

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at the Ocean City Branch. Members present were Jeff Smith, Sandra Buchanan, Nancy Howard, Patricia Tomasovic, Vicki O'Mara, Jocelyn Briddell, and Kathryn Culbertson.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Alec Staley, Ocean City Branch Manager; Amy Parker, Business Manager; Brittney Herz, Snow Hill Branch Manager; Bill Contarino, Library Services Assistant, Ocean City; Allison Blakeman, Library Services Assistant, Ocean City; and Lorissa McAllister, Town of Snow Hill.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Ms. McAllister presented updated plans for the Bank Street improvement project in Snow Hill. The Board and staff had several questions and concerns. Ms. Ranck noted the number of employees the library has working in those two buildings (17 total – Snow Hill branch library and Tech building on Bank Street) and that does not account for the Extension office staff or the Land Trust staff who currently use library parking. Ms. Ranck is also worried about the proximity of parking and curbside sidewalk next to the Tech building. The location of the stage area was also a concern. Discussion continued. The board would like Ms. McAllister to attend the next board meeting on April 9 in Snow Hill so they can discuss plans onsite. Ms. Briddell commented that she sees positive outcomes of this project for the library. Ms. Ranck asked Ms. McAllister about the next steps. Ms. McAllister replied that work will start from Green to Willow Street this fall, and she is planning to meet with County Administration in March and the County Commissioners in April.

Mr. Staley said we received our new meeting room tables and chairs. This Thursday the ceiling and walls will be painted blue to match the hallway. Painting will take approximately one week. The following week new carpet will be installed. Plak That will also be printing some old images of Ocean City to display in the meeting room. New children's chairs have also been delivered. Ms. Ranck mentioned new shades for the windows are on the way as well. Mr. Staley introduced Mr. Contarino and Ms. Blakeman to the board. They are here to observe the library board meeting as part of the LATI program. Mr. Staley also said we are preparing for the summer and door counts have been up from last year. In addition, the Ocean City branch is working on a new entry to the Children's area thanks to a grant from the Worcester County Arts Council. Dawn Tarr, a local artist, will be starting this project in April.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Buchanan; seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – *Bayside Gazette* and *Ocean City Today* both ran articles about the Neil Young program at the Ocean Pines branch.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for February 2024. Ms. O'Mara asked how the door count for the Pop-Up Library is tallied. Ms. Ranck said staff count the number of people they visit throughout the month and include those numbers for program attendance. For outreach events, they have a clicker they use a handheld tally counter.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said Susan Todd retired after 28 years. The Berlin branch planned a nice

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sendoff for Ms. Todd. Julie Johnson has hit the ground running and is planning some exciting children and teen programs and ordering new materials. Ms. Howard asked Ms. Ranck to let the Board when employees receive commendations from the County Commissioners.

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 thanked Ms. Ranck and Ms. Parker for the Udemy challenge. Several employees completed classes. Michael Hayes and Erin Scott graduated last week from the LATI program. They gave their Capstone presentations. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey apologized for cancelling yesterday's EDI meeting but it will be rescheduled. Mr. Smith asked if Buckingham Elementary visited Berlin for the "Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library" program. Ms. Ranck was not aware but will ask Ms. Pattera.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Pocomoke** Cost estimates will be shared with the County Commissioners at the March 19 meeting. We have not seen Keller's estimate yet, but Whiting Turner has completed their estimate as part of their contract to provide preconstruction services.

**Strategic Plan** A sub-committee consisting of Ms. Buchanan, Ms. Culbertson, and Ms. Briddell will get together and come back with information for the next meeting. Ms. Ranck will also recruit library staff to join the committee and email the latest community survey draft for review.

**Chromebook Distribution Grant** Ms. Ranck said one-third of the devices have been distributed. Two distribution events were held last week in Pocomoke. We are finding that word-of-mouth is the best strategy for letting people know about the program. Ms. Ranck thanked Ms. Pattera and Mr. Staley for helping the Pocomoke staff. There have been some hiccups with addresses, but we are working with the State to figure things out. We have noticed a lot of seniors taking advantage of this program as well and everyone is very appreciative. The next distribution site will be the Berlin branch library. The grant will end in June.

**Rutgers Externship** Ms. Ranck said that it has been wonderful to work with these very talented students. Ms. Howard asked if the program was only open to libraries; it is open to all different fields. Mr. Staley said their feedback regarding website design and organization has been helpful. The project will wrap up in April.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**National Library Week Press Release/Proclamation** Mr. Smith would like to give a proclamation for the library for the upcoming Library week in April. Ms. Ranck will reach out to the County's Public Information Officer. Ms. Ranck suggested that the Library Board be present for the proclamation. Ms. Howard made a motion for Ms. Ranck to get this on the County Commissioner's schedule; Ms. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Ranck will also draft a press release promoting National Library week.

**Letters/Certificates of Commendation from the Board** Mr. Smith mentioned he would the Board to send Ms. Todd and Mr. Staley letters.

Mr. Smith stated that he will reach out to Commissioner Bertino to see about the status of Ms. O'Mara's board reappointment. Ms. Briddell wanted to follow up on a couple of policies. First is the program policy; Ms. Ranck will send the draft policy to Ms. Briddell. Second, is the telework policy. Ms. Ranck since the County is updating their personnel policy and will likely include this policy. Third, is the gift/donation policy. Ms. Ranck mentioned that the library's collection development policy does address donations and we may need to make sure the two polices align.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at the Snow Hill branch at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Briddell motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Tomasovic seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

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Amy Parker