

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, June 9 at the Pocomoke City Hall. 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; and Amy Parker; Administrative Services Coordinator; and Dawn Ingrassia, Pocomoke Branch Manager; and Nicole Punches, Pocomoke Assistant Branch Manager.

The board members took a tour of the new Pocomoke library before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said the opening is now looking towards the end of August, possibly beginning of September, although an updated schedule has not been issued by Keller.

Regular meeting was called to order at 9:42 a.m. by Mr. Smith. Recording device was acknowledged.

Ms. Ingrassia said the branch is welcoming more families as the school year comes to a close. Staff have been decorating the temporary branch with dinosaur themed decor and getting ready for Summer Reading; the theme this year is "Unearth a Story." Staff are looking forward to this year's program and are having a lot of fun with the preparations. Ms. Punches turned the "mess" in the back into a cool volcano; this will hide some of the boxes as the branch is slowly packing up for the move.

A motion to accept the minutes from May 12, 2026 was made by Ms. O'Mara, seconded by Ms. Buchanan. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – Bayside Gazette and OC Today-Dispatch featured our free summer reading challenge. Bayside Gazette and OC Today-Dispatch both had articles on the County eligible employees will receive \$4,000 COLA and a 2.5% step increase. OC Today-Dispatch published a press release about the community conversation being held at the Snow Hill Library as part of the Accessible Small and Rural Communities initiative.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the May 2026 monies sent to the County Commissioners. Ms. Parker passed out the statistics to the board. Mr. Smith noted we lost visitors this month.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Ms. Ranck said that Kimberly Patrick filled the part time position in Berlin. Berlin staff are also working on collection maintenance making room for new materials. Ocean City received their two new book drops. Ocean City also hosted a Maryland Birthday Party program on Saturday, May 23. It was held on an unusually rainy day during Memorial Day weekend with an attendance of 90! Princesses and princes are always an irresistible draw, proven once again by Youth Services Specialist Angie DiMarco's Royal Story Time on May 14, attended by 73 children and adults. Branch Manager Harry Burkett presented Pro Wrestling & Culture: A 100-Year History, with 11 attendees. Ms. Ranck said the Snow Hill library temporary space is very small. Snow Hill will host summer reading programs off-site at the local schools and Sturgis Park. They are still doing the proxy program at the jail. Judy Harrison and Erin Scott also did a presentation at Whatcoat Church about the library and all the different services

the library offers. Ms. Scott has begun working on a solution for being able to access the Pitts collection files while the collection is in storage. The Pop-Up partnered with Worcester County Recreation and Parks to finish their "Movies in the Park" series. The Pop-Up also joined Avery Castellani from Ocean City to participate in a Career Day at Buckingham Elementary. Detailed letters about the Summer Reading Program and the performers scheduled to visit Worcester County Library this summer were sent to local childcare facilities throughout the county. A program held at Saint Martin's Church as part of our MD 250 series was a highlight in May. Dr. Ray Thompson gave a lecture about the church, and 60 people attended the event. Ms. Ranck said it would be nice to have another church tour in Snow Hill, perhaps this fall. Ms. Howard shared that some friends attended the program and very much enjoyed it. Offsite programs have proven to be popular. The Foundation meeting will be rescheduled since Ms. Ranck will be on leave. Ms. Ranck thanked the Foundation for their financial support for the summer reading t-shirts and a new youth services desk at the Ocean Pines branch.

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 included in the board packet are learning reports from staff highlighting what they learned from the MLA conference. New resources Blackstone Unlimited (audiobooks), Kanopy Plus Packs (streaming movies and documentaries), and Lucky Day (a companion to Libby/OverDrive) became available on June 1, as Hoopla access was discontinued, and staff and patrons have been adjusting to the new services. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey commented on Lucky Day and hopes that ESRL sees how popular it is. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey said over 20,000 minutes have been logged so far for summer reading. We would like to reach our community goal of 510,000 minutes before the end of the summer. Ordering of print materials for the current fiscal year has concluded, as of June 1, to allow time for the items to be invoiced and processed for the branches. Ordering will likely resume by mid-July, once the new fiscal year funds are allocated.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pocomoke Project Ms. Ranck said construction of the children's porch has not yet started, the lighting package came in higher than expected, and GIPE and Keller are working to find a more economical option. Douron will be on site June 10 to discuss furniture delivery and installation.

Snow Hill Project Ms. Ranck attended a flood variance meeting. The library doesn't meet the current Town's charter and we are waiting to get approval before the project can receive a full building permit. Permission to start demolition has been given. A quick meeting with Town Planner Dan Brandewie is scheduled for this afternoon and Ms. Ranck will ask about adding sprinklers in this phase. Eastern Shore Regional Library IT staff moved network equipment to the Bank Street offices on Sunday, so as not to disturb our regular operating hours. We thank them for their assistance.

Grievance Policy An updated grievance policy is included in the board packet for your review and approval. Dr. Briddell said the highlighted sentences were added to the policy under the advisement of our lawyer. Ms. Howard made a motion to approve the policy with the updated changes; Ms. O'Mara seconded the motion. All present were in favor.

FY 26 Budget – Transfers and Encumbrances Ms. Ranck is seeking board approval to make any necessary transfers to balance the budget and request any encumbrances for the next budget year. The FY 26 will close in August and these requests are typically due to the County in September.

NEW BUSINESS:

Worcester County Arts Council Grant Elena Coelho, Adult Services Coordinator, secured a \$2,000 grant to offer a beginner filmmaking series this winter. We hope this attracts aspiring filmmakers and encourages them to enter their work in the Ocean City Film Festival.

County Outdoor Warning Siren System Emergency Services department has plans to update the outdoor warning siren system at various locations throughout the County. The Ocean Pines and Snow Hill library branches have been identified as potential sites. The poles (approximately 50 ft high) will be placed in the back of the buildings near other outdoor equipment. The project timeline is still being determined, and Ms. Ranck will keep the board up to date.

FY 27 Budget The FY 27 budget was emailed to the board on June 5 and hard copies were distributed to the board. Ms. Ranck noted the two new part-time positions for the Pocomoke branch were approved, as well as the increase to our periodicals budget. Ms. Culbertson made a motion to approve the FY 27 budget; Dr. Briddell seconded the motion. All present were in favor.

Marketing Report Enclosed is the latest marketing report from Lexi Orf, Marketing Coordinator. Mr. Smith said he really likes the ads in the newspapers. Ms. Howard commented on the QR code for program registration. She said it didn't work for her, possibly due to the timeframe around registration. Certain programs require registration, which opens three weeks before the event. (Most library programs do not require registration.) Ms. Ranck and Ms. Gravenor-Stacey will see what they can do about putting more information about the registration process in the Calendar of Events.

Closed Session – Personnel Matter

Dr. Briddell motioned to close the meeting at 10:25 a.m.; Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor. Mr. Smith made a motion to have a closed session to discuss a personnel matter at 10:28 a.m. under Maryland Open Meetings Act General Provisions Article § 3-305 (b) (2); Ms. Buchanan seconded. All were in favor. At 11:15 a.m. Ms. Howard made a motion to come out of closed session, Ms. O'Mara seconded. Ms. Culbertson motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Howard seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, September 8, location to be determined, possibly at the Worcester County Tourism Office, 107 West Green Street, Snow Hill, MD. at 9:30 a.m.

Amy Parker