

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, February 17 at the Berlin branch. Members present were Jeffrey Smith, Nancy Howard, Kathryn Culbertson, Sandra Buchanan, Jocelyn Briddell, Vicki O'Mara and new member Jennifer Pflaumer.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Amy Parker; Business Manager; and Alice Pattera, Berlin Branch Manager. Betsy Gravenor-Stacey was absent.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Alice Pattera shared that Boothy and the interactive play area will be transformed into a Pizza Parlor, "Once Upon a Slice" this Spring. Youth Services Specialist Laura Bartels has been selected as the next branch manager. In January, a snowplow hit our fence; it will get fixed when it gets warmer. The HDMI port in the meeting room is not connecting to the projector. ESRL is helping to get that fixed. Ms. Pattera said she has been with the library for almost 28 years and thanked everyone.

A motion to accept the minutes from January 13, 2026 by made by Dr. Briddell, seconded by Ms. Buchanan. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – The Courier had an article on Classic Illustrated Comics displays at the Ocean Pines library. Bayside Gazette and Coasttv.com featured Berlin library gallery showcases artist Kathryn Redden.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the January 2026 monies sent to the County Commissioners. Ms. Parker mentioned the County will do a journal entry to correct the \$24.00 mistake in the postage budget. Ms. O'Mara noticed the Ocean Pines water/sewer bill was high. 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 reported that Nicholas Barnes resigned, and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey has been training. Ms. Ranck mentioned again that Ms. Bartels will be the next Berlin branch manager; she has over 20 years of experience working in libraries. Rachel Jones has been promoted to Assistant Manager at the Snow Hill branch. Lisa Voss requested to move to part-time at the Pocomoke branch. This leaves three open Youth Services Specialist positions. The positions have been posted internally and externally. The Ocean City staff were able to take the Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training. Thank you to the Ocean Pines staff for helping with desk coverage. The "Demystifying the Symphony" series has wrapped up in Ocean Pines. Ms. Ranck mentioned Lisa Schoch is the new Ocean Pines Friends President. Pocomoke, Berlin, Ocean Pines, and Ocean City are offering the AARP tax service again this year. The Snow Hill branch has moved to the Annex and is open for patrons. Story times and baby times are still happening in the temporary space. Brittney Herz created a virtual escape room program; 24 people attended. Local History Librarian Erin Scott is working in Ocean City on Thursdays during the renovations. Another bowling for books fundraiser will take place on April 11 at Eastern Shore Lanes in Pocomoke. The Foundation received a wonderful donation to support our summer reading programs from the Robert I. Schattner Foundation and the Phyllis & Sidney Bresler Gift Fund. The 2026 Leister-Staley scholarship application has been sent to the local schools and shared on the Foundation webpage. Ms. Howard asked about the Winter Quill Poetry contest. She requested that the board be involved.

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 has been busy in the Tech department.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board Recruitment Successfully completed. Welcome Ms. Pflaumer!

Pocomoke Project Ms. Ranck said the substantial completion date is now showing June 24, 2026. Ms. Ranck hopes they can pick up in the next couple of weeks. Brick work is mostly completed and the roof is coming along. Mechanical and plumbing work continue inside.

Snow Hill Project A pre-bid meeting was held on February 3 and there was a nice turnout. Bids are due February 20 and may be presented to the County Commissioners for their approval as early as March 3.

Grievance Policy An updated draft of the Grievance Policy is included in the board packet. The board agreed to approve the policy and have the attorney review. Mr. Smith thanked the subcommittee for developing this policy. Ms. Buchanan motioned to approve the grievance policy adding two lines to say "Provides for the report of the subcommittee to be presented to the full board of trustees at a closed meeting within 10 days under our guidelines", and "Final decision to the Director within 5 days". Dr. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor.

Policy Committee – Dr. Briddell said it is lots of work. Sitting down in person and hammering it out would be best. Mr. Smith said we can keep coming back as needed.

Marketing Report The Board appreciates the detail provided in the monthly market reports; it is helpful to see how marketing efforts affect program attendance.

NEW BUSINESS:

MCAAHC Book Drive The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture have an annual book drive. The library has participated in the past and plan to launch this year's drive in February running through Juneteenth. Donated items will be given to the Germantown School.

Closed Session – Personnel Matter

Ms. Howard made a motion to have a closed session at 10:35 a.m. under Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (2); Ms. O'Mara seconded. All were in favor. At 11:44 a.m. Ms. Buchanan made a motion to come out of closed session, Dr. Briddell seconded. Ms. O'Mara motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Howard seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, March 10, at the Ocean City branch at 9:30 a.m.

Amy Parker