

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, June 11 at the Ocean Pines Branch. Members present were Jeff Smith, Sandra Buchanan, Patricia Tomasovic, Jocelyn Briddell, Vicki O'Mara and Kathryn Culbertson. Nancy Howard was absent.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Harry Burkett, Ocean Pines Branch Manager; Amy Parker, Business Manager; and Christopher Blume, Library Services Assistant, Ocean City.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Mr. Burkett said the Ocean Pines Friends general membership meeting was yesterday. The groundbreaking for the new outdoor learning space, during which Jim Meckley provided the golden shovel, was also yesterday, making it an active and exciting day. About fifteen to twenty people attended the membership meeting. Mr. Burkett also said an all-female author panel was held afterwards, with about twenty people in attendance and great conversation amongst the panelists. The weekly children's programs are so well-attended they are now held in the big meeting room. Fifty to sixty-five people attend each event.

A motion to amend the May minutes to say on page three Mr. Smith (not Ms. Smith) was made by Ms. Briddell, seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – *Ocean City Today-Dispatch* had an article on the bid process set for summer on the Pocomoke library. *Ocean City Today-Dispatch* had another article on the free Chromebook distribution. *Bayside Gazette* featured an article on the art project on display at the Berlin library.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for May 2024. Ms. Ranck said we are in decent shape. The branches are spending down the book money. Ms. Ranck noted that grant money is spent in full. Mr. Smith commented about May's door count. 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 two part-time library assistants have started in Ocean Pines: Nicole Shafer and Elizabeth Hall. Berlin needs a replacement projector; we have one on order. The cost is just under \$6,000 and should include a 5-year warranty. Berlin and Ocean Pines staff visit the Berlin 50+ Center twice a month. The battery storage project in Ocean City has begun. Access to public parking will be on the north side of the building. Pocomoke hosted a program in partnership with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. In addition to the patrons who visited the branch to view the Zoom stream, several local schools (as well as a school from New York) joined in the program and roughly 200 people watched as Mrs. Esther Starobin shared her story. Snow Hill had a great program last month, a "Homeschool History Fair" that had 27 attendees and 9 different student projects. Ms. Ranck said the Pop-Up is doing very well and visits during park stops are increasing. Amanda Laick is looking into a sunshade for the vehicle. Ms. Ranck said we are having a car wash fundraiser for the Library Foundation this Saturday. A new historic marker has been added to the Snow Hill Library grounds, to recognize a Masonic Hall built on Commerce Street that served the African American community. The African American Heritage Society of Snow Hill will hold an unveiling of the marker on June 15, 2024. The text of the marker is as follows:

**Masonic Hall**

The Masonic Hall, a Quonset hut on Commerce Street, was built in 1946 by Clemon W. Outten to serve Snow Hill's African American Community. It was first used as a movie theatre and music venue. Howard Showell purchased it around 1955 for a youth physical fitness center. In 1965, Prince Hall Masonic Lodge #105 acquired the building to host their meetings and community events.

**Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Historical Trust**

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 said sixteen staff members attended the MLA conference. Learning reports are coming in. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey is eager to read them. The EDI committee met yesterday. Two new members joined; Julie Johnson and Amanda Laick. The committee needs to review the monthly display and programming calendar. Ms. Ranck, Ms. Gravenor-Stacey, and Mr. Carmean attended a virtual marketing conference. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey mentioned the "Not Every Program Needs a Flyer" session stood out to her. We are gearing up for summer reading. Ms. Wheatley and other youth team members have been conducting outreach events to get patrons pre-registered for the program, which starts June 24. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey also said game boards are being printed. Ms. Culbertson asked if she can repost the summer reading information. Ms. Tomasovic asked who can post to social media. Ms. Ranck, Ms. Gravenor-Stacey, and Mr. Carmean can, along with a couple of other staff members.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Pocomoke** Ms. Ranck said Mr. Schollkopf had a meeting with Dawn Mackes, Nicole Punches, and Lisa Voss on May 28 to review the latest design and discuss interior furnishings. Project will need to hire a consultant to help with data/IT design. An FY 26 State Library Capital grant was submitted to help offset the cost of furnishings and equipment. Ms. Tomasovic asked about clubs giving donations to help with specific equipment. Ms. Ranck said that is possible. Ms. Buchanan mentioned possible fundraising for the porch. Ms. Ranck said the treehouse space is larger but the surrounding platform has been reduced to allow for more floorspace. We want to make sure we have an area for "tweens." The project timeline is roughly: bids go out August/September, demolition to start October, and substantial completion could be December 2025/January 2026.

**Strategic Plan** Ms. Briddell asked the board for clarification about the Strategic Plan Committee's role and the process. The committee has met twice and the public survey has been launched. Brief surveys for the library board and staff have also been drafted. Ms. Culbertson is compiling a list of community events so we can take the survey to the public and reach people who may not currently use the library. Bookmarks with the survey link are available for board members to share. The next committee meeting is scheduled for July 1 at the Snow Hill branch. Ms. Ranck would like to hold two community listening sessions. Dates need to be scheduled soon for the Calendar of Events. A strategic planning session with the board will be scheduled for after the September board meeting. Results from all of the surveys will be shared in advance.

**Chromebook Distribution Grant** Ms. Ranck said we have about 200 left. Julie Johnson from the Berlin branch is having a special program with the Stephen Decatur High School families to distribute more.

Mr. Smith suggested contacting the Principal at Buckingham. Thanks to the Berlin and Pocomoke staff for helping with this project.

**FY 2025 Budget** Commissioners approved the FY 25 Budget on June 4. Ms. Ranck passed out copies to the board. Ms. Ranck asked for cameras for Ocean Pines but was told that would be included in a bigger project. A motion to approve the library's budget as presented was made by Ms. Buchanan; seconded by Ms. O'Mara. All present were in favor. Mr. Smith said Ms. Ranck did a nice job.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Collection Development Policy Update** Ms. Briddell motioned to add "*The Library also adheres to Maryland's Freedom to Read Act*" in the collection development policy; Ms. Culbertson seconded. All present were in favor. The policy is available to read on the library website.

**Borrowing Policy Update** A new regulation ("County Public Libraries - Minors, Children, and Teens - Prohibited Practices") for libraries will take effect October 1. Ms. Ranck said this doesn't happen often and has reached out to the County for guidance. We will table this matter until September.

It was brought to Ms. Ranck's attention that a group in Ocean Pines is trying to fundraise on June 24 in the meeting room. Ms. Ranck has emailed the group and Mr. Burkett has left a message. Ms. Culbertson suggested sending a certified letter since fundraising is not allowed. Ms. Ranck also said we received a certificate of appreciation from the 4H. This will be filed in the board packet.

Ms. Briddell motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Buchanan seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

**Closed Session – Personnel Matter**

Ms. Briddell made a motion to have a closed session as noted on the meeting agenda at 10:50 a.m. under Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (2); Ms. Tomasovic seconded. All were in favor. At 11:41 a.m., Ms. Tomasovic made a motion to come out of closed session; Ms. Briddell seconded. Mr. Smith reported that the closed session was to discuss the library director's annual performance evaluation. At 11:42 a.m., Ms. Briddell motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Tomasovic seconded. All were in favor.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at the Snow Hill branch at 9:30 a.m.

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Amy Parker