The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, September 15 at the Tourism Office in Snow Hill. Members present were Jeffrey Smith, Nancy Howard, Sandra Buchanan, Jennifer Pflaumer, Jocelyn Briddell, Vicki O'Mara, and Kathryn Culbertson.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Amy Parker; Administrative Services Coordinator; Brittney Herz, Snow Hill Branch Manager; and Carol Rose, Worcester County Library Foundation President.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Ms. Herz reported that summer reading programs went very well, despite the great majority being held off-site. Dawn Davis, the new youth services specialist, already knew many of the children and families. The renovations at the Snow Hill branch are looking better than we anticipated. The branch received an American Library Association "Transforming Communities" grant to help install an ADA ramp at the garden entrance. The study room will also be a very welcome addition. Ms. Herz demoed the new website. Thank you to the County IT department for their help with design. This saved the library thousands of dollars. The website was well received by the board.

A motion to accept the minutes from June 9, 2026 was made by Ms. Culbertson, seconded by Dr. Briddell. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – There was a plethora of articles over the summer in the local newspapers.
Bayside Gazette – June, July, August, September Upcoming Events; Snow Hill moving forward with proposed revitalization; Ocean Pines annual book sale; and remembering Andrea Schlottman
OC Today-Dispatch – Ocean Pines Library to host local author panel; June, July, August, September Upcoming Events; Picture of Harry Burkett with author Bunk Mann; Snow Hill makes improvements; Ocean Pines annual book sale
The Courier – Picture of Harry Burkett with author Bunk Mann
MLA YSD Newsletter – Storytime at Furnace Town, activities, challenges, and successes
County Seat – July 2026 Jump into Summer Reading; August 2026 September is Library card sign-up month

Ms. Howard asked about the warning system discussed at the June meeting; Ms. Ranck will see if there are any updates about this project.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the June, July, and August 2026 monies sent to the County Commissioners. Funds for the shade sail at the Ocean Pines branch have been given to the County; thank you to the Friends of the Ocean Pines Library for this generous donation which includes an annual maintenance agreement. Mr. Smith noted about 8% of the budget is leftover; this is due to several positions remaining open and ordering fewer materials due to changes in book vendors and two branches operating in temporary spaces. Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Gravenor-Stacey for the graph (page 22) showing the patterns and usage of library services and materials. Ms. O'Mara noticed that Snow Hill and Pocomoke are trending down, likely due to the temporary locations which have much smaller collections. Ms. Rose said Pocomoke is still having good attendance at story times and other programming. Mr. Smith noted the trends

look good and would like the graph to be broken down by month. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey will work on this.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting.

Three new youth services specialists were hired in June, just before the start of summer reading, and we are so very fortunate to have them on staff. Despite having two branches in temporary locations, summer reading attendance remained steady and we surpassed our community reading goal. Ms. Ranck thanked the branches for their outreach efforts over the summer and noted how hard the Pop-Up staff, Amanda Laick and Shelby Windsor, worked over the summer. They provided programs around the county from the Taylor House in Berlin to Fourth Fridays in Pocomoke.

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 summer is usually a slow time for trainings, but this was not the case this year.

Ms. Gravenor-Stacey reported the following:
June: 10 staff members attended 24 trainings, for a total of 30.5 learning hours
July: 12 staff members attended 26 trainings, for a total of 56 learning hours
August: 14 staff members attended 22 trainings, for a total of 25.5 learning hours

The new interlibrary loan platform, ShareIT, launched in late August. The Maryland Interlibrary Loan Organization (MILO) is helping staff fix some glitches and provided several training opportunities. Part-time employee Haley Rawls has started the Early Start LATI Program as part of the September cohort. Congratulations to Allison Blakeman who graduated from Louisiana State University with her Master of Library Science and Certificate in Archival Studies, also earning her Professional Public Librarian License from the state of Maryland. The next Staff Day is scheduled for Monday, October 12. A speaker from University of Maryland Extension will present "Habit Shift Mindset." Ms. Howard would like to attend.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pocomoke Project Shelving was installed earlier in September and furniture installation is on hold. Lumber for the treehouse has not yet arrived. A meeting to start the punch list process is scheduled for September 22. Ms. Rose shared that the Library Foundation will be meeting later in the afternoon and is planning to sell bricks to raise funds for the branch, including supplies needed for the children's area. Ms. Howard motioned to write a letter to the County Commissioners about the Pocomoke project; Dr. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Ranck will email the landscaping plan to the board members.

Snow Hill Project The overall schedule is going well. Cabinetry, carpet, and other finishes are being finalized. A new circulation desk is also part of this project. Progress meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

Collection Development Policy The Board approved updates to the Collection Development

Policy to better align with the Maryland Freedom to Read Act via email on September 4. The updated policy has been shared with staff and posted to the library website.

NEW BUSINESS:

Board Officers A motion to nominate Dr. Briddell as President was made by Ms. Howard; seconded by Ms. O'Mara. All present were in favor. This will be effective October 1. Ms. Culbertson made a motion to nominate Ms. O'Mara as the Vice President; seconded by Ms. Buchanan. All present were in favor. Ms. Howard's term will end in December.

Organization Structure and Effectiveness Study Worcester County Library is collaborating with Calvert Library on this project, funded through an LSTA grant. Proposal submissions are due September 24.

Library Website Update Thank you to Ms. Herz who is leading the library website project.

Marketing Report Enclosed is the summer marketing report from Lexi Orf, Marketing Coordinator from June – August. Mr. Smith would like to invite Ms. Orf to the next Ocean Pines meeting.

2026 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees, and Library Supporters will take place on Saturday, November 7 at the Owings Mills branch of Baltimore County Public Library. (Correction: this is the 2026 Conference, not 2027.)

Board Committee Reports Ms. Buchanan made a motion to approve the board's self-evaluation forms; Dr. Briddell seconded the motion. All present were in favor. Mr. Smith will step in for Dr. Briddell on the policy committee. Next month, the board will discuss a revised director evaluation and job description.

Ms. Culbertson motioned to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, October 13 at the Berlin branch at 9:30 a.m.

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Amy Parker