Committee Chair Ewing opened the meeting at 10:35 AM. Attendees included Chair Ewing, Trustees Pekarsky and Russell, Library Director Hudson, and Library Financial Services Director Hagan.

Review and approval of the September 10, 2018, minutes was deferred until the following meeting.

The committee received and reviewed an eight-year overview of the Library’s budget, broken down into personnel and operating costs. Review of the figures showed that although the Library’s budget has increased over the last eight years, all of the increase has been in personnel expenditures. Between the FY2012 adopted budget and the FY19 adopted budget, there has been an increase of approximately $3.5 million. Taking inflation into account, and with no extra positions allocated to the department, that amounts to approximately a 3% increase per Library employee over that period of time. Personnel expenses make up approximately 80% of the Library’s budget.

A review of the operating expenses shows a decrease of approximately $200,000 over the same period of time. Taking inflation into account, that amounts to an approximately 16% decrease in purchasing power over those eight years.

The committee discussed a prior joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors, held on September 18th. One of the weightiest topics from the meeting was a consensus of both Boards that the Library needs consistent hours. The Library Board reviewed consistent hours in the winter/spring of 2017 and reported back to the Board of Supervisors in July 2017. It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will provide direction back to staff at their September 25th meeting around consistent hours. The committee reviewed the three options originally presented to the Board of Supervisors; all libraries at current regional hours, all libraries at a mid-point of regional and community hours to include Sundays, and a straight addition of Sunday hours at community libraries. The committee requested that staff review the options again, and see what the cost would be for a mid-point of regional and community hours to include Sundays but with an increase from two evenings per week to three.

Director Hudson provided a brief recap on the budget timeline for the committee.

The committee then moved on to a discussion of what to include in the budget transmittal memo. Instructions to Library staff from the County’s Department of Management and Budget were that this year’s budget development would be a flat budget, with no anticipated increases or decreases. That does not disallow the Library Board from including future asks in their budget submittal. A draft transmittal memo will be presented for approval at the next Finance Committee meeting. The committee discussed the inclusion of future asks such as Sunday hours, fully funding the collection development budget, increased early literacy funding and the potential purchase/staffing of a bookmobile to ensure equity of access.

The committee selected their next meeting date; Tuesday October 9th at 11 AM in the Government Center, room TBD.

Committee Chair Ewing adjourned the meeting at 11:30 AM.