

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at the Berlin Branch. Members present were Jeff Smith, Sandra Buchanan, Nancy Howard, Patricia Tomasovic, and Jocelyn Briddell. Kathryn Culbertson joined the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Brittney Herz, Snow Hill Branch Manager; Alice Paterra, Berlin Branch Manager; Amy Parker, Business Manager; and Lorissa McAllister, Town of Snow Hill.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Ms. McAllister gave a presentation about the Bank Street Promenade Project in Snow Hill. The board asked several questions about the project. The board expressed concern with smaller parking spots, handicap parking location, and a service road connecting the parking lot to Willow Street. Ms. Briddell said this would be positive for us and that the outdoor stage could be used for outdoor programs. Ms. McAllister said they hope to present the project to the County Commissioners by the end of this year. Ms. McAllister said she would send a digitalized two scale drawing to us.

Ms. Paterra said that volunteer Michael Walker was awarded the Worcester County Spirit of Worcester Volunteers Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Walker has been volunteering at the Berlin branch for twenty years. Ms. Howard motioned to write a letter from the board, Ms. Culbertson seconded. All present were in favor. The AARP arranged to use the Berlin Branch to offer free tax help to seniors and low-income patrons on Tuesdays starting February 6 through April 9. The Worcester County Arts Council presented their Plein Air event at the library on September 22 with a record number of entries. They had to cancel their Saturday plans because of the Tropical Storm. Ms. Paterra said the branch saw their biggest door count since Covid on the day of the event. Julie Johnson has innovative ideas for the teen area and is helping with displays and program ideas. Dave Nedrow will start to transform the meeting room next week for Halloween. Ms. Paterra said the display is called "Haunted Laboratory" this year. Ms. Howard encouraged everyone to see the display.

An amendment was made to the minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting on page three, second paragraph from the bottom, to say "The board agreed to put on the next month's agenda." A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Ms. Howard; seconded by Ms. Briddell. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – *The Coastal Dispatch* and *Ocean City Today* had articles on the progression of the Pocomoke library project. The *Ocean City Today* and *Bayside Gazette* ran articles about Creative Aging with Care programs.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for September 2023. Mr. Smith asked why some of the admin expenses have been spent down. Ms. Ranck explained that some of the line items are one time purchases that have already taken place for the year. We continue to see the cost of periodicals increase and we anticipate an overage. The motor and barring assembly on the boiler in the Snow Hill Library is in need of replacing and will likely come out of the general maintenance line item for the branch.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said Allison Blakeman was hired as a full-time library services assistant in Ocean City. Interviews were held for the other open positions. Erin Scott has subscribed to the collections management software CatalogIt, which will allow the library to share our archival collections with the public. Ms. Ranck said CatalogIt is cost effective and Ms. Herz said it is user friendly. Amanda Laick attended the Association of Bookmobiles and Outreach Conference in Hershey, PA. TechOps, the company who build the Pop-Up Library, covered the cost of the conference and hotel fees. Ms. Howard asked if Ms. Laick could share what she learned at the conference with the board. The Pop-Up Library will be at Harbor Day on Saturday, October 14. The Pop-Up has also added Seaside Christian Academy to their scheduled stops. The Library Foundation's Paint Night fundraiser was a success and raised \$680 for the annual scholarship fund.

Assistant Director's Report – A copy of the Staff Development report was sent in each board member's packet to review before the meeting. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said staff day was held yesterday with 37 people in attendance. Thank

you to Harry Burkett and the Ocean Pines staff for hosting. We discussed the strategic plan. Savannah Varner from the Ocean City branch gave an excellent presentation about the Maryland Youth Sensory Services Summit on September 7. She passed around sensory materials for the staff to explore and explained ways to incorporate the materials for more interactive story times. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey installed the Mobile Multisensory Storywalk® at the Ocean Pines branch. Ms. Ranck attended the Association for Rural and Small Libraries conference in September. Ms. Ranck mentioned she and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey will be attending the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators Fall meeting this Thursday and Friday in Ocean City.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pocomoke Ms. Ranck has received some questions from the Maryland State Library Agency about the current site. A meeting with the design team and a preliminary meeting with the City of Pocomoke planning director took place in September. The next step in the process will be to request permission to bid the construction manager at risk services.

2023 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees and Library Supporters A reminder about this upcoming conference scheduled for Saturday, October 21 from 9 am – 3 pm at the Bowie Branch of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System.

NEW BUSINESS:

Strategic Plan Included in the board packet are a couple of examples of patron surveys the library could use to gather information for the next strategic plan. Ms. Howard suggested providing both paper copy and online versions of the survey.

Board Training Please let Ms. Gravenor-Stacey or Ms. Ranck know if there are training topics/areas of interest to any board members.

Connect Maryland FY23 Connected Devices Program The Connected Devices Program aims to address the digital divide by providing new, internet-enabled devices to families in need. Ms. Ranck drafted a proposal on behalf of Worcester County to distribute devices in the Berlin, Snow Hill, and Pocomoke communities. The library is available to help patrons learn how to use their device, and there are also digital navigators that can help people over the phone. The library will share contact information and information about wifi access as we distribute the devices.

Policy Committee Ms. Briddell, Ms. Culbertson, and Ms. Buchanan volunteered to be on the policy committee.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, November 14 at the Ocean City branch at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Briddell motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Buchanan seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Amy Parker