

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at the Ocean Pines branch. Members present were Nancy Howard, Vicki O'Mara, Jeff Smith, Jocelyn Briddell, and Patricia Tomasovic. Sandra Buchanan was absent.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Harry Burkett, Ocean Pines Branch Manager; and Michael Hayes, Library Services Assistant, Ocean City branch. No attendees joined the meeting via Zoom conference.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m. by Ms. Howard. Recording device was acknowledged.

A motion to accept Minutes from the November 9, 2021 meeting was made by Mr. Smith; seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – The *Worcester County Times* publicized an article on Worcester seeking Snow Hill representative for Library Board. *Coastal Dispatch* featured an article on Alec Staley and his Employee of the Year award from the Citizens of Maryland Libraries organization. *Ocean City Today* mentioned the Ocean Pines library-heating valve to be replaced.

Financial Report – Ms. Ranck reported on the branch expenses for November 2021. Ms. Howard asked about only 21% spent in Ocean City at halfway point in the year. Ms. Ranck explained that some expenses may not have been coded to the library account yet. Ms. Ranck noted that the general maintenance budget is over. In Berlin, an updated door alarm panel was installed to allow after hours meetings. In Ocean Pines, Mr. Burkett discussed ongoing repairs that are taking longer than expected. Ms. O'Mara asked about the lawyer fees being over budget consistently. Ms. Ranck had the lawyer review the library's new Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedure, causing the line item to go over budget. Ms. Briddell asked about the #DIV/O!. Mr. Smith replied that is an Excel error. Mr. Smith asked about the \$20,000 over expenditure in the Snow Hill branch; Ms. Ranck explained that we used unused periodical funds from the FY 21 budget to make an important HVAC upgrade in the Worcester Room which houses the library's special collections. Ms. Howard asked if door count numbers include program numbers. Ms. Ranck said yes and mentioned that Ocean Pines moved their door counter to make sure program attendees are captured. Ms. Ranck said that overall attendance is down, but circulation numbers are higher than expected at this point.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ocean City welcomed Savannah Varner, Youth Services Specialist, on November 29. Berlin's new signage regarding skateboarding on the premises has been installed – discussion about ongoing efforts to curb this issue. Ms. Ranck said a new Local History Librarian was hired in Snow Hill, Nate Godfrey. A project list was left by Alec Staley for Mr. Godfrey to reference as he prioritizes projects. Ms. Tomasovic said it is great Snow Hill is working with the County jail. Ms. Ranck talked about touring the jail library and meeting with the Warden & Assistant Warden. Ms. Jocelyn Colbert in the Snow Hill branch put together a suggested collection list for the jail. The Library may provide programming for the jail as well; some ideas include book clubs, reference services and reading challenges between housing blocks.

Mr. Burkett invited board members to tour the Ocean Pines library after the meeting; library staff are creating a welcoming environment by providing engaging displays and crafty how-to programs. The Friends of the Ocean Pines Library has purchased new acrylic sign holders.

Staff Development 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 a variety of webinars were attended by staff. The Maryland State Library did not renew Ryan Dowd subscription. After reassessment, Maryland State Library is subscribing to Niche Academy; Worcester uses that platform for new employee orientation. The Library's Storywalk® was featured on Facebook by the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) on November 17 as part of their Storywalk® Week.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mobile Library Grant The mobile library grant was approved and the pop out style vehicle was selected. The vehicle will be built on a Ford F-350 chassis and include a 5 foot space to hold tables, computers, or other needed supplies. Yesterday, Ms. Ranck and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey attended Mobile Services Day webinar. Ms. Howard said the vehicle

should participate in parades during the holiday season. Ms. Ranck will provide updates as they come.

Student Virtual Cards Ms. Ranck thanked Ms. Gravenor-Stacey for creating a LibGuide to explain the cards to the parents and students.

Pocomoke Ms. Ranck said City of Pocomoke's strategic demolition grant was not approved but they were encouraged to reapply. Ms. Ranck is not sure of the next steps, how to move forward to help continue the project. Ms. Tomasovic asked how land was acquired for the Berlin project. Ms. Ranck said the site was purchased by the County. Ms. Ranck will meet with the County Administration to talk about how to proceed with the Pocomoke project. The board members discussed other location options. Ms. Ranck will add the Pocomoke project on next month's board meeting agenda.

EDI Statement Included in your packet is a draft EDI Statement. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey received feedback from several committee members in favor of the revised statement and heard no negative feedback. Mr. Smith suggested eliminating the last sentence. Ms. Howard agreed with Mr. Smith's recommendation to eliminate the last sentence. Ms. Tomasovic asked about how the statement can be included in the library's collection development and other policies. Ms. Briddell liked the phrase "building partnerships" in the last sentence. There was discussion and it was decided to add the phrase to a prior sentence. A motion to approve the amended EDI Statement was made by Mr. Smith; Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Ranck will add to the collection development policy and the policy will be reviewed at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

County Budget Ms. Ranck said FY22/23 budget packets are not quite ready yet. The FY 22 budget was flat, no changes requested. For next year, we will investigate restructuring of staff positions. Ms. Ranck and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey will meet with the HR Director to discuss personnel changes. Ms. Ranck will work with County Maintenance to identify building needs.

Ms. Howard acknowledged Michael Hayes, who introduced himself.

Library Board Vacancy At the November 2021 Trustee meeting, a nominating committee was formed. Ms. Briddell reported that herself, Ms. Buchanan, and Ms. Howard met with all five candidates. The committee recommends Ms. Catherine Culbertson. Ms. Ranck will send a memo to the County Commissioners along with Ms. Howard's reappointment for their approval at the January 2022 meeting. Ms. Ranck will meet with Ms. Culbertson to provide an orientation. Ms. Howard stated that the library board needs to be more active and there was a brief discussion of what that might entail. Ms. Ranck suggested the possibility of forming board committees. A motion to approve selection committee's recommendation of Ms. Catherine Culbertson made by Mr. Smith; Ms. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Howard gave an overview of questions asked of candidates. Mr. Smith thanked the selection committee for their time and hard work.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, January 11 at the Pocomoke branch with a Zoom option at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Amy Parker