

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

March 19, 2024

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at the Arbutus Library. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 am by Board President Yara Cheikh. Other Board members present were: Maureen Walsh David, Claudia Cruz, Jane Eickhoff, and Havaca Ganguly. Ms. West arrived at 8:05 am.

Staff in attendance: James Cooke, Chief Operations Officer; Jen Evans, Executive Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning and Projects Manager; Amanda Leitch, Human Resources Generalist; Robin Linton, Human Resources Manager; Robert Maranto, Arbutus Branch Manager; and Helen Rowe Fiscal Services Manager.

COMMUNICATION

Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the February 20, 2024, meeting (**Eickhoff/West**).

Correspondence

None.

Upcoming Events

Highlighted were the upcoming Public Library Association Conference April 3-5, 2024, and the Maryland Library Association Conference May 8-10, 2024.

Comments from the Public

None.

REPORTS

CEO (Alcántara-Antoine)

Ms. Cheikh read the CEO's written report which will be filed with the minutes.

Ms. West arrived.

Statistical Dashboard (Gamertsfelder)

Ms. Gamertsfelder shared the February 2024 statistics with the Board. The Arbutus Branch is the branch that has seen the most impact from the temporary closure of Catonsville with a significant increase in in-person visits.

Ms. West remarked on the increased number of customer assists. Ms. Ganguly asked what counted as a virtual visit. Ms. Gamertsfelder shared that a virtual visit is any visit to BCPL.info or the mobile app.

Arbutus Branch Report (Maranto)

Mr. Maranto that the key factors in service at the Arbutus Branch are challenge, change and need. The level of business at Arbutus has increased with the closure of the Catonsville Branch for renovation. Staff met the challenge with flexibility and as a result the busiest year Arbutus has experienced has gone well.

Ms. Walsh David is interested in seeing what happens when Catonsville reopens as she feels a few of Catonsville's customers may remain with Arbutus.

Customer Experience (Edington)

Ms. Cheikh read the Customer Experience Report which will be filed with the minutes.

Operations (Cooke)

COO Cooke shared that the construction portion of the Catonsville renovation is almost complete. The next phase is inspections to allow for occupancy, followed by installation of furniture, shelving and technology.

The Digital Equity and Virtual Services Department has distributed 2,300 Chromebooks to residents. Mr. Cooke thanked all the staff involved for their work.

Mr. Cooke introduced Ms. Robin Linton, the new Human Resources Manager. Ms. Linton was previously at DC Housing Authority, Save the Children, Maryland Live, and Comcast. She has extensive experience in policy development and labor and employee relations.

Ms. Linton expressed her pleasure to be working at BCPL and to be leading the HR team in providing for the needs of the employees.

Fiscal Services (Rowe)

Ms. Rowe provided the Finance Report. Recent recruitment by Human Resources has narrowed the variance in salaries. Ms. Rowe highlighted a pass-through grant from the Maryland State Library agency for \$1,309,044 that is grant revenue received by BCPL for Baltimore County for costs related to the Catonsville renovation. Funds will be remitted to Baltimore County at the start of the next fiscal year.

Human Resources (Leitch)

Ms. Leitch reported on the busy month in Human Resources. Human Resources staff coordinated staff training and interviewed candidates for a wide variety of open positions.

Included were Library Manager, Payroll Specialist, Youth and Family Engagement Librarian, Recording Studio Specialist, and other positions.

Board Report (Cheikh)

Ms. Cheikh thanked the staff of Arbutus for hosting the Board Meeting and for accommodating the additional customers using the branch during the Catonsville renovation.

Ms. Cheikh echoed remarks made in the CEO's report and added her thanks to those involved in the Lisa Scottoline event. Several of the Board members attended, including Ms. Cheikh, and all enjoyed the program. There is already anticipation for the Alexander McCall Smith event in the fall.

Several members of the Board will be attending the PLA (Public Library Association) Conference in Columbus and look forward to supporting Sonia in her role as PLA President. The group is also excited to gain new perspectives and knowledge of current successful library trends.

Ms. Cheikh recently wrote an editorial for the *Baltimore Sun*. The editorial supported the Freedom to Read Act currently moving through the legislative process in Annapolis. In that editorial, Ms. Cheikh remarked that "Libraries serve each American who walks through the door from all the diverse socioeconomic, racial, and geographic communities across our nation. It is incredible work performed by humble and hardworking people."

Ms. Cheikh, on behalf of the Board, thanked the staff who she feels are truly humble in the face of so much worthwhile programming, work and service performed in the community. Ms. Cheikh reminded the Board that it is their job to amplify the stories of the staff to the wider community and support BCPL as best they can.

Finally, Ms. Cheikh remarked that the application period for new trustees is closed. The Board is looking forward to reviewing applications and recommending a qualified candidate to the County Executive for appointment.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Reappointment of Trustees (Cheikh)

Ms. West and Ms. Cheikh are eligible to serve a second term on the Board. The Board approved sending their names to the County Executive for reappointment (**Ganguly/Eickhoff**).

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 (**Cruz/Eickhoff**).

Submitted by

Havaca Ganguly

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees