

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, June 10 at the Pocomoke Branch (temporary location). Members present were Jeff Smith, Nancy Howard, Patricia Tomasovic, Vicki O'Mara, Kathryn Culbertson, Sandra Buchanan, and Jocelyn Briddell arrived at 9:42 a.m.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Amy Parker; Business Manager; and Dawn Ingrassia, Pocomoke Branch Manager.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

The minutes from the May 13, 2025 meeting should be amended to read under the Snow Hill Project – "Funds from the Riley bequest can help cover the cost of new shelving. Once the construction documents are 50% completed, plans for this project will be shared with the County." The header date should read May 13, 2025, and under New Business, a subheading should read "Institute for Museum and Library Services." A motion to approve the minutes with these amendments was made by Ms. Tomasovic, seconded by Ms. O'Mara. All present were in favor.

Ms. Ingrassia said the branch is seeing an increase in families visiting the temporary location. Youth Services Specialist Lisa Voss is doing a fantastic job encouraging children and families to sign up for the summer reading program. The collaborative art project will be a large hot air balloon mural. The branch is partnering with the Sturgis One Room Schoolhouse and will host another Open Mic Night to celebrate Juneteenth. Mr. Smith noted Pocomoke numbers are up.

Correspondence – *Bayside Gazette* had an article on Library branch celebrates volunteer of the year and Berlin library branch opens updated exhibit. *The Daily Times* featured an article on the Code Songs of the Underground Railroad program at the Berlin library.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the monies sent to the County Commissioners and noted grant monies are still coming in. Mr. Smith asked about the Ocean City general maintenance numbers being so high. Ms. Ranck explained that an underground geothermal well was damaged by accident during the construction of a fence around Delmarva Power and Light's battery storage station behind the library. Information has been given to the insurance company. No comments were made on the statistics.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said Tina Kahl started in the part time position in Ocean City. Ms. Paterra had a good turnout for the Code Songs of the Underground Railroad program. Ms. Ranck noted Ocean City's extended hours on Monday, Tuesday, and Saturdays for the summer season. Ocean Pines is working to increase circulation by displaying new release books on tables close to the entrance. The Homeschool History Fair in Snow Hill was a success with 19 participants entering a total of 17 projects. The Pop-Up is now doing park stops; locations are listed on the back of the current Calendar of Events. The next Foundation meeting is next Tuesday at the Snow Hill branch. Ms. Howard asked about the De-escalation training Ms. Coelho took. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said she will have to get back to her with the details. Mr. Smith commented that Ocean City held an in-house safety training led by branch manager Julie Presley.

Assistant Director's Report – A copy of the Staff Development report was sent in each

board member's packet to review before the meeting. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey reported the MLA learning reports are still coming in. It is interesting to see the trends of what trainings the staff are taking. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey gave a shout out to Ms. Ingrassia for completing her re-certification in a short amount of time. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey and Ms. Coelho tag-teamed a table at the Health & Wellness Fair in Snow Hill. A lot of people were interested in what the library does. The new Calendar of Events and the game boards are out. Ms. Arena has been doing a lot of outreach at the schools. We also have a reading log for adults too. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey attended the in-person staff development coordinator meeting last week at the Laurel branch in Maryland, where results of the learning needs assessment were discussed. Trainings on AI were discussed, as well; some libraries have policies on AI usage, though Worcester currently does not. Ms. Ranck said if there are any training needs for the board to please let her know.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Pocomoke Project** The masonry sections for the mechanical and electrical rooms are up. Wood framing is next. The project is progressing slower than originally planned and Keller is projecting final completion in March 2026. Site water continues to be an issue, with the recent rainy weather. In addition, a new site superintendent will be transitioning over the next couple of weeks. Thank you to Ms. Ingrassia and Ms. Panches for helping with the furnishings. Ms. Buchanan mentioned Norma Howard found old stained-glass windows in a church basement and wants to give them to us for the new building.

**Snow Hill Project** The Library is hoping to receive the construction documents soon to present to Commissioners. The '70s Book Bash is planned for Friday, June 27 to help raise funds toward new furniture and equipment.

**Library Mission and Vision Statement** Ms. Briddell motioned to adopt a new mission statement to read "The mission of the Worcester County Library is to encourage a love of reading, provide free access to information, and offer programs to serve and connect our communities"; Ms. Culbertson seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Buchanan motioned to adopt a new vision statement to read "The Worcester County Library will be the leading community resource that fosters literacy, cultivates a love of learning, and helps individuals reach their full potential"; Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor.

**Nominating Committee** Ms. O'Mara motioned to approve the nominating committee application; Ms. Culbertson seconded. All present were in favor.

**FY 2026 Budget** Ms. Ranck passed out the FY2026 budget to the board. Ms. Ranck said the marketing position was approved. A \$5,000 promotional budget line was also added this year. Ocean City will be getting a new digital sign out front. Ms. Ranck didn't include the two new part time positions for Pocomoke in the budget. Ms. Ranck will try to correct this. Ms. Ranck also said there was an increase in the book budget and periodicals. The budget also includes a \$2,500 COLA and a step increase for eligible staff. Ms. Howard asked if we are able to keep Hoopla. Ms. Ranck said yes, ESRL is keeping Hoopla, but the number of checkouts for patrons will decrease to six per month. The daily cap will also remain. Ms. Culbertson motioned to approve the FY2026 budget; Ms. Buchanan seconded. All present were in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Program Policy** Mr. Smith thanked the policy committee for developing a draft program policy. Under section 1.6 – take out Communications officer and put “Director”. Ms. Buchanan said we should include a sentence about minors. Ms. Ranck said no presenters are alone with minors. Ms. Briddell said all policies should be consistent with the same format. Ms. Ranck will send out information regarding the board’s intranet again. Mr. Smith mentioned section 1.4 is very helpful but reads differently from our meeting room policy. Ms. Briddell will work on this, noting we need a robust program policy. Also included are the ALA Bill of Rights and Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights. The policy will be reviewed at the September 2025 meeting.

**BookPage** The library has purchased a one-year subscription to BookPage for patrons. This publication features new titles across all genres and includes book reviews, recommendations, author interviews, and seasonal book lists. Ms. Ranck hopes it will increase reading interest and circulation statistics.

Ms. Buchanan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 a.m.; Ms. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at the Snow Hill branch at 9:30 a.m.

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Amy Parker