

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
FEBRUARY 12, 2022

President Bernard Rochford called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library in the Lolita K. Adair Board Room to order at 9:09 am. The following members of the Board answered the roll call: James Casey, Jill Darlington, John Frola, Angela Neeley, William Rich, Bernard Rochford, and Ray Weber. Pamela Hickson-Stevenson, Michelle Scarpitti, Peter Schantz, and Barb White were present from the staff.

Mr. Weber moved, seconded by Ms. Neeley, to adopt the agenda. The motion was adopted without dissent.

22-22  
AGENDA

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson introduced Michelle Hillstrom, Managing Director with the Cleveland office of Stifel Public Finance. Ms. Hillstrom appeared via video conference call. During her presentation regarding library capital financing options, she provided an overview of the five methods available to the Library for securing the funds needed to address the Library’s capital needs. A voted bond issue is the most secure type of debt issuance but requires voter approval.

PRESENTATION  
ON PUBLIC  
FINANCE  
OPTIONS

Public Library Fund (PLF) Notes themselves do not require voter approval but a new levy may be required to supplant the PLF revenues that will be diverted from the General Fund to debt service. The PLF Notes would also have slightly higher issuance and interest costs than a voted issue.

Tax Anticipation Notes, a third option, would be secured by a voted permanent improvement levy. They provide a secure type of debt issuance with low expenses but require voter approval and feature a ten-year maximum maturity.

Revenue Bonds are secured by existing revenues such as a levy or the Public Library Fund. They do not require voter approval but they have higher issuance expenses, are issued by a third party taxing authority, and are complex.

Certificates of Participation (COPS) are bonds secured by existing tax revenues and would require the Library to enter into a lease-purchase agreement under which the Library would lease the renovations to certain buildings over a period of up to thirty years. COPS have higher issuance and interest costs, require additional legal documents, and are complex.

Board members discussed the various options and their advantages and disadvantages. They asked Ms. Hickson-Stevenson to find someone, probably from the County Fiscal Office, to attend a Library Board meeting and present detailed information on tax levies, including explanations of topics such as effective millage, reduction factor, and property tax rollback.

Next, Mr. Schantz reviewed a memo with notes on the preliminary facilities assessment he has conducted. He then reviewed the assessment spreadsheet that featured predicted expenses in a variety of categories for each of the Library’s nineteen locations. The categories he included on the spreadsheet are:

REVIEW OF  
PRELIMINARY  
FACILITIES  
ASSESSMENT

- building envelope (roof and flashings, exterior sealants, doors and windows, exterior finishes, and exterior cladding);
- mechanical (rooftop units, boilers, condensing units, air handlers, and other);

- building controls/automation (HVAC controls, lighting controls, access controls, surveillance systems, fire alarm systems, and burglar alarm systems);
- energy conservation measures / lighting upgrades;
- FFE (furnishings, fixtures, and equipment);
- grounds (landscape, signage, and parking lots); and
- finishes (floor coverings and wall finishes).

Mr. Schantz explained how he and the Facilities Services Department staff arrived at the estimates and how rising inflation could affect the estimates. Board members discussed the difficulty of predicting inflation. Mr. Schantz closed by saying that work on a complete assessment will be finished in June 2022.

Ms. Hickson-Stevenson introduced Kent Oliver, Director of the Nashville (TN) Public Library, who appeared via video conference call. Mr. Oliver has managed libraries in Kansas, Missouri, and Ohio. He was Executive Director of the Stark County District Library in Canton, three-time President of the Freedom to Read Foundation, and past chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association (ALA).

PRESENTATION  
ON FREEDOM TO  
READ

Mr. Oliver presented information on intellectual freedom, censorship, and the freedom to read, including a brief history of public libraries and censorship in the United States. He reviewed the following documents developed by ALA: Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement, and ALA Statement on Book Censorship. Several Board members asked questions about the role of public libraries in intellectual freedom and about school libraries.

Mr. Rochford stated there were no requests for public participation.

PUBLIC  
PARTICIPATION

Having reached the end of the agenda, Mr. Rochford adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

---

*President*

---

*Secretary*