

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
August 18, 2020

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held via Zoom on Tuesday, August 18, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 am by Board President Maureen Walsh David, and a notification of recording was given. Other Board members present were: Yara Cheikh, Jane Eickhoff, Michael Netzer, Paul Schwab, Aaron Slater, and Anne West.

Staff in attendance: Paula Miller, Director; Andrea Bleinberger, Woodlawn Librarian; James Cooke, Assistant Director; Natalie Edington, Assistant Director; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning, Projects and Data, Coordinator; Kevin Jayce, Towson Librarian; Christine Kamt, Woodlawn Librarian; Ann McElroy, Staff Association President; Olivia Mirot, Assistant Library Manager White Marsh; Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager; Conni Stritmatter, Youth and Family Engagement Coordinator; Liz Sundermann, Virtual Services and Media Creation Manager; Zeke White, Library Manager Woodlawn; Mary Wilson, Human Resources Manager.

Those wishing to speak during Public Comment were asked to sign up. The process for public comments was shared: Individuals are called in order by the Board President and will have 3 minutes to speak. No decisions/comments are made today based on issues brought up in Public Comment.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved minutes for the July 28, 2020 **(Cheikh/West)**.

Correspondence

None.

Public Comments

Ms. Anita Bass spoke to the Board. Ms. Bass asked about diversity training for the entire BCPL staff and how the Board would monitor to be sure all staff took the training.

Ms. Walsh David thanked Ms. Bass and assured her that her words would be taken into consideration.

REPORTS

Director's Report (Miller)

Director Miller briefly reviewed the written Director's Report which will be filed with the minutes. She provided the Board with a link to programs on the BCPL website, which have been successful with customers. BCPL has applied for multiple grants for FY 21 and should know the status of them shortly. Director Miller and the administrative staff continue to work on issues identified in the recent listening sessions.

Dashboards and Strategic Plan (Gamertsfelder)

Ms. Gamertsfelder reviewed the July statistical dashboards which have been updated to reflect the changes to service due to COVID-19. Strategic Plan XI, approved by the Board in May, will be available to the staff and public this week. The Board was very complimentary of the work done for Strategic Plan XI.

Facilities Update (Cooke)

Assistant Director Cooke reported on current capital projects and plans. The Reisterstown renovation continues to make progress and planning for the Catonsville renovation continues on schedule.

Sensory Story Path at Woodlawn (Bleinberger, Kamt, White)

Staff from the Woodlawn Branch made a presentation to the Board on the new Sensory Story Trail. This project received micro-grant funding from the Foundation for Baltimore County Public Library and consists of story panels in English, Spanish and Braille. The project incorporates augmented reality and sensory components. The team worked with numerous partner organizations on elements of the trail, including LBPH and the Parkville Senior Center.

Staff Reports

Finance Report (Rowe)

This year's audit is almost complete. The process has been conducted remotely by CLA.

Staff Association (McElroy)

Ms. McElroy shared plans for upcoming social events for the staff, which will be held virtually, and encouraged participation in the Wellness Challenge. The Staff Association is also working on a process to allow staff to participate in this year's virtual Festival of Trees.

Board Reports (Walsh David)

Ms. Walsh David reported on sessions for the recent United for Libraries Virtual Conference and encouraged the other trustees to view the recorded sessions.

The Director Search is currently on schedule and the Board and staff will be kept updated.

OLD BUSINESS

Pandemic Impact on BCPL (Cooke, Edington, Strittmatter)

Staff continue to develop plans to expand service. Upcoming additions to service include Chromebooks for loan and pick up of printouts. Implementation of Phase 2B, the extension of curbside hours, is under consideration for a post Labor Day start. Phase 3, which would include limited customer access to the buildings for focused services like computer sessions, is currently on hold.

Mr. Schwab asked for clarification on which phase would include a full reopening. Mr. Cooke responded that it would be Phase 4. Ms. Cheikh asked how BCPL was supporting BCPS and Director Miller assured her that a statewide conversation was ongoing among library directors on how best to support schools. Mr. Netzer asked about staff density in branches and telework scheduling and was assured that staffing is constantly being assessed.

Assistant Director Edington updated the Board on public programming. Staff continue to provide a wide variety of virtual programs. Notable virtual programs include those associated with Summer Reading Club, Entrepreneur Academy and teen programming.

Ms. Strittmatter discussed the work in her department to supporting students. Additional STEM programming and programs for parents on how to help students are being added to the website.

The Board was very complimentary of the staff and programs.

Towson Mural Update (Cooke)

The Towson Chamber of Commerce will announce the selected artist in the near future. Mr. Cooke did not have a timeframe for the announcement.

NEW BUSINESS

Diversity Kits for Staff Training (Jayce, Mirot, Wilson)

Members of the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Awareness (IDEA) Team gave a brief presentation on training kits. Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Awareness (IDEA) Kits are an updated version of BCPL's Diversity kits that were first launched in 2017. A sub-team has developed a virtual version of the kit to be used until staff can gather in person for training. Included in the kits are online activities, articles, videos and courses that can be used by any staff member. The goal is to foster open and honest discussions among colleagues.

Policies

Circulation Policy Revision: Extension of Temporary Suspension of Fees Charged & Collected (Edington)

The Board voted unanimously to temporarily suspend until Phase 3 of BCPL's Reopening Plan:

- Fees charged for extended loans.
- Fees charged for hold materials that are not picked up.
- Payment requirements to borrow materials.
- Limits on borrowing for customers with fees owed.

Exception: Customer accounts that have been referred to the collection agency still require a partial payment to borrow up to two (2) items.

(Slater/Eickhoff).

Fee Revision – Temporary Suspension of Printing Fee (Cooke)

The Board approved the suspension of the printing fee charged to customers to the extent that customers may receive the first 20 pages of a print job for free per day. The suspension of this fee will be for the duration of the pandemic period or until the library has returned to more typical public service. Copies more than 20 pages per day will continue to receive a charge. **(Cheikh/Schwab).**

Contracts Greater than \$50,000 (Rowe)

A list of vendors whose invoices for providing goods or services to BCPL will be more than \$50,000 during FY21 was presented to the Board, along with explanatory footnotes. The Board accepted the list of vendors **(Eickhoff/Slater).**

Before moving into Closed Session, Ms. Walsh David complimented Ms. Frederick and the Marketing Department on the new Etsy shop.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board moved into Closed Session at 9:40 am for a personnel discussion.

Motion to close meeting **(Slater)**; seconded **(Cheikh)**; voting in favor **(Cheikh, Eickhoff, Netzer, Slater, Schwab, and Walsh David)**; absent (West).

The session was closed under the following statutory authority: "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment...of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction...." §10-509 (c) 2.

Director Miller remained. The Board discussed the Director's Transition Plan and the appointment of an interim Director.

Closed Session adjourned at 10:50 am (Cheikh, Eickhoff) and the Board moved back into regular session.

Ms. Walsh David announced the appointment of James Cooke and Natalie Edington as joint interim Directors.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 am.

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees