

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
DECEMBER 15, 2020

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held via Zoom on Tuesday, December 15, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 am by Board President Maureen Walsh David, and a notification of recording was given. Those wishing to speak during Public Comment were asked to sign-up using the Q&A tool on Zoom. Other Board members present were: Yara Cheikh, Jane Eickhoff, Michael Netzer, Paul Schwab, Aaron Slater, and Anne West. In attendance as a guest of the Board was Ms. Sonia Alcántara-Antoine.

Staff in attendance: James Cooke, Interim Co-Director; Natalie Edington, Interim Co-Director; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning, Projects and Data Coordinator; Justin Hartzel, Cockeysville Branch Manager; Ann McElroy, Staff Association President; Samantha O’Heren, Hereford Branch Manager, Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager; Liz Sundermann, Virtual Services and Media Creation Manager; Cynthia Webber, Hereford Librarian; Mary Wilson, Human Resources Manager.

Ms. Walsh David began the meeting by introducing Ms. Sonia Alcántara-Antoine who will join BCPL as Director in February. Ms. Alcántara-Antoine expressed her pleasure at being selected as the new Director, and her anticipation of joining BCPL in serving the Baltimore County community.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the November 17, 2020 meeting (**Eickhoff/West**).

Correspondence

The Board received a letter from a staff member with concerns about the candidate presentation portion of the Director Search process. Ms. Walsh David thanked the letter writer for their feedback, but was unable to respond directly as the letter was anonymous. Future concerns may be submitted through the Staff Association.

Public Comments

Ms. Anita Bass, Essex Circulation Assistant, spoke to the Board about her disappointment in the way communication around a recent positive COVID-19 case at the Essex Branch was handled. Ms. Walsh David thanked Ms. Bass for her comments and indicated that the Interim Co-Directors would formulate a response.

Upcoming Events

Interim Co-Director Edington called the Board’s attention to the upcoming virtual ALA Midwinter Meeting.

REPORTS

Director’s Report (Edington)

BCPL continues to develop virtual programs during the pandemic. Recent highlights included Baltimore County Dialogs on Race: Advancing Health Equity; virtual visits from Battle of the

Books authors; Teen Book club; children's art classes; and teen Coding Club. Branches continue to find ways to connect with local groups and customers. This month Randallstown worked with the PAL center on a deposit collection; Woodlawn hosted the Woodlawn Page Turners book club with a virtual BookBuzz from Collection Development; Essex demonstrated HeritageQuest database via virtual outreach to the Essex Senior Center. There has been good computer use during this first month offering appointments. Staff are seeing new and returning customers. BCPL's holiday toy drive expanded to include other necessities such as clothing and supplies. Branches participated as drop-off locations.

Mr. Schwab asked about the safe drug disposal project. This is a partnership with the County Department of Health to distribute drug disposal kits at eight branches identified by the County.

Co-Interim Director Cooke introduced Mr. Justin Hartzel, new Manager of the Cockeysville Branch. Mr. Hartzel expressed his excitement in his new role. The Board was familiar with Mr. Hartzel in his role as manager of the Rosedale Branch, they congratulated him on his new assignment.

Statistical Report (Gamertsfelder)

Copies of the 2020 Annual Report will be sent via mail to Board members. Ms. Gamertsfelder thanked Ms. Frederick and the Marketing/Graphics Department for their work on the report.

Ms. Gamertsfelder reviewed the Statistical Reports. A recent drop in circulation is most likely attributed to the recent COVID-19 branch closures of several of BCPL's busiest locations. Renewals continue to be a large portion of circulation, accounting for about 30% of that total. A targeted report was shared in response to recent statistical questions about returns, as well as to include newly added Computer Appointment and Print Pick-Up services. November saw 1,700 PC appointments and about 1,100 print requests.

Ms. Cheikh inquired after the tracking of hotspot check outs. Ms. Gamertsfelder does not pull out data on these items specifically, rather she reports them as part of the collection overall. However, the majority of them are in circulation. Ms. Cheikh asked if there was data on the age group checking them out, but this data is not tracked. Ms. Sundermann reported that all hotspots and Chromebooks are in circulation. Ms. West asked if the hotspots and Chromebooks could be renewed, and Ms. Sundermann confirmed that they are eligible for renewal.

Facilities Report (Cooke)

Mr. Cooke updated the Board on facilities projects. The Reisterstown Renovation, which is 60% complete and on schedule. The Rosedale meeting room/bathroom refresh should begin on December 28, 2020. A snow removal plan has been developed and put in place with Property Management. Property Management is installing air purifiers in public spaces around the County and BCPL will be included in this project. The number of purifiers will be determined by the size of the space.

Ms. Walsh David was pleased that construction was going so well and that the Rosedale project is finally starting.

Finance Report (Rowe)

Ms. Rowe reported that revenues and expenditures continue to be below projections.

Staff Association (McElroy)

Ms. McElroy welcomed Ms. Alcántara-Antoine to BCPL. She encouraged the Board to join the Wellness Challenge. Staff Association officers are working on a final report for 2019/2020. Staff members who joined the association in 2020 will have their membership extended through 2021. Ms. McElroy thanked the out-going Staff Association Representatives and members of the Staff Association Concerns Council members. She reminded the Board that this was her last meeting and Mr. Joey Schenning would be representing Staff Association as President at the January Board meeting.

Ms. Walsh David expressed the Board's appreciation for the work done by Ms. McElroy and the Staff Association on behalf of the staff.

Board Report

Ms. Walsh David expressed her appreciation of staff participation and feedback during the Director Search process.

OLD BUSINESS

The Hive and Artist/Maker in Residence Update (O'Heren/Webber)

Ms. O'Heren and Ms. Webber gave the board an overview of activities at the Hive, the Hereford Branch's Center of Excellence focusing on the arts. The Hive provides arts programming for adults and children and is home to BCPL's Artist-in-Residence. Ms. O'Heren reviewed the process for selecting an artist, who is funded through a grant from the Northern Baltimore County Arts Foundation (NBCAF). The Branch has hosted a variety of media artists as well as musicians. While the program was suspended for 2020 due to the pandemic, plans are going forward for 2021.

Ms. Alcántara-Antoine left the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Artist/Maker in Residence Policy (Edington)

The Board approved changes to the Artist/Maker in Residence Policy to allow the program to be implemented in a virtual setting (**Cheikh/Schwab**).

Policy Revision: Temporary Telework Policy During Adverse Weather & Emergency Building Conditions (Edington)

Through the winter 2020-2021 season, the Board was asked to approve a Temporary Telework Policy as it relates to adverse weather closings. For this winter season, if Library buildings are closed, all onsite services will be cancelled. All full-time and part-time staff who are not

providing critical functions onsite are expected to telework for all telework and/or onsite hours scheduled that day. All virtual/remote programs and services are provided as scheduled. Managers will have the discretion to cancel activities on a case-by-case basis. Staff who telework will not be eligible for any premium pay or compensatory time. Staff who chose not to telework during weather closings may use Liberal Leave.

The Board approved revision to the Temporary Telework Policy **(West/Eickhoff)**.

Minimum Wage Compliance (Wilson)

The Board approved a change to the Part-Time Salary Scale to comply with the next phase of the State of Maryland Minimum Wage bill **(Eickhoff/West)**. The change will take effect in January 2021, and impact only two employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Walsh David called for a motion to adjourn. Before one could be made, Ms. West requested that BCPL look into becoming a vaccination center for COVID-19 and Ms. Cheikh requested that sinks be added to children's areas when we renovate them.

Mr. Slater made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Schwab seconded. The Board meeting Adjourned at 9:06 am with appreciation for staff dedication during a challenging 2020 and final wishes for a happy 2021.

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees