

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at the Ocean City branch. Members present were Nancy Howard, Vicki O'Mara, Patricia Tomasovic, Sandra Buchanan, Kathryn Culbertson, and Jocelyn Briddell (via Zoom Conference). Jeff Smith was absent.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Amy Parker, Business Manager; Alec Staley, Ocean City Branch Manager; Bethany Hooper, *Coastal Dispatch*, via Zoom Conference.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Ms. Howard. Recording device was acknowledged.

Mr. Staley reported the Ocean City branch is proud of recent layout changes. One change made in the children's area is the books have been moved to the front, so they are the first thing patrons see now instead of the DVD's. Teens are asking for Manga (Japanese books that are written backwards). The biography section has been moved closer to the the non-fiction materials. Branch staff are hoping to connect with the J-1 students with a diverse selection of books. The New Americans corner was piloted in the Ocean City branch. There are citizenship materials available and we emphasize that it is only resources only; the Library cannot provide legal help. The printer has been moved to the front of the branch. Our Youth Services Specialist, Savannah Varner, is doing great, often bringing in 25 attendees for programs. Mr. Staley offered a tour after the meeting.

A motion to accept Minutes from the February 8, 2022 meeting was made by Ms. O'Mara; seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – No comments were made. *Coastal Dispatch* had articles on Library distributing home test kits and masks to the public and Library officials discuss proposed OC land swap. *Bayside Gazette* featured an article on the Ocean Pines Library opening a new art exhibition and an Expungement clinic to be held March 8 at the Ocean City Branch. *The Courier* included a press release about the Everly Brothers program offered at the Ocean Pines library.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for February 2022. Ms. Howard asked about the postage budget. Ms. Ranck said we use postage monies for our Books-by-mail service. Currently we have one patron using this service. Ms. O'Mara asked about the remaining ESRL funds. We have approximately \$40,000 left to spend and will have that completed by the end of May. The statistics were displayed on the screen for the board to see. Ms. Ranck apologized for not having them in the board packet. Ms. Ranck said circulation and door counts continue to increase, as well as the number of meeting room reservations. Meeting room usage is still down from 2019 but continues to increase as more groups and organizations return to in-person meetings. Ms. O'Mara asked why program attendance in October was higher than other months and Mr. Staley reminded everyone about the Haunted Library program held at the Berlin branch.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck reported that several part-time positions are currently open, two in Ocean City and one in Pocomoke. The walking trail in Berlin is complete. The next step is to install signage. Berlin hopes to use the trail in future programs. Ms. Ranck said Pocomoke had a couple of heating issues this month and on February 5 the branch had to close at 11 am. The County has installed a new boiler. The Farm to Library initiative is moving forward; there are monthly partner meetings. The Library branches will offer some programs with the help of experts from the Worcester County Extension Office. Ms. Ranck highlighted some of the projects Local History Librarian Nate Godfrey is completing. He has presented a couple of public programs as well. Right now the library uses LibGuides and Flickr to share our digital content but we hope to find a more robust platform that can grow with our collections. Some platforms are expensive to purchase and require an annual maintenance fee. This is a goal for next fiscal year. The Foundation will be having a meeting next Tuesday at the Berlin branch. Delmarva Power will swap lots with the Town of Ocean City for a battery storage facility. This will impact our parking options for both staff and the public. Delmarva Power is also looking to install an EV charging station at the Snow Hill branch; permission from the County will be required.

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 reported that she, Elena Coelho, and Marshall Shord will be attending the PLA Conference in Portland, OR later this month. Ms. Coelho and Mr. Shord will be presenting a short workshop on

how to run an expungement clinic. The New Americans Corner currently in Ocean City is the process of being replicated in the rest of the branches. Materials have been purchased with funds from the Worcester County Library Foundation. Thank you to Ms. Parker for placing the order. Sara Wheatley and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey have been meeting monthly with the school media specialists. The Library is coordinating with the school system to attend outreach events where the Summer Reading Program can be promoted to children and their parents and guardians. We hope to attend field days, graduations, and back to school nights. Ms. Howard said the new Calendar of Events looks fabulous.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pocomoke Project The City of Pocomoke requested funds from the County for the demolition of the Armory with the intent to provide a site for the new library at their budget presentation on March 1. Ms. Ranck has not heard much.

FY 23 Library Budget Ms. Ranck will presenting the Library budget to the Commissioners on March 22, tentative time 2 – 2:20 pm. If anyone from the board would like to come, they are more than welcome to attend.

Meeting Room Effective March 1, the wearing of face masks is no longer required to attend in-person programs at the library branches.

Ms. Howard asked about the mobile library unit. TechOps is still working to source the vehicle chassis. The Library is also due to receive a replacement vehicle for the Youth Services Manager to use.

NEW BUSINESS:

Library Board Committees The Policy Committee met on March 2. Ms. Culbertson spoke on the recommendations about the Meeting Room, Collection Development, and Tuition Reimbursement policies. No changes were recommended for the Meeting Room policy at this time. A motion to reaffirm the meeting room policy was made by Ms. O'Mara, seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor. The committee recommends adding the Library's EDI statement and the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement to the Collection Development and suggested added this phrase: *The Library subscribes to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement, and the Worcester County Library's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion statement (see addenda).* A motion to accept the Collection Development policy with the above addition was made by Ms. Culbertson; seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor. The board also discussed the proposed Tuition Reimbursement Policy. Several suggestions were made. Ms. Ranck will send out updated policy for the board to review at the April meeting. The board agrees to help further people's education and to promote within the Library.

Library Logo There was a discussion about changing the library logo. Ms. Howard asked the board to explore other library logos to bring back ideas for a possible update.

EBSCO Solar Grant Ms. Ranck will request permission from the County to apply for a solar grant at the Berlin branch. The grant is due at the end of April. Ms. Ranck mentioned the solar panels might have to be installed on the roof.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, April 12 at the Snow Hill branch with a Zoom option at 9:30 a.m. Ms. O'Mara motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Buchanan seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Amy Parker