaccurate statements being made about that bond issue and how much was being spent, and there was a difference on how much was being spent on the actual construction and how much was being spent on architects fees and construction management. The building money was used up more quickly than had been expected/planned. There were vague statements about possible new branches in areas like Springfield-Lakemore and Copley for instance. She thinks there were hard feelings about that, and there may have been issues about salary too. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson learned the other day that at one point Steve's salary was higher than the mayor's salary, which the mayor used to lever for a higher salary. Barb recalls the same things. Steve had a way of attracting attention that was not beneficial to the library, but that has not been a problem at all since then.

Tentative library timeline – Ms. Hickson-Stevenson will email them to board members.

Have not made any overtures to Citizens for Library's Future. Treasurer is Jan Everitt. Balance is about \$38-39,000.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson gave credit to David for leaving flash drives that helped her create her presentation.

Campaign is a one and done for the Library, the friends could handle other events such as the 5K race done to support Orion House. Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said that Mrs. Adair always wanted to do something to support the endowment fund. It is definitely worth exploring, but requires a really good core of volunteers due to the lack of extra time for staff.

We will continue to refine the cost estimates, which will still be somewhat rough due to the number of variables. We will also need to be in touch with the county fiscal office due to a reevaluation coming up. We will then have a better idea of replacement levels.

A lot has been covered today, some really great information shared.

We will also have to consider the cost of a special election charge back. Mr. Rich will check to see the approximate cost. We don't want to take the risk of waiting until November and running out of money. Expect some push back from the media on the cost of special election, but will beat the alternative. Mr. Weber said we need to get out in the limelight so the public sees that good things we are doing as a lead-up to the election.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson said that on a happy note, but not concrete yet, she asked about First Energy supporting an e-Tuk. Her contact will be putting her in touch with someone regarding applying for a grant from them, since it is an electric vehicle.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.