

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

June 16, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at the Towson Library. The meeting was called to order at 8:01 am by Board President Ms. Cheikh. Other Board members present were Dr. Lin-Chen, Mr. Netzer, Ms. Walsh David, and Ms. West. Ms. Cruz and Ms. Ganguly were absent.

Staff in attendance: Erin Baker, Chief Public Services Officer; Ann Beegle, Chief External Affairs Officer; Jen Evans, Executive Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning Projects and Data Manage; Justin Hartzell, Capital Projects Manager; Michelle Romney, Director of Human Resources; Helen Rowe, Director of Fiscal Services; and Micah Yankovich, Interim Chief Steward. Also attending were Bernie Marczyk and Jenna Sublett from Cornerstone.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of May 19 & May 28, 2026 **(Walsh David/West)**.

Correspondence

The Board received email correspondence from Anita Bass requesting union participation in the hiring of the Executive Director; the Union Report from Mr. Yankovich; a request from Matthew Zernhelt to initiate an appeal of employee termination; and a request from Diallo Jackson to preserve video and provide a copy of his suspension letter.

Changes to the Agenda

The Board added approval of the Executive Director job description to the agenda as item 5e **(Walsh David/Lin-Chen)**.

Comments from the Public

None.

REPORTS

The Board received written branch and department reports prior to the meeting.

External Affairs

Ms. Beegle shared some highlights with the Board.

The Foundation is preparing for the end of the fiscal year. The Philanthropy Department is ensuring major donors know about the upcoming *Booked for BCPL* series that will kick off in September and preparing for one last multi-channel solicitation to help ensure all our lapsing donors receive one last appeal before June 30.

Youth and Family Engagement's busiest time of year is summer, and the Summer Reading Challenge just kicked off at Arbutus.

Adult and Community Engagement has a lot of great programming, from author events and musical performances to arts and a traveling book club. They have planned something for everyone this summer.

Marketing and Communications Strategy video service team members Ms. Kinzinger and Mr. Mulieri were awarded Telly Awards for promotional videos for last year's Summer Reading Challenge and Black Friday. The graphics team designed a BCPL 250th logo for programs and events related to our nation's 250th anniversary.

Ms. Beegle invited the Board to the kick-off of summer meals at a press conference next week.

Cornerstone Legislative Session Report

Mr. Marczyk thanked the Board for choosing Cornerstone. This is the 6th year they have presented a report to the Board, and they are honored to provide service to the Board and library system.

Mr. Marczyk introduced Ms. Sublett and shared how important her contribution is to the effectiveness of their team.

The Board received a written end-of-session report prior to the meeting. Mr. Marczyk shared how much he enjoys working with Ms. Beegle, Ms. Cheikh, and the rest of the Board and staff, who all deserve recognition for their work building relationships with legislators. Having engaged Board members and library staff who can work with their team to effectively advocate in person at Library Legislative Day and in meetings and tours around the library system has been vital.

There is significant change coming to the members of the Maryland House of Delegates and Senate, and to Baltimore County.

The past year has seen several successes with the passing of the collective bargaining bill for supervisors and \$500,000 in additional capital funding for the new Essex Library. Mr. Marczyk was also pleased by the bond funding put forward by the County Executive.

Mr. Marczyk encouraged the Board to write notes to Delegate Metzgar, Senator Salling, and County Executive Klausmeier, thanking them for their support of the new library and the library system.

Public Services

Ms. Baker shared that during the month of June, Public Services has concentrated on strengthening organizational effectiveness through change management best practices while fostering a culture rooted in transparency, collaboration, and data-driven decision-making. This work continues to support strategic alignment across departments and positions the organization to respond more effectively to evolving community needs.

Ms. Baker participated in several Strategic Plan Action Planning sessions, serving as lead for a highly engaged cross-functional team. Additionally, Public Services has made steady progress on the development of operational procedures aligned with HR policies.

Looking ahead to the upcoming fiscal year, all library locations will undertake annual schedule reviews. These reviews are designed to better align operational needs with staffing models, while also incorporating staff preferences, supporting both service excellence and employee engagement.

The Library Leadership Team held a focused session on Post-Incident Procedures and Best Practices. Staff participation and feedback were invaluable. Professional development and leadership cultivation remained a priority.

In partnership with Baltimore County's Office of Information Technology (OIT), BCPL has been assigned a dedicated Product Manager, a role provided to many other county departments but a first for the library system. This addition comes at a critical time, as BCPL anticipates future software system expansion and potential replacements, and this will help ensure that technology resources are strategically managed in alignment with organizational needs.

Capital Projects

Mr. Hartzell shared the Capital Projects report. He shared that acoustic panels have been added to study rooms at Parkville and White Marsh; children's area furniture was installed at Arbutus before the SRC Kickoff event; construction of the temporary stairs at Loch Raven has stalled as permits are acquired; and that Property Management will begin maintenance projects at several branches that had been deferred for some time.

Statistical Dashboard

Ms. Gamertsfelder reviewed the Statistical Dashboard. She noted that meeting room reservations have been added to the report in place of notarial work.

Fiscal Services

Ms. Rowe reported that the gap between revenues is \$506,000 over expenditures. Fiscal services will be pre-paying for a number of digital services over the next few weeks. Ms. Rowe also reviewed a new department report for Fiscal Services and noted that 72.92% of payments are now made via ACH (Automated Clearing House). She also shared the top five areas of revenue year-to-date, and a chart of Foundation and State grant funding. Fiscal Services continue to work on the implementation of new timekeeping software, preparing for the end of the fiscal year, and creating the FY 2027 Chart of Accounts.

Human Resources

Ms. Romney shared highlights from the Human Resources Report. BCPL has 509 active employees. Human Resources will continue with recruitment, as necessary. Work continues updating the Employee Handbook. Human Resources conducted recruitment training for management groups to inform and clarify the recruitment process. Preparations continue for the implementation of FMLI (Family and Medical Leave Insurance) which will be administered by the Maryland Department of Labor. Multilingual certification has been delayed by technical issues which have been resolved.

Union Report

Mr. Yankovich, Interim Chief Steward, reviewed the Union Report for the Board. There were no new grievances. Bradbury Miller will be connecting with the stewards regarding the Executive Director search. A main concern for the Union is the plan to open the Reisterstown Branch on Sundays in place of Owings Mills. The Union feels there was not sufficient notice of the change given to allow for the Union

to assess impact on Owings Mills staff who use public transportation. The Union requests that the Board postpone the vote on operating hours until the Labor Management Committee can discuss the plan.

Health and safety concerns centered around HVAC issues, which are being addressed by Facilities and Property Management. The Labor Management Committee will be discussing the FY 2027 COLA, the Longevity Plan, and the Multilingual Policy Implementation Plan.

Ms. Cheikh thanked Mr. Yankovic for the report and for the grace given regarding building issues. There is a process that is followed by Mr. Hartzell, and he works diligently to make sure issues are handled as quickly as possible.

Board Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met this month, discussed the current RFPs, and heard an update on the executive search process.

Search Committee

Ms. Walsh David (chair) shared that the committee will make every effort to keep staff updated and make sure staff understand the process. The job notice will be live on the Bradbury Miller website as soon as the Executive Director Job Description has been approved. Bradbury Miller will screen applications for review by the committee. Selected applicants will be interviewed with the goal of having a finalist in October.

Ms. Walsh David thanked Mr. Otto, Purchasing and Grant Specialist, for his assistance in the selection process.

Closed Session

The Board went into closed session on May 19, 2026, at 8:15 am. Mr. Netzer and Ms. West were absent. Ms. Beegle and Ms. Baker were present for a portion of the discussion. The Board discussed a personnel matter and authorized the BCPL executive team to implement actions voted upon. The vote of members present was unanimous.

The Board also went into closed session on May 28, 2026, at 1:04 pm. Ms. West was absent and Dr. Lin-Chen recused herself. Ms. Beegle, Ms. Baker, and legal counsel Ms. Bolmarcich were also present. The Board discussed the performance of an employee, and the voting members of the Board authorized the action recommended by Human Resources.

Board President's Report

Ms. Cheikh thanked the BPCL staff for the wonderful program this month and for all the reports the Board heard. It was a very full June agenda, and it shows the vitality of the organization and the exciting, worthwhile work being done at the library. From summer meals, to Pride Month activities, to the relationships being built with state and local legislators, all show our successful efforts and the breadth and scale of BCPL's efforts.

Ms. Cheikh thanked the Board Nominating Committee and everyone who is stepping up to serve as BCPL moves into a new fiscal year.

She took a moment to reflect on the political and economic uncertainty coming in the year ahead. The Board is aware that BCPL might face cuts in funding and resources for staff and programming. There will be new County Council members and State legislators. Cuts will make it challenging to meet the increased demands of economic and political change. However, BCPL has secured capital funding, and the Board is excited to move forward with capital projects.

The Board will remain vigilant and is determined to demonstrate BCPL's values and to justify its funding, especially when budgets are tight. She shared that history has shown that in economic downturns there are surges in library use as people seek free resources for internet access, job search assistance, and other services. BCPL plays a critical role in bridging the digital divide and providing access to technology and the internet for those who may not have it at home. Customer demand for digital content is also rising and shaping expectations around accessibility and convenience, and BCPL's ability to adapt to customer needs.

BCPL will play a pivotal role in the County this coming year and will continue to offer resources like job databases, resume assistance, and help with online applications; playing a vital role in helping people find employment. BCPL will continue to support local businesses by providing information resources and expertise. BCPL will serve as a community hub offering safe and accessible space with programs for individuals and families.

Ms. Cheikh is confident that BCPL will successfully navigate the upcoming leadership transitions as a new Board President is elected and a new Executive Director is hired. The Board and BCPL leadership will develop strategies highlighting how BCPL creates value for the County and BCPL's staff. BCPL can benefit from anticipating change and adapting services to meet community and staff needs, as necessary. The Board will continue to advocate for continued funding and support.

Ms. Cheikh wished everyone a wonderful summer. She will continue to serve BCPL and the Board in whatever capacity needed by the new president.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers

Ms. West thanked Ms. Cheikh for her service and praised her dedication to making the library prosper. She stated that Ms. Cheikh is a committed, creative person who has stepped up to the challenges that have come her way during her time on the Board as a member and as President. Ms. Cheikh's hard work has paid off by making libraries stronger for the citizens of Baltimore County.

The Board elected the proposed slate of officers for FY 2027. Beginning July 1st, the Board's officers will be Ms. Ganguly – President; Ms. Cruz – Vice President; Ms. Walsh David - Treasurer; Ms. West – Secretary (***Netzer/Lin-Chen***).

Branch Hours of Operation

Ms. Baker shared the financial and operational benefit to opening the Reisterstown Branch in place of the Owings Mills branch during FY 2027's Sunday hours. The Board approved the FY 2027 hours of operation **(Walsh David/West)**.

Updated Transfer Policy

The Board approved updates to the transfer policy, which were approved by counsel **(Lin-Chen/West)**.

FY 2027 Board Meeting Dates and Locations

The Board approved meeting dates and locations for FY 2027 and a notice will be posted on the website **(Lin-Chen/Walsh David)**.

Executive Director Job Description

After correction to Chiefs job titles referred to in the document, the Board approved the Executive Director Job Description **(Walsh David/West)**.

CLOSED SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Cheikh called for a motion to close the public portion of the meeting at 9:22 am under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (1) to consider personnel matters related to a specific employee or employees and to adjourn from closed session **(Lin-Chen/West)**. Aye: Cheikh, Lin-Chen, Netzer, Walsh David, and West. Absent: Ms. Ganguly and Ms. Cruz. Dr. Lin-Chen did not attend the closed session. Staff members Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, and Ms. Romney were present for the closed session.

A statement about the closed session will be provided at the next regular meeting of the Board.

Submitted by

Anne West

Acting Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees