Committee Chair Ewing opened the meeting at 10:00 AM. Two committee member were present, Library Director Hudson was in attendance as was the Library’s Financial Services Director Sandra Hagan and a representative of the Fairfax County Public Library Employee Association.

Chair Ewing moved review and approval of the October minutes; the motion was seconded and approved.

Director Hudson provided a brief overview of the County’s FY19 Advertised Budget but deferred most details to the presentation provided by the County’s Department of Management and Budget at the full Board’s March 14, 2018, meeting. Director Hudson spoke regarding the budget process and requested that the Committee review an updated budget process document. The updated document included a previously provided timeline of both current and upcoming budget cycles, as well as narrative regarding the three main budget increments; the annual budget submission, the third quarter budget review, and the annual carryover review. The committee reviewed the document and did not have any edits; it will be provided to the full Board as part of their next agenda packet.

The committee reviewed a second document provided by staff; draft talking points for budget advocacy. Talking points consisted of statistical information related to circulation, in person visits, online visits, program attendance, and volunteer hours as well as the amount of county general fund allocated to the Library. Staff requested committee feedback on other talking points that will help them make their case to the Board of Supervisors.

The committee discussed the anticipated increase in general fund revenue through the 2.5% increase ceiling on the property tax rate; it was anticipated that general fund revenues would increase approximately 4.3% and that the Library would not be receiving any of that increase (other than what is paid for employee compensation increases across the board to all agencies). Chair Ewing would like his colleagues to advocate for 1% of the increase, or $600,000, to come back to the Library, as the Library only receives less than 1% of the general fund yearly allocation as its annual budget. The Board of Supervisors has $3.9 million in unallocated funds to distribute and some of that should come to the Library.

Trustee Pekarsky recommended tying the budget advocacy points into the One Fairfax policy. She spoke regarding equity in services and equity in budget distribution; that the Library provides access and opportunity to anyone and the budget allocations should reflect that. The committee requested that
staff update the talking points based on their feedback and provide it to both the Library Board of Trustees and their colleagues on the Fairfax Library Foundation Board.

Further discussion centered on the next joint meeting of the Library Board and the Board of Supervisors, finding additional funding sources through corporate giving and large-scale grants, and getting more supporters out and speaking on behalf of the Library and its budget. Staff will draft a template budget advocacy letter for use by the Board, the Foundation and other supporting agencies and individuals.

The meeting concluded at 10:45 AM.