Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Regional Library

Minutes of Special Board Meeting March 26, 2018
Council Chambers, Stryker Center

Attending: Board of Trustees Chair Natalie Miller-Moore; Board members Pam Franz, Chris Gareis, Vickie Herrick, Barry Marten, Jean Stettler, and Nicole Trifone;

Friends of WRL Foundation President Sam Sadler; Friends of WRL Foundation members Mike Caplice, Lucinda Dudley, Sarah Houghland, Peter Mellette, Tom Phelps, Louis Weeks, and Michael Westfall;

Interim James City County Administrator Bill Porter; City of Williamsburg City Council members Barbara Ramsey and Benny Zhang; City of Williamsburg Assistant City Manager Andrew Trivette; York County Library Director Kevin Smith;

Library Director Elizabeth B. Fowler; Assistant Library Director Janet Crowther; library staff members Carrie Binsfeld, Benjamin Goldberg, Alicia Phinney, Melissa Simpson, Sandy Towers, Barry Trott, and Sarah App;

Greg Lukmire of RRMM Lukmire Architects;

Absent: Sally Andrews, Jim Axtell, Jason Purse, and Jorge Rivas.

Call to Order: Chair Miller-Moore called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Chair’s Report: Ms. Miller-Moore announced the Board of Trustees hired RRMM Lukmire Architects to complete an assessment of the Williamsburg Library building. Ms. Miller-Moore introduced Mr. Lukmire and stated this is the first viewing of this presentation by the board.

Mr. Lukmire began by introducing himself and his firm, RRMM Lukmire Architects has designed over 50 public libraries in the United States. He spoke of the ways in which public libraries have changed throughout the years. Lukmire Architects were tasked with analyzing the current spaces and needs in regards to programs and collections of the Williamsburg Library. The firm contracted outside inspectors to review the current electrical, plumbing, and life safety engineering systems while Lukmire inspected the internal layout, exterior site, and parking. It was Lukmire Architect’s job to investigate design options that could help the Williamsburg Library meet the current needs of the library and community. Mr. Lukmire discussed ways in which the Williamsburg Library compares to various twenty-first-century public libraries. Common elements of the twenty-first-century libraries include; a civic focus/community center, lifelong learning center, community resource center, information/technology center, a place for social interaction, collaboration space, and being a community and/or architectural landmark. These up to date libraries often hold traits such as; being flexible/adaptable, having comfortable seating areas, accessible after hours, having new technology, having exploration/maker spaces, having dedicated spaces for children, tweens, and teens, having flexible meeting spaces of all size groups, having areas to inspire and enrich, having areas connecting inside and outside, and being community-driven. Mr. Lukmire discussed some of the current trends in library design including; community information centers, readers-on-the-run, bookstore appeal, technology throughout, self-service for users, smaller distributed service desks, educational resources, teen centers, group rooms, hi-tech meeting rooms, snack/café areas, and environmentally friendly buildings.
Mr. Lukmire reviewed the current status of the Williamsburg Library including the mission statement, site design, and floor plans. Based on the space needs analysis, the Williamsburg Library needs approximately 50,000 square feet to meet the current needs, the library has approximately 39,000 square feet currently, including the basement and the theatre. Mr. Lukmire reviewed the issues that currently limit the Williamsburg Library; staff has limited ability to monitor activity in the library, structural steel stacks are inflexible and difficult for handicapped users to move in, the reading areas are remote from stacks, there is a lack of group study/comfortable places to read, children are remote with a lake of natural light, access to children’s area from auditorium is a security issue, staff is decentralized, restrooms are not ADA compliant, staff space is a windowless basement, electrical systems have numerous code violations, and lighting is not efficient. Mr. Lukmire described the various renovations/additions to the library that have happened since its initial construction.

Mr. Lukmire discussed four possible options for proving the needed space and functionality for the Williamsburg Library:

1. Renovate/modify the existing library and expand.
2. Re-build a larger library on existing site.
3. Relocate library across Armistead Avenue on larger site.
4. Relocate library to a new location.

Mr. Lukmire discussed the option of renovating the existing library. To add the additional 10,000 square feet to the library, Mr. Lukmire suggested demolishing the existing children’s wing and replacing it with a two-story addition. In order to give the library a better line of sight, the existing structural steel stacks would also need to be removed and the pyramid entrance relocated. The administration/circulation area could also be expanded to add additional square footage. This option would not add any additional parking spaces for the library.

Mr. Lukmire discussed the option of rebuilding a larger library on the existing site. Rebuilding using a second story model to achieve the needed square footage could also add an approximate additional 130 parking spaces.

Mr. Lukmire discussed the option of relocating the library to a new building across Armistead Avenue. With this option, there are two different site plans that could possibly be used. One site would have the library building facing Scotland Street allowing for 130 parking spaces and the second site having the building face Armistead Avenue allowing for 115 parking spaces. Both would allow for a state of the art 50,000 square feet facility and also community development of the existing library site.

Mr. Lukmire discussed the option of relocating the Williamsburg Library to an entirely different site. A possible site has not as of yet been identified but would allow the Williamsburg Library to design a twenty-first-century library to fit the user’s needs as well as design a site with optimal parking.

**Public Comment:**

Mr. Sadler asked Mr. Lukmire to comment on the available parking garage near the Williamsburg Library and a teen area if the library were remodeled. Mr. Lukmire stated the staff currently uses the parking garage and does not feel it too far from the library but many users are not aware of its availability or believe it is not a realistic walking distance to be usable. A teen area would be feasible with the additional 10,000 added in an addition.
A member of the public asked if a larger Friends Book Nook was incorporated into the remodeling option. Mr. Lukmire stated if need and resources are available, a larger Book Nook could be incorporated into design plans.

Staff member, Ms. Hamblin, asked if a closed children’s area would be feasible if the library were remodeled and if the new children’s area would be larger than the current. Mr. Lukmire agreed that a defined children’s area would be beneficial and could be incorporated into design plans as well as a larger area.

Mr. Phelps asked if the theatre area would be incorporated into the remodel with the first option. Mr. Lukmire stated that it would not be beneficial to demolish the theatre and rebuild but it would need to be upgraded during a possible renovation.

Mr. Mellette asked for an estimated time frame for the renovation option. Mr. Lukmire stated it would take approximately three years to complete.

Mr. Caplice asked if the potential plans of the City of Williamsburg to upgrade various city facilities were taken into account for this assessment. Mr. Lukmire stated he was not apprised of the City of Williamsburg’s plans during the study but if the library was moved it would allow the city to use the existing site for another city facility.

Ms. Fowler asked if the first option to remodel the current facility would allow for any additional parking spaces. Mr. Lukmire confirmed that it would not. Mr. Lukmire stated that if the library was rebuilt on the adjacent property as in option three, it would present a longer estimated timeframe than the first renovation option.

Staff member, Mr. Kelley asked how long the proposed library in option one, renovation, would last given the estimated population growth of Williamsburg. Mr. Lukmire stated the library would be current for approximately twenty years, possibly longer.

Ms. Miller-Moore discussed this assessment as the beginning of the process of updating the Williamsburg Library facility. She thanked everyone for coming and stated any further comments or questions could be directed to the Board of Trustees.

**Adjournment:** Ms. Miller-Moore moved to adjourn at 3:14 p.m. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah App

Approved by ______________________________
Natalie Miller-Moore, Chair