

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

May 18, 2021

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held via Zoom on Tuesday, May 18, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 8:02 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, and Anne West.

Staff in attendance: Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, Director; James Cooke, Assistant Director; Natalie Edington, Assistant Director; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Linda Frederick, Marketing and Development Manager; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning, Projects and Data Coordinator; Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager; Joey Schenning, Staff Association President; and Liz Sundermann-Zimmer, Virtual Services and Media Creation Manager.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting (**West/Schwab**).

Correspondence

None.

Upcoming Events

Summer Reading Challenge will begin on June 19 and this year's theme is "Tails and Tales". The Mobile Library Law Center vehicle should be delivered on May 28 and a ribbon cutting event will be held at the Essex Branch on June 10 with Maryland Legal Aid.

REPORTS

Director's Report (Alcántara-Antoine)

Director Alcántara-Antoine gave a verbal Director's Report. BCPL reopened on May 25, and with the rapidly changing information from the State and County, altered the original reopening plan to align with the State and County on lifting the indoor mask mandate for vaccinated customers and no longer requiring customers to complete the form at www.BaCoSafe.org to enter the building. She commended frontline staff who demonstrated the true meaning of public service as BCPS reopened branches to the public. Director Alcántara-Antoine was at the Cockeysville Branch for reopening and saw firsthand how hard the staff were working and the can-do spirit that defines BCPL staff. There were some glitches, but staff handled them all with professionalism and aplomb. The public was excited to come back into the library after what has been a challenging year.

Director Alcántara-Antoine acknowledged staff who celebrated big accomplishments this month. BCPL's Media Creation team received three Communicator Awards from the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts for films that they created for BCPL virtual programs. Assistant Library Manager Nay Keppler was honored for her leadership and numerous contributions to the Maryland library community when she won the MLA Outstanding Member Award. Numerous staff members presented at the *Teen Connect for Maryland Libraries Conference* sharing tips and best practices for innovative teen services, which will then be emulated around the state. All of these BCPL staff members exemplify leadership to our peers around the state and country.

In alignment with Baltimore County, and with the authority granted to the Director in November, 2019 to match County practice on closure, BCPL will observe the Independence Day holiday on July 5th. All branches will be closed and no virtual service will be provided.

Ms. West commented that she was also at Cockeysville on reopening day, and noted how happy and excited customers and staff were to see one another.

Statistical Report (Gamertsfelder)

Ms. Gamertsfelder reviewed the monthly Statistical Dashboard. April was a typical month. Work continues on Wi-Fi statistic reporting with estimated numbers used again this month.

Mr. Netzer asked for clarification of the issue with Wi-Fi reporting. Ms. Gamertsfelder shared that new software for our access points was too sensitive, and was capturing data from any device locating the Wi-Fi, rather than just those devices actually requesting access.

Facilities Report (Cooke)

Mr. Cooke was pleased that reopening went fairly smoothly. Buildings are currently operating at 30% capacity, which will change over time.

Mr. Cooke shared some photos of progress at Reisterstown and Rosedale. Repair of the sewer line continues at Rosedale. Planning has begun for replacement of the shelving and a quiet study room at Woodlawn, replacement shelving at White Marsh, and a laptop bar and exterior book drop at Essex.

Ms. Walsh David asked if the capacity limit would be increased slowly or go to 100% when updated. Different capacities are being considered and lifting it completely is not out of the question. Ms. Walsh David asked for clarification on which phase of the Reopening Plan included the restoration of all services, and that is Phase 4.

Mr. Netzer asked if BCPL had considered becoming a vaccination site. The Reopening Team has worked with guidance from the Department of Health, and using BCPL as a vaccination site is not a request the County has made. Vaccinations are currently readily available at other sites.

Ms. Eickhoff asked if branches had reached capacity on opening day. While most did not, larger branches had short lines at various points during that day.

Finance Report (Rowe)

Ms. Rowe reviewed the Finance Report, expenses and revenues remain below budget. Hiring for full and part time vacancies continues. Changes have been made to the pay scale for Circulation Assistant II and Circulation Assistant III. These changes are the first step in the implementation of the Hybrid position approved by the Board.

Ms. Cheikh asked if Director Alcántara-Antoine and Ms. Rowe need to present the FY 22 Budget Request to the County Council. Director Alcántara-Antoine and Ms. Rowe have already gone before the Council. Additionally, Administration has answered two rounds of questions from the County Council Auditors. The Auditors recommended no changes to the Budget and the Council budget adoption will be on May 27.

Staff Association (Schanning)

Mr. Schanning updated the Board on recent and upcoming Staff Association events which continue to be virtual.

Board Report (Walsh David)

At the April meeting, questions arose about how the public and staff could find Board Agendas and Minutes. Ms. Walsh David shared that the Board meets consistently on the third Tuesday of the month and meeting agendas and minutes are available on the BCPL website. Additionally, BCPL staff have access to the minutes and agenda on SharePoint and a summary of the meeting is sent to them within a few days of the meeting. She thanked Ms. Edington for providing the staff with this information in a Beat on SharePoint.

OLD BUSINESS

FY 2022 Budget (Rowe)

Ms. Rowe covered this topic during her Finance Report.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Board Nominating Committee (Walsh David)

Ms. Walsh David appointed Ms. Cheikh, Ms. Eickhoff, and Ms. West to the Nominating Committees. The committee will present a slate of officer candidates at the June meeting.

Board Meeting Dates

The Board will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of the month. It is anticipated that virtual meetings will continue through FY 2021. Until in person meetings resume, the meeting time will remain 8:00 am.

Update to Rules of Conduct (Gamertsfelder)

The Board approved updating the Rules of Conduct to include a preamble that aligns BCPL with County Government guidance on matters related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This statement will facilitate seamless alignment with current guidance. Also updated was the section on food and drink to indicate that no food or drink is allowed when face coverings are required. The Board approved these revisions to the Rules of Conduct **(Cheikh/Schwab)**

Reisterstown Donor Wall (Frederick)

Ms. Frederick requested approval of a donor wall, similar to the one at the Hereford Branch, to be installed during the current renovation of the Reisterstown Branch. Donors in various financial categories will have their names added to the wall in accordance with the Naming Policy. Mr. Schwab asked if there was a way to remove names if necessary. Wording in the Naming Policy will be reviewed and amended with that provision if necessary. The Board approved the donor wall and the solicitation of donors provided there was provision in the Naming Policy to remove names or the entire installation as necessary or after some time **(Cheikh/Netzer)**.

Grant Approval

The Board approved BCPL's application for grant funding in excess of \$300,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act facilitated by the Maryland State Library Agency. These funds will be used for projects in support of Strategic Plan XI **(Eickhoff/Schwab)**.

COMMENTS FROM the PUBLIC

The Board heard comments from three members of the public. Bridget Fitzgerald commented on the quick change to the mask policy and asked that the Board reinstate the mask requirement for customers. Lauren Buell thanked Assistant Director Edington for being at the Essex branch for the first day of reopening. She commented on the rapid change to the mask policy and would like to see customers required to wear masks. Joey Schenning also commented on the quick change of policy.

ADJOURNMENT

With the Board's business concluded, Ms. Walsh David requested and received a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 am **(Schwab/Netzer)**.

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees