



HCLS Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2023 ♦ 8 am
Virtual

Board members present were: Phillip Dodge, Vice Chair; Elizabeth Banach; Rob Mentz; and Kelly Smith. Also present were leadership team staff members/citizens including Ruba Abukhdeir, Dorna Anderson, Lew Belfont, Angela Brade, Mary Brosenne, Kelly Clark, Allison Jessing, Nina Krzysko, and Stephanie Shane.

I called the meeting to order at 8:05 am.

I provided background on the strategic plan development, including that the RFP was posted to our website and sent out to multiple vendors. The Due East proposal that was sent to Board members was scored highest by cabinet team members and contained items in blue that represented items added into the proposal based on additional work that we would like to have.

Much has changed since 2015, especially considering the pandemic and the myriad services provided by HCLS. Further, we have not reached out to non-user groups, which is part of the proposal. I provided anecdotal evidence of Howard County's Korean population and the many members who desire to engage more with the library but find our present service methods present some unintentional barriers.

In response to questions on the cost and the scope of the proposed plan, I explained that we endeavor to engage across the county from April to November, providing a breadth of options to participate for customers and non-users, as detailed in the document. I related that the cost is on par with other proposals and similar to work the selected vendor has done with other organizations. I further noted that there will be no learning curve to get up to speed on our county since the vendor is familiar with our region having done work here.

I shared that Board members willing to serve on the strategic plan committee should forward their names to the Chair of the HCLS Board of Trustees.

There was a request to equip Trustees with information to share with community members regarding the proposal and plan. It was noted that testimonials from other places for whom the vendor has done work would be helpful.

In response to a question on the limited number of respondents to the RFP, I related that a factor may include the pandemic and many organizations now ramping up on their strategic planning work, with many vendors are already engaged. Vendors who bid on HCLS' strategic plan have done work in libraries locally and nationally, including for libraries that are five star and have won the National Medal.

In response to a question about possible cost savings from work already done in the area, I explained that we can use some of the information already gathered but our scope is different and thus requires more extensive work. We serve 300K people, which is a larger scope than that of many organizations, and therefore a greater cost. I will make talking points available for Board members on the plan scope and justification. The Board approved the motion, including Antonia Watts who voted by proxy.

I adjourned the meeting at 8:28 am.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on **Wed., June 21, 2023**, and will be virtual unless otherwise noticed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tonya Aikens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tonya Aikens
President & CEO