Draft Minutes  
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
North Country Library System  
June 25th, 2020

PRESENT: Duane Hughes, Nelson Schwartzentruber, Jerilyn Fairman, Carolyn Mosier, David Bradford, Keith Caughlin, Emily Blauvelt, Kathleen Mantaro, Linda Kenny

STAFF: Susan Mitchell, Margo Shepard, Matt Corey, Ashley Brimmer

President Hughes called the meeting to order at 4:31 P.M.

1. **Approval of Agenda**  
   Motion by Fairman, Seconded by Mosier to approve the June 25th, 2020 agenda as presented.  
   *Unanimously Passed and Carried.*

2. **Welcome & Introduction of Guests**  
   President Hughes welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. **Public Comments**  
   No public comments were made.

4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**  
   Motion by Caughlin, Seconded by Schwartzentruber to approve the April 30th, 2020 and May 28th, 2020 meeting minutes as presented.  
   *Unanimously Passed and Carried.*

5. **Financial Reports: May 2020**  
   A. **May 2020 Financial Reports**  
      Shepard presented to the board the financial reports for May 2020.  
      A. **Receipts:** Shepard presented the receipts for May 2020.  
      B. **Expenditures:** She also presented the expenditures and check run for May 2020.  
      C. **Status of Investments:** Shepard reported that as of May 31st, 2020 NCLS had total cash and investments of $2,279,866.52 as reported on the May cash flow report. FDIC and third-party securities covered all investments.

      Motion by Caughlin, Seconded by Schwartzentruber to accept the financial reports for May 2020.  
      *Unanimously Passed and Carried.*
6. Reports
   A. Director’s Reports
   Mitchell presented the following:
   - Mitchell updated the board on the reopening of member libraries. Some libraries are starting to reopen for curbside pickup. So far the transition has gone smoothly. Libraries are receiving some pressure to reopen their buildings to the public, but most are waiting to ensure they can meet safety and cleaning requirements before opening.
   - She also updated the board on the reopening of the NCLS building. NCLS is only allowing up to 10 staff members in the building at any one time. NCLS has also included a check in station before entering the building and sanitizing stations throughout the building. Signage has been hung in the entrance and throughout the building in compliance with regulations and the NYS safety plan.
   - Mitchell also updated the board on the PPP Loan that NCLS received. Stating that we are crunching the numbers to see whether it will be beneficial to extend the use of the loan from 8 weeks to 24 weeks.
   - She stated that NCLS has been working closely with United Way of Northern New York who supplied not only NCLS but also member libraries with cleaning supplies and PPE.
   - Mitchell stated that we are starting to hear bits and pieces about the cut to state aid. As of right now there has been no word as to how much or when the Governor will be cutting state aid. The last time there was a cut to funding NCLS received most of the state aid but the final percentage that usually comes at the end of the year did not arrive. There was talk that this may be how the funding goes this year as well.

   B. Consultant’s Report
   Corey presented the following:
   - There were 12 libraries that went out on the school ballot and were successful in obtaining sustainable funding. The total awarded was $164,000 with a 92% success rate.
   - Corey stated that this morning he had hosted a Library Advocacy Focus Group for member libraries to discuss how to advocate and ultimately be more successful with their funding campaigns.
   - He stated that after many discussions with Ogdensburg Public Library, Flower Memorial Library and the Central Library Advisory Committee a decision was made to pursue moving away from the co-central library model. The main concern is that Ogdensburg has been struggling to meet the financial requirements of the state as a co-central library and may fail maintenance of effort. This in turn jeopardizes the funding for not only Ogdensburg but Central Library Aid in total as well as NCLS state aid. Mitchell has contacted the DLD about starting the removal process.
   - A shared calendar has been posted for Online Summer Reading Programs across the system. This will allow patrons to see and participate in any
program being offered by member libraries in our region. NCLS has also distributed yard signs promoting Summer Reading.

7. **Board Committee Reports**

   A. **Executive Committee**
      The committee stated they have no new business to share with the board.

   B. **Finance Committee**
      The committee stated that they met on June 23rd to discuss some of the upcoming issues that our budget will be facing. This is considering the minimum cut of 20% to state aid. Along with how the cuts this year will affect our budget going into 2021.

   C. **Personnel Committee**
      The committee stated they have no new business to share with the board.

   D. **Nominating Committee**
      The committee stated that as of January 1st, 2021 both Schwartzentruber and Bradford will be ending their first terms on the NCLS board. Since both have agreed to stay on for another term there will be no need to solicit board nominations this year.

8. **Old Business**
   There was no old business to report on.

9. **New Business**

   A. **NCLS Budget Revisions**
      Mitchell and Shep ard presented the 2020 budget revisions.

      **Motion** by Schwartzentruber, Seconded by Caughlin to request the budget revisions reflect a projected 30% cut to funding to state aid.

      **Unanimously Passed and Carried.**

      a. **Discussion on 2021 Budget**
      NCLS expects to be faced with substantial budget cuts in 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the impact that has had on the state budget. While NCLS begins the fiscal year in January, the state budget that allocates aid for that year isn’t passed until April. This year’s NYS budget included a 3% decrease in state aid to libraries and the Governor has the authority to make additional midyear adjustments. Likely projections are for cuts ranging from 20-50% by the end of the state’s fiscal year next spring.

      The COVID-19 pandemic has put additional stresses on the 2020 and 2021 budgets. NCLS is projecting a substantial decrease in revenue in 2021 and an increase in health insurance and other costs. Projections will be more
uncertain this year. NCLS is also anticipating a smaller carry over from 2020 to 2021 which creates an additional shortfall.

Mitchell presented a revised budget for 2020 which included the additional revenue from the CARES Act PPP Loan to cover 8 weeks of salaries during the closure, and about $70,000 in cuts to other budget lines. Between the cuts and the PPP loan salary offset the net effect is a 20% cut in expenses in 2020.

In addition to the projected shortfall in 2020 there is a projected shortfall in 2021 of $263,000. That is based on two assumptions: that the state cuts library aid by 20% next year and that health insurance costs increase by 20% in 2021.

There was a discussion regarding the projected cuts for this year and how to close the gap this year and next given that the discretionary lines had already been cut as far as they could go. Some of the possibilities included: healthcare cost sharing, decreasing the number of staff, and finding selling our large building and property and downsizing it so more of our revenue could go to the programmatic side of the budget.

The Finance and Personnel committees will meet to review options before the next board meeting.

Motion by Mosier, Seconded by Bradford to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 P.M.