

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
October 20, 2020

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held via Zoom on Tuesday, October 20, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 8:01 am by Board President Maureen Walsh David, a notification of recording was given and those wishing to speak during Public Comment were asked to sign-up in the Q&A chat. Other Board members present were: Yara Cheikh, Jane Eickhoff, Michael Netzer, Paul Schwab, Aaron Slater and Anne West.

Staff in attendance: Natalie Edington, Interim Co-Director; Phyllis Bontrager, Mobile Engagement Administrator for Youth and Family Engagement; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Linda Frederick, Marketing and Development Coordinator; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning, Projects and Data Coordinator; Tia Jennings, Youth and Family Engagement Specialist; Ann McElroy, Staff Association President; Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager; Liz Sundermann, Virtual Services and Media Creation Manager; Mary Wilson, Human Resources Manager.

Guests of the Board, Bill Early and Alex Walther of CLA, were present for the presentation of the Audit.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved minutes for September 29, 2020 (**Eickhoff/Schwab**).

Correspondence

None.

Public Comments

None.

REPORTS

Director's Report (Edington)

Ms. Edington shared highlights from the written Director's Report which will be filed with the minutes. BCPL continues to develop its virtual programs throughout the pandemic. Working with the Office of Information Technology, an upgrade to Polaris (the library catalog) was completed. Improved features include the ability for customers to change their PIN independently. Two staff members, one at Essex and one at Towson, tested positive for COVID-19, and both branches were closed from October 9 to October 16. Preparations continue for the next portion of Phase 3 which will be limited in-person computer use by appointment. The Reisterstown renovation continues, and the scheduled refresh of the Rosedale bathrooms and meeting room will now begin in December. The painting of the mural on the Towson branch has started and work should go on for the next week. This month BCPL virtually celebrated staff service awards. Ms. Edington also commended the numerous staff participating in virtual programming this fall. Staff are lending expertise to the Maryland Tech Connect event and the Maryland Library Association / Delaware Library Association Conference. She was particularly complimentary of Nay Keppler, who served as Conference Chair for the Maryland Library Association / Delaware Library Association Conference.

Mr. Schwab complimented the Service Awards videos and Ms. Edington thanked Media Services staff for their work on that and other projects.

Statistical Dashboards (Gamertsfelder)

Ms. Gamertsfelder reviewed the September statistical highlights. September circulation has increased, but that is primarily accounted for by renewal of materials. In statistics tracked during the pandemic period, Wi-Fi use and views of library videos on YouTube have both increased. Ms. Gamertsfelder will continue to adjust the dashboards as more materials and services become available to customers in the coming weeks.

Finance Report (Rowe)

Ms. Rowe had nothing new to report for September. Revenues and expenses continue to be below previous levels.

Staff Association (McElroy)

Ms. McElroy invited the Board to participate in the Staff Wellness Challenge. The Staff Association is currently planning staff events for 2021.

Foundation Quarterly Report (Frederick)

Ms. Frederick shared an update on the activities of the Foundation for Baltimore County Public Library. Fiscal Year 2020 saw a record \$400,000 in donations to the Foundation, from initiatives including All In Crowd memberships, payroll support and grants. In Fiscal Year 2020 the Foundation funded \$200,000 of projects at the library. The Taste of the Town event postponed from spring has been cancelled. In its place will be the Frost & Bite Cookie Party. The Foundation has initiated the purchase process for the Mobile Legal vehicle. Fiscal Year 2021 donations have been lower. The Foundation has chosen not to press for donations at this time out of consideration for many individuals and business that are struggling. The Foundation should receive updates about the PNC Bank and Baltimore County Community Fund grants shortly.

Ms. Frederick noted that it is currently National Friends of Libraries week and thanked BCPL Friends groups for their support. This support included a donation of \$3,500 by the Towson Friends toward the mural project.

Ms. Walsh David asked if there would be a silent auction this winter. There will not be a silent auction event as donations are down and businesses are struggling.

Ms. Walsh David was pleased to announce that a donation of \$2,900 will be made to the Foundation by the Board in honor of Retired Director Paula Miller and in support of the Mobile Legal vehicle.

Board Reports (Walsh David)

Ms. Walsh David announced that there were 30 applicants for the Director position. These have been reviewed and nine candidates have been selected for screening interviews with final interviews on November 12.

Ms. Walsh David was very complimentary of the recent Citizens for Maryland Libraries Annual Meeting. Featured speakers included Dr. Carla Hayden, Librarian of Congress and Julius Jefferson, President of the American Library Association.

OLD BUSINESS***FY 21 Budget (Rowe)***

Ms. Rowe reported that the Fiscal Year 2021 Chart of Accounts had been made available to staff and the printed budget book would be available soon.

Pandemic Impact on BCPL (Edington, Bontrager)

Staff continue to provide many programming options for residents. Upcoming options include One Maryland One Book with *The Island of Sea Women*; Your Vote 2020 speaker series; ConnectFest, 45-minute sessions connecting residents to needed resources; take-home craft kits for children being distributed via curbside service with tutorial videos available on BCPL's YouTube channel; and FutureMakers Snacks (STEM kits) also being distributed via curbside along with a link to a FutureMakers virtual program.

Ms. Bontrager spoke with the Board about the resumption of service to childcare providers. Staff worked diligently to find a model to safely provide materials to centers on an opt-in basis. There are currently 19 childcare sites that will receive materials monthly. Youth and Family Engagement staff are also working with Head Start and, in collaboration with branches, Police Athletic League (PAL) Centers to provide library materials to youth and caregivers. Ms. Bontrager thanked her staff for their hard work in establishing this return to service.

Mr. Schwab asked about BCPL's next phase of service. Ms. Edington updated the Board on the installation of plexiglass shields at service desks and distribution of PPE for use during limited in-person service. An announcement should be made soon on a start date for in-person, limited computer use.

NEW BUSINESS***Acceptance of the FY 2020 Audit***

Mr. Bill Early and Ms. Alex Walther of CLA joined the Board to review the FY 2020 Audit. Mr. Early was very complimentary of Ms. Rowe and Mr. Merrick, who facilitate the auditor's work by uploading needed documents to a secure website and reconciling accounts before the start of the audit. Mr. Early reviewed the discussion draft audit documents with the Board and pointed out specific areas for clarification. As in past years, Mr. Early noted a lack of separation of duties in the Fiscal Services Department. The audit team was pleased to see improvements in the way documentation is being handled based on previous recommendations. The Board accepted the Audit (**Eickhoff/West**) and Mr. Early and Ms. Walther left the meeting.

Policy - Temporary Leave Accrual and Use Policy (Wilson)

The Board was asked to approve a Temporary Leave Accrual and Use Policy which would be implemented immediately and remain in place until June 30, 2021. This policy would set new, higher maximum accrual balances and allow staff more time to use the accrued leave. The Board approved the temporary policy (**Cheikh/West**).

Summer Reading Challenge Wrap-up (Jennings)

Ms. Jennings of Youth and Family Engagement shared a PowerPoint presentation with the Board as a summary of the 2020 Summer Reading Challenge (SRC). SRC ran from July 1, 2020 to August

30, 2020 with a theme of Imagine Your Story. This year's challenge had 1,930 registered participants. Game boards were available both virtually and on paper. Youth that completed the challenge were able to pick up their completion prize via curbside pickup in September. Additionally, staff provided diverse virtual programs that tied in with the challenge. Youth and Family Engagement staff are working on next year's program with the theme Tails and Tales.

The Board congratulated Ms. Jennings on a successful program and encouraged the Board to view the virtual programs on the library's YouTube channel. Ms. Edington added her thanks to all the staff who made this year's SRC successful.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 am **(Cheikh/Slater)**.

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees