

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

September 15, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, at the Towson Library. The meeting was called to order at 8:08 am by Board Vice President Ms. Cruz. Other Board members present were Ms. Cheikh, Dr. Lin, Mr. Netzer, Ms. Walsh David, and Ms. West. Ms. Ganguly arrived as the consideration of the minutes began and assumed control of the meeting.

Staff in attendance: Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, Ms. Evans, Ms. Gamertsfelder, Mr. Hartzell, Ms. Jackson, Ms. Leitch, Ms. Romney, Ms. Rowe, Ms. Smith, Ms. Watson. Also in attendance was Delegate Forbes.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of August 4, 2026, and August 20, 2026 **(Walsh David/West)**. Ms. Cheikh requested a change to the draft September 8, 2026, minutes to reflect her presence for the entire meeting. Ms. Ganguly called for a motion and the Board approved the correction. The Board then voted to approve the September 8, 2026, minutes **(Walsh David/Cruz)**

Changes to the Agenda

Ms. Cheikh requested an agenda change to allow Delegate Forbes to speak **(Walsh David/Lin)**.

Delegate Forbes presented Mr. Hartzell with citations from the County Executive and Maryland General Assembly in recognition of his dedication to the residents of Baltimore County.

The Board expressed their gratitude for his service and wished him success in his future endeavors.

Comments from the Public

Ms. Bass thanked the Board for deciding not to renew the contract with Cornerstone and including union leadership in the Executive Director search process. She also emphasized the importance of collaboration among the Board, administration, and Human Resources and referenced the Maryland public library laws.

Ms. Walsh David thanked everyone who participated in the interview process.

REPORTS

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

External Affairs

Ms. Beegle reported that public programming saw an increase of more than 2,000 participants over the summer despite offering approximately 200 fewer programs during the same period as compared to the previous year.

September Marketing efforts include back to school initiatives, National Library Card Sing-Up Month, and the promotion of Sunday service hours.

The Foundation successfully launched this year's Booked for Baltimore County with Jesmyn Ward and will continue to bring great authors to Baltimore County. BCPL's advocacy campaign also kicked off, and the Foundation's 250th event committee will share ideas at their next meeting.

Public Services

Ms. Baker thanked staff for their efforts throughout the busy summer season. She noted the successful launch of Sunday service hours. Ms. Baker thanked Mr. Yankovich for serving as Interim Chief Steward during Ms. Jackson's absence and welcomed Ms. Jackson back to her role.

Capital Projects

Mr. Hartzell provided updates on a number of projects.

Woodlawn Branch

Skylights have been installed, and window installation is underway. Once enclosed, interior drywall work will begin. At that point, a tour will be arranged for Trustees.

Randallstown Branch

Sixty percent design drawings have been completed, and construction drawings are now underway. Value engineering efforts are being conducted to remain within the projected \$55 million project budget.

Ms. Cheikh asked if the \$55 million for Randallstown was for the project as a whole, or just for the library portion? Mr. Hartzell shared that it was for the project as a whole.

North Point HVAC

This project has been delayed until early November and the branch remains closed. Staff continue to work with contractors to minimize impact and support reopening as soon as possible.

Loch Raven Stair Replacement

The permits required for the project have been received. Construction is expected to begin on September 28. Meeting Room access will be maintained with temporary stairs.

Other Projects

County Property Management deferred maintenance projects are ongoing.

The White Marsh Branch is expected to require a temporary closure for roof and skylight replacement.

Efforts continue to improve communication and advance notice from County project managers regarding service impacts.

Statistical Dashboard

Ms. Gamertsfelder provided a written report to the Board. Ms. Ganguly called for questions; there were none.

Fiscal Services

Ms. Rowe provided a written report to the Board. Ms. Ganguly called for questions; there were none.

Human Resources

Ms. Romney shared a written report prior to the meeting. Ms. Ganguly called for questions; there were none.

Union Report

Ms. Jackson, Chief Steward, thanked Mr. Yankovich for his work while she was away. She also thanked the Board for including the stewards in the Executive Director interview process.

Ms. Jackson reviewed the Union Report for the Board. A grievance regarding the opening of Reisterstown in place of Owings Mills on Sundays was withdrawn. Two other grievances involving personnel issues are still active.

The issue of limits to promotion or transfer while under corrective action or performance improvement plan (PIP) has been raised as there is no written policy.

Health and safety concerns included HVAC issues over the summer at six locations. Four locations have been treated for bed bugs. Other pest treatments included mice and wasps.

The Labor Management Committee will be discussing promotions and transfers with corrective action or PIP and recruitment and selection procedures.

Board Evaluation Committee

Ms. Cheikh reported that the evaluation committee met this month and will follow up with Human Resources regarding standard protocol for evaluations. The committee will continue to meet as needed.

Finance Committee

Ms. Walsh David shared that the Finance Committee has been reviewing the status of the overall budget process. Ms. Rowe has reviewed internal budget development with the committee and is working on efficiencies in how information is presented going forward. The Committee also reviewed mileage rates and is considering travel policy updates. Ms. Walsh David was pleased to note that funding from grants exceeded the amount budgeted. Future discussions will include longevity pay.

Executive Search Committee

Ms. Walsh David expressed appreciation for the feedback received during the process from staff. The Committee appreciates that there were some concerns regarding who would have an opportunity to meet the candidates in person. The Committee worked to be fair to the candidates and staff and

allowed everyone to be able to see the same presentation and have the same opportunity to give feedback. The Board will be conducting interviews with the four finalists today, and hope to be able to announce a decision soon.

Board President's Report

Ms. Ganguly expressed her appreciation for the Jasmyn Ward event. The event reminded her of why she is passionate about being a library trustee. She felt the staff did an excellent job ensuring the event was a success, and the Board was grateful for all their efforts.

The Board is looking forward to today's candidate interviews. The Board appreciates all that staff have been doing to help pull BCPL forward during the transition. Ms. Ganguly acknowledged Mr. Hartzell's 24 years of service to BCPL and wanted him to know he will be missed, and the Board wishes him well in his next chapter.

Closed Session Statements

August 4, 2026

The Board met in closed session on August 4, 2026, at 8:42 am via Zoom.

The meeting was closed under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (1) to consider personnel matters related to a specific employee or employees.

The motion to move into closed session was made by Ms. Cruz and was seconded by Dr. Lin. Voting aye: Cheikh, Cruz, Ganguly, Lin, Netzer, and West. Absent: Ms. Walsh David.

Staff members Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, Ms. Leitch, Mr. Mason, Ms. Romney were present for the closed session.

The Board discussed the termination of an employee and unanimously authorized Human Resources to take the recommended actions.

August 20, 2026

The Board met in closed session on August 20, 2026, at 8:02 am via Zoom. The full Board attended the closed session.

The meeting was closed under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (1) to consider personnel matters related to a specific employee or employees.

The motion to move into closed session was made by Ms. West and seconded by Ms. Cruz. Voting aye: Ms. Cheikh, Ms. Cruz, Ms. Ganguly, Dr. Lin, Mr. Netzer, Ms. Walsh David, and Ms. West.

Staff members Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, Ms. Leitch, Ms. Kleback, Mr. Malley, Ms. Romney, Mr. White, and Mr. Wolfe were present for portions of the closed session.

The Board discussed the termination and discipline of employees and unanimously authorized Human Resources to take the recommended actions.

Summary for September 8

The Board met in closed session on September 8, 2026, at 11:01 am via Zoom.

The meeting was closed under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (8) to potential or pending litigation, and General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (1) to consider personnel matters related to a specific employee or employees.

The motion to move into a closed session was made by Anne West and seconded by Ms. Cruz. Voting Aye: Cheikh, Cruz, Ganguly.

Staff members included Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, and Ms. Romney who were present for portions of the meeting.

While in closed session, the board discussed pending litigation and the performance evaluation of staff members.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Collection Development Policy - Revised

Ms. Watson presented revisions to the Collection Development Policy to comply with state standards. The revisions add language protecting librarians from discipline when following established collection policies; add explicit support for the Freedom to Read Act; and establish a response timeline of up to 180 days for formal requests for reconsideration of materials.

The Board approved the revised Collection Development Policy **(Cheikh/Walsh David)**.

Circulation Policy Revision – Use of Library Cards

Ms. Watson presented updates to the Rules and Regulations for Using a BCPL Library Card. Key changes include that the e-cards will function as introductory accounts. Borrowing privileges for physical and digital materials will require a full library card. Administrative exceptions may be granted as appropriate for homebound customers. Staff anticipate implementing the changes following a public information campaign, targeting the beginning of 2027.

These changes align with practices adopted by peer library systems. They will improve management of digital collections and hold requests and offer better tracking of library usage and resource allocation.

The Board approved the updated Rules and Regulations for Using a BCPL Library Card **(Lin/Cheikh)**. Marketing will develop a notification plan, and the policy will go into effect in January 2027.

Ms. Watson shared that educational materials are being developed that will explain e-book licensing, costs, circulation limits, and related legislative issues.

CLOSED SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ganguly called for a motion to close the public portion of the meeting at 8:52 am under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (1) to consider personnel matters related to a specific employee or employees **(Cheikh/Cruz)**. Aye: Cheikh, Ganguly, Lin, Netzer, Walsh David, and West. Staff members Ms. Baker, Ms. Beegle, Ms. Leitch, Ms. Romney, and Ms. Smith were present for the closed session.

The Board returned to open session at 8:56 am **(Walsh David/Cruz)** and voted unanimously to authorize Human resources to take the recommended personnel actions.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 am **(Lin/Cruz)**.

Submitted by

Anne West

Acting Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees