

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, December 9 at the Ocean Pines branch. Members present were Nancy Howard, Vicki O'Mara, Kathryn Culbertson, Sandra Buchanan, and Jocelyn Briddell. Jeffrey Smith was absent.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Amy Parker; Business Manager; Harry Burkett, Ocean Pines Branch Manager; Nicholas Barnes, Technical Services Manager; and Lexi Orf, Marketing Coordinator.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m. by Ms. Buchanan. Recording device was acknowledged.

Harry Burkett reported on two large youth events, including a Wicked Party featuring witchy-themed crafts and snacks with one hundred children and adults in attendance. Youth Services Specialist Angie DiMarco needed extra help and five National Honor Society students from Stephen Decatur High School came to assist. Frank DeLucco and Harry Burkett presented Glen Campbell: Rhinestone Cowboy on November 20, drawing 35. With the Isle of Wight location of the Worcester County Treasurer's Office undergoing renovations over the next several months, a drop box for water payments and other fees were installed in the Ocean Pines Branch parking lot. This is working out well. The Tech Services department has moved to the Ocean Pines branch. Jim Meckley's term as President of the Friends of the Ocean Pines Library is ending, and Lisa Schoch will serve as the next President. Amazon sales run by the FOPL will stop at the end of December.

A motion to accept the minutes from the November 11, 2025 meeting was made by Dr. Briddell, seconded by Ms. O'Mara. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – Bayside Gazette and OC Today-Dispatch featured our upcoming events at the library. OC Today-Dispatch and Bayside Gazette reported on Worcester County denies ask for outdoor library space at new Pocomoke library. The Courier had an article on a Glenn (sic) Campbell event at the Ocean Pines library. Bayside Gazette featured Berlin library now featuring new art exhibits. Bayside Gazette had an article on a Wicked-themed craft session planned at the Ocean Pines library. OC Today-Dispatch highlighted the outdoor children's area received funding. No comments were made on the statistics.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the November 2025 monies sent to the County Commissioners. No questions or comments were made.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck noted that attendance at the Berlin Branch children's programs is increasing. Berlin is also experimenting with a community engagement art project known as "Letterboxing." Players use the Letterbox website to find clues that will lead them to a specific box and once they find it, they use the stamp provided to mark the cache they found. Nicole Shafer filled the full-time position in Ocean City. Jack Pruyn filled the full-time position in Pocomoke. This is the first time a gentleman has worked there. Lisa Voss held a month-long program called *Cardboard City*. Patrons were able to participate any time in November to help add to the city using a wide variety of cardboard pieces and other recycled items. Snow Hill's baby time program has drawn steady attendance. The pop-up is sharing "The History of Mobile Libraries" to local elementary schools. WCLF received a grant from the Philip A. Zaffere Foundation for the Children's Porch at the Pocomoke Library.

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 went to the Snow Hill parade last night, where the pop-up won best non-commercial float. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey attended the unveiling of a Historical Marker honoring the legacy and heritage of the Pocomoke Tribal Homelands, hosted by the Maryland Department of Transportation, in partnership with the Pocomoke Indian Nation and Worcester County. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey shared information about the Project LIMA pilot program, which would be a good resource for our managers. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said for our half-day staff day in April we will most likely be doing reference interview and readers advisory training, as these topics were requested by the staff. The Strategic Plan Oversight Committee will meet December 22 at 3 p.m to review an updated draft of the Display and Programming Calendar, created with feedback from branch staff as well as committee members. The Tech Services Department has relocated to the Ocean Pines branch.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pocomoke Project In November, work to “dry in” the building continued as well as window installation. Rough in for mechanical, plumbing, and sprinklers continued. Exterior brick veneer has started. Ms. Ranck said the furniture package will be presented to the Commissioners next Tuesday. Ms. Ranck said the library received \$275,000 from the Maryland State Library Agency to help cover the cost of furnishings and equipment for the new Pocomoke branch.

Snow Hill Project Final details for the bid documents came in Friday at 4 p.m. Ms. Ranck hopes the bids will go out soon. Some shelving is going over to the Annex building. Children's programs will be held in the Annex, the schools, and the Rec & Parks Center. Adult programs will be held at the Tourism office and the 50plus Center.

Board Policy Manual This will be tabled until January 2026 meeting. Ms. Culbertson will work on getting it from a Google Doc to Microsoft Word. Ms. Ranck said the Program Policy should be added to the board's website for posterity.

Board Recruitment Five interviews were held. The nominating committee has selected two finalists.

Marketing Report Lexi Orf introduced herself to the Board. She has been including monthly marketing reports in the board packet and shared that numbers with 25-35 age group are increasing. Ms. Orf is looking into other social media platforms including LinkedIn and possibly TikTok (if this is allowed by the County). She is tracking marketing efforts with programming attendance.

Annual Plan Update An annual plan was shared with the Board. A big initiative over the next several months will be a library website update.

Ms. Ranck noted that the County Commissioners approved a salary study and library positions will be included. Ms. Ranck will request two new part-time positions for Pocomoke in next year's budget. Departments have been asked to request no more than a 2.5% increase above this year's current operating budget.

NEW BUSINESS:

Grievance Procedure A draft procedure is included in your packet. Several suggestions were made including adding a timeline and including the full board in the final appeal. The policy committee will review and bring back along with the policy manual at the January meeting.

Ms. Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m.; Dr. Briddell seconded. All present were in favor.

Closed Session – Personnel Matter

Dr. Briddell made a motion to have a closed session at 11:15 a.m. under Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (2); Ms. O'Mara seconded. Mr. Smith joined the meeting via phone. All were in favor. At 11:52 a.m. Ms. Culbertson made a motion to come out of closed session, Ms. O'Mara seconded. During the closed session, the board selected a nominee to be presented to the County Commissioners to fill the trustee vacancy.

Ms. O'Mara motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Howard seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at the temporary Pocomoke branch at 9:30 a.m.

Amy Parker