

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, May 14 at the Pocomoke Branch. Members present were Jeff Smith, Sandra Buchanan, Nancy Howard, Patricia Tomasovic, Jocelyn Briddell, and Kathryn Culbertson. Vicki O'Mara was absent.

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

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

Ms. Punches showed the board last Friday's teen junk art program showcase. The branch is getting ready for summer reading. The theme is "Adventures Begins at Your Library" and each branch is holding a kick-off event with their own theme. Pocomoke's theme is pirates and a pirate will be visiting for a program. The branch will do another mural, like last year, where each week patrons will contribute a new craft for decoration. Ms. Ranck said the mural was on the Fall Calendar of Events last year.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Tomasovic; seconded by Ms. Buchanan. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – A support letter from the Library board to Department of Housing and Community Development was included. A thank you note to Erin Scott, Snow Hill's Local History Librarian, was also included. *Ocean City Today-Dispatch* and *Bayside Gazette* had an article about a Holocaust author to speak at the Ocean Pines library. *Ocean City Today-Dispatch* and *Bayside Gazette* both had articles on the State to provide \$3.9 million for the new Pocomoke library. *Ocean City Today-Dispatch* had an article on local artist transforms Ocean City library children's section with a new mural.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for April 2024. Ms. Ranck said the software line item is over budget; this covers annual fees for the library's hotspots and our online calendar and registration system. The database/shared computer line is no longer needed since the Eastern Shore Regional Library covers the cost of our ILS/catalog system. All locations have just had their carpets cleaned and we are in the process of paying the invoices. No comments were made on the statistics.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Pocomoke staff are distributing Chromebooks by appointment and have less than 100 left to give away. Ms. Ranck sent out a press release to let the public know we still have them available. Ms. Punches said word of mouth around Pocomoke is producing more calls for appointments. Berlin welcomed new volunteers from the Developmental Center, who will be helping several days each month. Ocean City branch had a very successful Beach Cleanup program. In Ocean Pines, Lee Monick was named Volunteer of the Year. Commissioner Chip Bertino presented Ms. Monick with a proclamation on behalf of Worcester County. Over 60 people were in attendance for Dr. George Eisen, author of *A Summer of Mass Murder: 1941 Rehearsal for the Hungarian Holocaust*. Attendance when author Mark Millikin discussed *Baseball Fever in Baltimore* was also encouraging. Amanda Laick and Shelby Windsor are taking the Pop-Up library to parks around the County in between their scheduled outreach visits. The Library Foundation scholarship winners have been selected. A car wash fundraiser for the Foundation has been planned by Ms. Parker on June 15. The Pop-Up will also be there and some of the library staff have volunteered to help us vacuum the cars. Please help us spread the word.

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 the EDI committee met yesterday and talked about their next project, social stories for autistic patrons. The idea came from Somerset County's website. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey reached out to ask questions and found out they got the template from Queen Anne's County. Ms. Briddell entered the meeting at 9:48 a.m. Ms. Howard said the new park on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Ocean City has guides and we should check them out. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said the MLA conference went well. Learning reports are starting to come in. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey mentioned she attended a table talk – Defending Our Collections session. Resources were given for future readings. The summer Calendar of Events is out for print. The Rutgers students had a nice hand off meeting with Ms. Gravenor-Stacey. Mr. Smith asked if the externship yielded good results. Both Ms. Ranck and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said yes. The students gave great ideas, which were shared with the library on a Google Drive. Ms. Howard would like to see it. Ms. Buchanan asked about Allison Blakeman's webinar "Save a Story! DIY Oral History Interviewing," she attended. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey will have to go back and look at the learning report. Ms. Parker asked about staff day. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said it was successful, with seven program showcases. Thank you to Ms. Howard and Ms. Culbertson for attending.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Pocomoke** Ms. Ranck reviewed the latest developments with the project, including the updated HVAC plans and lowering of the building. The footprint of the building remains the same, with a few changes to the second floor. Ms. Ranck will send out updated drawings. Pocomoke staff are helping to secure support letters for the next grant application; we are hoping to receive some funding to help with the FFE phase. A conversation about a temporary location followed; a potential leased space was toured and we are looking into temporary space like a trailer or mobile classroom. Mr. Smith will draft a thank you letter to Governor Moore for the state funds allocated to the project. The children's porch is still being designed but will be included as an add-alternate. The treehouse plans have been moved to the FFE phase as well. The pecan trees on site will likely need to be removed. If possible, Ms. Ranck would like to see if we could use the wood to create a table for the local history room. Mr. Smith said he would reach out to a woodworker.

**Strategic Plan** The strategic plan committee met yesterday, consisting of three board members and four staff members. The survey has been finalized and will be open until mid-August. The next committee meeting is scheduled for June 3. The Rutgers Externship could help with the process and Salisbury University's Beacon Group is another resource. Ms. Briddell asked about the timeline. If the plan is not completed by the end of the calendar year, the Board could extend the current plan. Community input sessions will be held in the fall.

**Chromebook Distribution Grant** So far, over 500 Chromebooks have been distributed. The Berlin branch will be giving away Chromebooks on May 22 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm and on May 29 from 1 – 4 pm.

**Rev. Charles Tindley Portrait** Patrick Henry has recreated a portrait of Rev. Charles Tindley for the Berlin Branch. Plans for a small ceremony and plaque are underway.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**LSTA Grant Application: Local History Project** The Library will apply for a local history grant to develop a series of digital videos promoting our shared cultural heritage. We hope the project will generate excitement for the Country's upcoming Semiquincentennial and allow us to hold some public programs such as Community Scan Days. We are proud of our local history collection and want to see it expand.

**Ocean Pines Branch Outdoor Learning Space** Included in your packet is a drawing of the proposed patio which includes a table and sitting wall. The location is on the lawn just outside the staff workroom, with easy access to and from the large meeting room. The Friends are seeking board approval and asking County Maintenance for their approval as well. Final approval will need to come from County Administration and/or County Commissioners. The board thinks a lighter color for the pavers would be beneficial due to heat. Ms. Howard made a motion to approve the outdoor learning space, Ms. Culbertson seconded. All present were in favor.

**MD Library Legislation Update** There is a 2024 Legislative Wrap-Up session scheduled for 11 am via zoom. The board is welcome to stay. Several important bills including the Freedom to Read act and a collective bargaining bill were passed. Morgan Miller is presenting; Ms. Miller has been selected as the next State Librarian. Tiffany Sutherland President of the Maryland Library Association will also be presenting.

Mr. Smith, Ms. Briddell, and Ms. Buchanan will form a committee to discuss the Director's evaluation.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at the Ocean Pines branch at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Buchanan motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

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Amy Parker