

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 via Zoom Conference. Members present via Zoom Conference were Leslie Mulligan, Nancy Howard, Vicki O'Mara, Patricia Tomasovic, and Jeff Smith. Holly Anderson, Jaime Bailey were absent.

Also present via Zoom Conference were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Rachael Stein, Assistant Director; Amy Parker, Business Manager; Dawn Ingrassia, Pocomoke Branch Manager; Frank DeLucco, Assistant Branch Manager, Ocean Pines branch; Sean Murphy, Library Services Assistant, Berlin branch; and Bethany Hooper, Reporter for the *Coastal Dispatch*.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Ms. Mulligan. Recording device was acknowledged.

A motion to accept Minutes from the December 8, 2020 meeting was made by Ms. Howard; seconded by Mr. Smith. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – Ms. Ranck said several holiday cards were received by patrons. *Ocean City Today* reported on the Worcester County five-year CIP plan to include Pocomoke and Snow Hill branch improvements. *Coastal Dispatch* reported on the Ten Thousand Flowers Mural Project that was installed at the Berlin branch. *Ocean City Today* reported that all five branches offer hotspots for checkout; Worcester County Library has been selected as a recipient of a \$1,000 Beanstack grant that will be used to offer prizes in 2021 for a reading challenge; and the Worcester County Arts Council, in partnership with the Library, announces new initiative: “Artist in Residence” program.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reviewed branch expenses for December 2020. Ms. Ranck said we are in good shape. The library has received a number of grants this year to supplement the budget. Ms. Ranck reported on the statistics. Door count is down obviously. Physical circulation is currently about 50% of where we were last year (pre-Covid) and we hope to increase these numbers. Downloadable circulation is up. Mr. Smith commented on the volunteer hours. Ms. Ranck said that must be a typo since there has not been any volunteers in the branches. Ms. Ranck will check on this.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said Grab-n-Go appointments are going well. We are trying to keep below the 10-person threshold. Over 500 youth program-to-go kits were distributed in December. Elizabeth Hall and Jane Barrett-Tribull are assembling an adult (or teen) program kit once a month as well. Ms. Ranck also said we are only planning program one month at a time since times are still uncertain. The “Earn While You Learn” apprenticeship fair is happening January 26 @ 1pm. Ms. Ranck and Ms. Stein talked about the Beanstack grant that was received. We are excited and this fits in nicely with our EDI grant. There will be monthly meet-ups and teens who participate will have a chance to win a \$500 prizes (two prizes are available). Ms. Stein said there will be suggested reading lists.

Staff Development Report - A copy of the Staff Development report was sent in each board member's packet to review before the meeting. Ms. Stein reported most of the youth services team attended the **Virtual Live Storytime training in December**. On December 11, Jennifer Ranck, Rachael Stein, and all of the branch managers attended a workshop on **Conducting Effective Performance Evaluations**. Ms. Ranck has revised the library's evaluation form based on feedback from the training and branch managers. Several staff attended Ryan Dowd's training on **Burnout and Stress**, which provided many useful tips for both managers and non-managers on making your workplace “burnout-proof.” Frank DeLucco and Sean Murphy will begin the **LATI Early Start Program** in January.

Old Business – A copy was sent in each board member's packet to review before the meeting.

EDI Grant / Committee The committee developed a list of children's books to add to the collection. Branches are weeding out older materials so we can order new ones. The committee is working on the EDI statement for board approval.

Ms. Howard asked about the CIP plan. The County Commissioners approved the CIP plan in December. It is not a guarantee for future projects. Ms. Ranck is waiting on the Governor's budget to see if the Pocomoke project was included.

New Business –

Library By Appointment Grab and Go browsing appointments and computer appointments continue. Branches are limiting access to one person, or one family, each hour to reduce the number of people in the building as Worcester County case numbers have been on the rise. Curbside service for material pick-up and printing requests continues. We are helping people where we can.

Laptops for checkout The library received some Cares Act funding through the County to purchase laptops for patron checkout. We hope to roll these out by the end of the month. Checkout period will be 30 days and users will need to sign an agreement form. This is a very welcome addition and will work well with our hotspots.

Parking Lot Agreement with Waystead Inn Enclosed in the board packet is a copy of an agreement that outlines the use of the parking lot at the Berlin Branch. Among other conditions, the library requires notification of use three weeks in advance (in writing) and the parking lot is only available outside of hours of operations. Ms. Ranck said the agreement was approved by the County Commissioners.

Sidewalk Improvement – Berlin There is not a continuous sidewalk from Main Street to Harrison Avenue where the library is located. Donna Main, a member of the Library Foundation met with Jeff Fleetwood from Town of Berlin to discuss a possible sidewalk improvement project. A possible layout is included in the board packet. Ms. Ranck said she appreciates the Town's help with this. The Worcester County Foundation will help supplement funds if needed. Mr. Smith mentioned the sidewalk by the Waystead Inn and thinks it should be on both sides. Ms. Ranck will inquire about this possibility.

Board Training Maryland State Library purchased "United for Libraries" memberships for county library systems. This includes a Trustee Academy which is a series of short, online training videos. If time permits, we will show one video at each board meeting. The board watched the "What it means to be a Trustee" video and discussion followed. The video prompted several questions from the Library Board. Ms. Ranck will re-send the Trustee Manual developed by the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators. Discussion concerning the process for evaluating the library director followed. Director Evaluation is one of the topics in the training series.

Ms. Ingrassia said Pocomoke is doing well. The patrons are happy with our services. We are trying to maximize our space by weeding the collection since shelving is tight.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, February 9 at via Zoom at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Amy Parker