

**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**May 17, 2022**

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at the Towson Library. The meeting was called to order at 8:01 am by Board President Maureen Walsh David. Other Board members present were: Yara Cheikh, Jane Eickhoff, Mike Netzer, Paul Schwab, and Anne West.

Staff in attendance: Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, Director; James Cooke, Assistant Director; Natalie Edington, Assistant Director; Will Carroll, Staff Association President; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning & Projects Manager; Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager, and Jamie Watson, Collection Development Manager. An additional guest, Mr. Bernie Marczyk of Cornerstone, was also present.

**COMMUNICATION**

***Minutes***

The Board approved the minutes of the April 19, 2022, meeting (**Eickhoff/West**) and the May 9, 2022 meeting (**Eickhoff/Schwab**).

***Correspondence***

None.

***Upcoming Events***

The Foundation's Big Give was taking place on May 19. Plans included pop-up events at a variety of branches and a sunset concert on the roof of the Library Garage in Towson.

***Comments from the Public***

The Board heard from Nicole Dvorak who would like the Board to reconsider the timing of the meeting.

Ms. Walsh David thanked her for her remarks.

Ms. Walsh David reordered the agenda to accommodate the presenter of the Legislative Update.

**NEW BUSINESS**

***Legislative Update (Marczyk)***

Bernie Marczyk of Cornerstone provided the Board with an overview of the collaborative efforts of his team and BPCL administration. Cornerstone actively monitored bills that would impact capital and operational funding for libraries. The final Capital Budget contains \$450,000 for the Woodlawn Library and \$450,000 for the Randallstown Library. Cornerstone also advocated for HB 685/SB 448 that would increase operating funds to libraries. Currently, those bills are on the Governor's desk for signature, and it is anticipated that the bills will be signed or allowed to pass into law without the Governor's signature.

Mr. Schwab asked about a questionnaire to be sent to candidates for governor asking about their support of libraries. Mr. Marczyk stated that those were sent out by professional associations. He asked the Board to make his team aware of any legislators where the Board could facilitate discussion due to personal connections.

Ms. Walsh David thanked him for his report and expressed how excited the Board was by the possibilities of additional Capital funding.

## REPORTS

### ***Director's Report (Alcántara-Antoine)***

Director Alcántara-Antoine thanked Mr. Marczyk for his report and then gave a verbal Director's Report. Director Alcántara-Antoine anticipates that the two items on the agenda, the Legislative update from Cornerstone and the upcoming presentation on Intellectual Freedom will provide information to assist in the Boards governing role as Trustees. Cornerstone has been working to strengthen BCPL's relationship with legislators and keeping up to date on legislation/funding opportunities that impact BCPL. Intellectual Freedom and the Freedom to Read are core values of libraries. Libraries are a bastion of a democratic society because at libraries individuals have the right to read about, learn about, and form their own opinions on whatever topic they choose. However, these fundamental rights and values are under assault nationwide and the Board has a clear role in either defending these values or undermining them.

Director Alcántara-Antoine recognized several staff members doing outstanding work on behalf of BCPL. Lori Hench, Karly Feinberg and Julie Brophy contributed to *Libraries That Build Business: Advancing Small Business and Entrepreneurship in Public Libraries* (as part of the ALA/Google Libraries Build Business grant). Media Creation Services has won three Communicator Awards of Distinction. This is the third straight year they have won multiple awards and only the second time when all of our submitted entries were deemed worthy of awards. Numerous staff presented at MLA/DLA Conference *and* PLA Conference, demonstrating the vast expertise we have amongst BCPL staff and how BCPL is a leader in libraries in the state and nation. Anita Crawford, Processing Supervisor in TS, received the MLA Margaret Carty Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes someone who demonstrates strong leadership potential and encourages the recipient to assume an increasingly responsible role in librarianship.

Director Alcántara-Antoine pointed out that each day, staff show up, work hard, and do good work in service to the community. The Board's support of the MOU agreement with the union and its ongoing support of staff is appreciated. Staff are BCPL's most valued resource. BCPL has a phenomenal team.

### ***Statistical Dashboard***

Ms. Gamertsfelder reported that the metrics for the Statistical Dashboard had normalized over the last month and there were no anomalies to bring to the Boards attention. Ms. Walsh David asked if virtual attendees were counted in program attendance numbers, and they are.

***Facilities Report (Cooke)***

Mr. Cooke gave a brief facilities report. He highlighted the 1,200 maintenance requests generated over the course of the last year, and the positive relationship between BCPL and Property Management.

***Finance Report (Rowe)***

Ms. Rowe provided the Board with the April financial summary. Fee revenue has increased over the last month and expenditures remain steady.

***Board Report (Walsh David)***

Ms. Walsh David encouraged everyone to participate in the Big Give. She also remarked on how much she and Ms. West had enjoyed the programs they attended at PLA on intellectual freedom. The agenda included a presentation on this topic, and other topics will be on future agendas as education for the Board.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

***Election of Officers (Eickhoff)***

Ms. Eickhoff presented the proposed slate of officers for FY 2023, and they were approved by the Board with Ms. West abstaining. The officers will be Maureen Walsh David, President; Yara Cheikh, Vice President; Jane Eickhoff, Treasurer; Anne West, Secretary.

***Intellectual Freedom (Watson)***

Jamie Watson, Collection Development Manager, provided the Board with information about how BCPL handles materials challenges. She also shared insights into the difference in a single person objecting to material, and the types of large, organized attacks being seen in other jurisdictions. BCPL does not see a high number of challenges each year. The average is seven. However, Ms. Watson stressed the importance of having BCPL respond to challenges in a coordinated fashion from the branches to the Board.

Ms. Cheikh asked about proposed legislation which would require the publishing of the library catalog for review. Director Alcántara-Antoine shared that the legislation had been pulled and would have impacted school, rather than public, libraries.

Ms. Walsh David asked how many items had been removed from the collection based on challenges. Ms. Watson replied that 3 titles have been removed in 12 years. It is more common that the location of the book is changed, for instance, from children to teens.

Ms. Cheikh commented that she appreciated the efforts of staff to keep polices on brand and the consistency of our message.

***Collection Development Policy (Watson)***

Ms. Watson presented an updated Collection Development Policy for approval. Changes to the policy were small and increased clarity and vision. After a brief discussion of word order and the addition of the Board as the last place of appeal, the Board approved the policy revisions **(West/Eickhoff)**.

**CLOSED SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Ms. Walsh David called for a motion to close the public portion of the meeting under General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) to interview prospective Board members. **(Schwab/West)**. Aye: Walsh David, Cheikh, Eickhoff, Netzer, Schwab, West. Absent: Slater. Also present in the closed session was Director Alcántara-Antoine.

With the move to closed session, the public meeting adjourned at 9:00 am **(West/Cheikh)**.

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees