

The Worcester County Library Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at the Ocean City branch. Members present were Vicki O'Mara, Jeff Smith, Patricia Tomasovic, and Sandra Buchanan. Nancy Howard and Jocelyn Briddell joined via Zoom Conference.

Also present were Jennifer Ranck, Director; Betsy Gravenor-Stacey, Assistant Director; Amy Parker, Business Manager; Alec Staley, Ocean City Branch Manager; Elena Coelho, Adult Program Manager; Seth Nedrow, Ocean City Assistant Branch Manager; and John Venditta, Eastern Shore Regional Library. Bethany Hooper, Reporter for the *Coastal Dispatch*; Lynn Wheeler, Chair and Jay Bansbach, President, from the Citizens for Maryland Libraries Board joined via Zoom Conference.

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

Ms. Wheeler and Mr. Bansbach presented Alec Staley with the 2021 Outstanding Employee Award. The award includes a plaque and a \$100 check.

Mr. John Venditta, Director of the Eastern Shore Regional Library, gave an overview of services provided by ESRL to the eight member libraries on the shore. Services include information technology support, training for staff, grants, and delivery services Monday - Friday. Mr. Venditta thanked Ms. O'Mara for joining the ESRL Board in December.

Ms. Coelho and Mr. Nedrow gave presentations about what they learned at the Association of Rural & Small Library Conference in Reno, NV held in October.

A motion to accept Minutes from the October 12, 2021 meetings was made by Ms. O'Mara; seconded by Ms. Tomasovic. All present were in favor.

Correspondence – Ms. Ranck included the letter from the Citizens for Maryland Libraries Board that was sent to Alec Staley. *Bayside Gazette* and *Ocean City Today* publicized that the County approved mobile library vehicle funds.

Financial Report – Ms. Parker reported on the branch expenses for October 2021. Ms. O'Mara asked about the equipment software budget. Ms. Ranck said that covers our annual fee for the library's ILS (catalog) system. Mr. Smith requested stats from 2019/2020 to have a comparison on a separate sheet. Ms. Ranck reported on the statistics; the circulation is creeping up, story time attendance is still down. Mr. Smith said expanded vaccine eligibility for children might help with attendance. Ms. Briddell suggested using the name "50 forward" and to visit senior centers for outreach to publicize adult programming.

Administrative Report – Board members received a copy of the Administrative report to review before the meeting. Nate Godfrey, Local History Librarian was hired in Snow Hill. A project list was left by Alec Staley for Nate to reference as he prioritizes projects. Marie Northam, Youth Services Specialist for the Ocean City branch, resigned effective November 3. Savannah Varner has been hired in this position and will start on November 29. Cher Grazier, Ocean City Assistant Branch Manager, will retire on January 1, 2022. A state of the art AV system will be installed in the Snow Hill meeting room later in November. Pocomoke got some new furniture. Our partnership with the *Homeless Outreach Team* is picking up again in Pocomoke. All branches received a \$100 donation from the Republican Women of Worcester County. We are very excited to welcome Sara Wheatley to Worcester County Library as the Youth Services Manager.

Staff Development Report – A copy of the Staff Development report was sent in each board member's packet to review before the meeting. Library staff completed a survey in lieu of in-person training this year. Ms. Gravenor-Stacey reported from the staff day responses that some patterns are emerging, including a love of serving and interacting with the patrons of the library and of providing a welcoming and inclusive space within the community. Wishing the community was more aware of the library's programs and free online resources is also a common theme. Next week is StoryWalk® Week; please check out our promo video on our Facebook page.

Mr. Staley said he became Ocean City branch manager at the end of September. The train garden will return this year and will be located in the center area downstairs. We hope the train will attract visitors to the branch. We have been busy moving around displays, removing the piano, and working on collection maintenance. Ms. Ranck mentioned there will be a statewide oral history project collecting Marylanders' experiences during Covid-19. The

Ocean City branch will be one of the sites across the state to record stories.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Mobile Library Grant** Ms. Ranck has received a quote from TechOps Specialty Vehicles, LLC. Ms. Ranck is thinking more along the lines of a pop up vehicle. The board had a small discussion and would like to see more options; Ms. Ranck will email the board pictures.

**Student Virtual Cards** We are still working on this; ESRL needs to be involved as they manage the shorewide catalog. The student will have limited access, with the ability to checkout three books at a time. Ms. Ranck has made a handout to help publicize the service.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act - Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedure** Enclosed in the board packet is a revised draft of the Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedure and Request Form that has been reviewed by the library's attorney. The board made changes to the form to denote if a request was made verbally. Ms. O'Mara motioned to approve the Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedure; Ms. Briddell seconded. The motion passed.

Ms. O'Mara asked the status of the EDI statement. Ms. Ranck & Ms. Gravenor-Stacey need to discuss it. Ms. Ranck mentioned a partnership with the Worcester County Detention Center. More information will be discussed next meeting. Ms. O'Mara also asked about the Pocomoke branch. Ms. Ranck replied it is included in the County's CIP plan. Ms. Howard inquired about the Berlin library after hours. Ms. Ranck said new swipers were installed on the doors last Friday. Ms. Hooper left the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**2022 Library Closing and Board Meeting Dates** Included in the board packet is the proposed list of holiday closings and board meeting dates for 2022. Ms. Buchanan motioned to approve the 2022 Library Closing & Board Meeting Dates pending the County approval; Ms. Howard seconded. All present were in favor.

Ms. Ranck received three applications to replace Leslie Mulligan on the board. Mr. Smith said he would like to table to next month. Ms. Howard said she thinks it is better to interview the applicants. Ms. Briddell made a motion to interview the applicants; Ms. Buchanan seconded. All present were in favor. Ms. Briddell, Ms. Howard, and Ms. Buchanan agreed to be the interview panel.

Ms. Ranck mentioned Ms. Howard's term ends in December. Ms. Howard replied that she would like to stay on the board. Ms. Howard also mentioned the board should go in front of their area's County Councils to give a brief 10-minute overview of the library. Ms. Ranck said she could give any notes and/or statistics to help the board with presentations.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, December 14 at the Ocean Pines branch with a Zoom option at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Tomasovic motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. O'Mara seconded. All present were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

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Amy Parker