



Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2022 - 7:00 PM
Zoom Video Conference Call**

Minutes

Board Members Present

Toni A. Smith, President
Brett Crawford, Vice President
Angela D. Smith
Dr. Arthuree Wright
Dr. Hiram Larew
Sylvia Bolivar
Samuel Epps

Prince George's County Memorial Library Attendees

Roberta Phillips, Chief Executive Officer
Michael Gannon, Chief Operating Officer for Support Services
Michelle Hamiel, Chief Operating Office for Public Services
Nicholas Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communication & Outreach
Blane Halliday, Director for Collection Strategies
Carla Moore, Director of Information Technology
Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance
Jessica Freeman, Executive Assistant

Welcome and Call to Order by President Toni Smith: 7:04 PM

March 17, 2022 Meeting Agenda: Adopted by consensus

January 20, 2022 Board of Trustees Minutes

President Smith requested that language be added to the minutes as to why the Friends & Foundation report was given out of order on the agenda. Mr. Crawford moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ms. Angela Smith seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it passed unanimously.

President's Report

January 21st - Urban Libraries Council's Virtual Innovations Celebration where PGCMLS was awarded the Top Innovator 2021 award. President Smith gave her congratulations to Library staff that were recognized for their innovation.

February 1st - In partnership with Patti Kim from the PGCMLS Foundation, President Smith provided testimony for the FY 2023 Library budget at the listening session. Susie Misleh also provided testimony for the Library's budget on behalf of MCGEO.

February 3rd - CEX Angela Alsobrooks visited and toured the Laurel Branch, President Smith also attended.

February 4th - Due to the work of the Community Engagement Committee and Communications Team, President Smith submitted FY 2023 budget written comments. The President thanked these groups for their contributions to this work, especially Ms. Angela Smith.

February 11th - Met with Megan Sutherland to discuss advocacy efforts. Megan will be presenting later in this meeting.

March 8th - Attended the United Libraries Trustees Round Table Discussion.

March 14th - President Smith received her certificate of completion for the Maryland Open Meetings Act online class.

Board of Trustees Committee Reports

Personnel & Governance Committee - Toni A. Smith, Chair

The committee held two closed sessions under MD Gen Provisions Code § 3-305 for the purpose of discussing personnel matters on Feb 8, 2022 and Feb 21, 2022 . The Committee is also in the process of completing the CEO's annual evaluation.

Talent & Culture Report - Michelle Hamiel, Chief Operating Officer for Public Services: During the height of the COVID-19 "Omicron" variant surge there were a total of 44 confirmed positive cases between December 1, 2021 and January 28, 2022. As of March 1 there have been no confirmed positive cases since January 28. The Prince George's County government continues to provide all employees with a COVID-19 home test kits and KN95 masks while supplies last. Prince George's County dropped the mask mandate effective February 28 but PGCMLS continues to enforce the mask mandate and social distancing that have been in place as a measure to keep staff safe. Since the mask mandate was lifted by the County, staff were polled and unanimously decided to keep the mask mandate for the System in place for both staff and customers. There have been a limited number of incidents with customers who aren't in compliance with the mask mandate. Ms. Phillips also provided that there has been positive feedback from customers, thanking the Library for keeping its mask mandate in place. As long as supply is available, PGCMLS will be able to continue to provide masks to its customers.

Board Questions and Comments

President Smith recommended that signs indicating the Library's mask mandate is still in place, and remain in place to remind customers. Mr. Epps commended the mask mandate efforts. Mr. Crawford made a query about the smaller than average applicant pools causing issues for hiring efforts. Ms. Hamiel indicated that the same is happening in Virginia, D.C., and surrounding counties so the issue is not just specific to PGCMLS.

Budget & Planning Committee - Sylvia Bolivar, Chair

Following the Committee's meeting with the Finance Director, it was decided that the policy would not be presented to the full board as there were a number of updates to be made. Once suggested revisions are made, this item can be presented at the May Board meeting. The committee would again review the policy with changes prior to full Board review.

Financial Information and Report, Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance: An overview of the Library's financial activities and budget status for fiscal year-to-date January 2022, about 58% through the fiscal year, and year over year comparison. Year-to-date operating revenues were \$19.23M, which is 57.6% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$19.22M, or 57.0% in fiscal year 2021. Year-to-date operating expenditures were \$18.9M, which is 56.7% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$18.8M, or 55.7% a year ago. Compensation was \$14.3M, 57.3%, and lower than the budget approximately by \$250K, which is primarily due to lower rates of hiring. The fiscal year-to-date net change in fund balance, budgetary bases, was a surplus of \$315K, for the most part due to lower than budgeted expenditures in compensation and library materials; negatively offset by higher than budgeted expenditures in utilities as well as lower than budgeted branch and other revenues. Overall fund balance decreased by \$157K, due to year-to-date surplus, less the use of fund balance in the amount of \$472K. The Library has incurred \$3.6M in CIP expenditures and recognized the same amount as revenue. Grant related revenue and expenditure were about \$153K and \$163K respectively.

Questions/Comments from the Board

President Smith inquired if there could be a detailed report that could be generated regarding the expenditures that the fund balance has been used to fund. Mr. Salehudres indicated that such a report could be provided. Mr. Crawford inquired if the fund balance is used as a monthly allocation or if it is used at the end of the fiscal year once other revenues have been used. Mr. Salehudres, indicated that the Library is using a predetermined amount per month to spend from the fund balance.

Community Engagement Committee - Angela Smith, Chair

The President gave testimony and written testimony on behalf of the full board. The unfortunate news is that the County Executive has presented the budget last week and there was no change in the Library's funding. However, the budget enhancement request has increased to \$1.9M. For FY 2023. Beyond FY 2023 there is also work being done to advocate for a sustainable funding model. County Council budget advocacy meetings are in the works and some have taken place. Megan Sutherland is working with staff at the branches to help prepare for the meetings with Council Members. Ms. Smith gave her thanks for these efforts. In conjunction with the Library, the Foundation is also working on advocacy efforts.

Dr. Larew reported Mrs. Phillips, Union representatives, and himself met with Council Member Taveras yesterday. Dr. Larew indicated that Council Member Taveras was very much in the Library's corner and

provided some useful points on how to better reach her fellow Council members. Following Ms. Smith and Dr. Larew's reports, Mr. Brown responded that the Foundation is also on message.

Community Engagement Report, Nicholas Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communication & Outreach

Hyattsville Grand Opening: Mr. Brown elaborated on his written report. The planning for the Hyattsville opening is well underway and the team is very excited to announce the Press Event on March 29th and the Grand Opening on March 30th. The grand opening will be filled with different activities throughout the day so that all interested don't have to be in the building all at one time, given COVID precautions. Mr. Brown reminded Board members to RSVP to be sure a seat is saved for them.

COVID Test Kit Distribution: Test kit distribution is still in full swing although demand is waning. The Library has committed to the County to continue kit and mask distribution at the branches until the end of March.

Indoor Programming: The Library was able to pilot its first indoor program since the closure in March 2020, which was Tuesday evening at the South Bowie Branch. The event featured pilot and author Carole Hopson, who was recently featured in Ebony Magazine. She is one of only 10 African American women at the Captain level in American commercial aviation. There was an excellent turn out to this event but it was also live streamed thanks to Nestor. The next major event will be held at the Bowie Branch on April 6, 2022 at 6:30 PM where author Kosoko Jackson discusses his new books and signs books at the Bowie Branch. As long as COVID levels remain low, more branches will be piloting indoor programs in April and May with full indoor programming resuming in June.

FY 2023 State Legislative Updates: Maryland's library ebook law is effectively dead. In a response filing this week, Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh said the state would present no new evidence in the case, allowing the court's injunction blocking the law to stand and paving the way for it to be converted into a permanent injunction. The Library will not be able to meet with the full County Delegation this year as there wasn't time enough in their schedules.

Questions/Comments from the Board

President Smith congratulated the team for the indoor programming launch and Mr. Brown for his article "[Examples to Emulate](#)" was recently published in Information Today's *Marketing Library Services* May/April edition.

CEO & State of the Library Report - Roberta Phillips, Chief Executive Officer

MCGEO Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations: Negotiations for the next collective bargaining agreement began on March 7th and another negotiations session is scheduled for March 28th.

Library Presentations: Mrs. Phillips highlighted that PGCMLS staff were invited to present at the bi-annual Public Library Association conference in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Brown, Ms Hamiel, and Mrs. Phillips presented at a Urban Libraries Council's Directors Meeting on what PGCMLS is doing in the area of anti-racism, social equity, and inclusion. The PGCMLS team is well regarded in the library community.

Arts'tination: The Library is partnering with the Prince George's County Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) to share the Arts'tination gallery space at the National Harbor this coming spring. The Library will provide borrowable collections for both kids and adults centered around the arts and host select programs that the Oxon Hill branch staff will be providing throughout spring/summer 2022. Tentative opening the week of April 3rd which is National Library Week but once the date is decided, it will be announced.

Bowie Branch Incidents: Mrs. Phillips deferred to Ms. Hamiel. Ms. Hamiel relayed that the letter that was sent home to parents and cooperation from the local police department has seemingly reduced incidents at the branch. The teen room is open and programming has been resumed. Mr. Brown mentioned that the Bowie Branch is going to be launching their teen action group very soon to help engage the teens coming from the high school and surrounding communities. Additionally, as part of the pull up fund grant, summer camps offering full week/40 hours will be taking place in six branches dealing with social justice for teens. The Library is also partnering with the CEX's passport program.

Hyattsville Opening: President Smith expressed her excitement for the opening of the Hyattsville Branch on March 30. Mr. Gannon indicated that there are a few small items left to be done but the branch will be ready by the opening date.

Langley Park: Mr. Gannon provided that there is funding available in order to build out the branch in the shopping center but the Library wouldn't be able to pay for the lease on the site once built out. Mrs. Phillips has asked for a commitment from Central Services and the Office of Management & Budget for staffing and operational expenses prior to bringing a new library online as the current staffing numbers cannot support an additional branch. Mrs. Bolivar inquired if purchasing property is off the table. Mrs. Phillips responded that leasing is preferred as it will get service to the community more quickly but that purchasing property and building a new branch is still on the table. Mrs. Bolivar volunteered to support advocacy efforts for this branch as she is very concerned for the younger members of this community and providing services to them quickly.

Advocacy Training: How to Become an Ambassador for Your Library - Megan Sutherland, East Area Director

Ms. Sutherland highlighted advocacy techniques and the [love my library advocacy page](#) on the PGCMLS website. She encouraged potential advocates to:

- Do Your Homework: Research your elected officials social media, website, newsletters, as well as sponsored legislation and voting record.
 - The PGCMLS Love my Library Advocacy page also includes a [find your legislator tool](#).
- Reach Out: identify yourself as a constituent, have a specific ask, be brief, personalize your message, and follow-up.
- Connect & Share: use social media, phone calls, and emails to connect with legislators

Following Ms. Sutherlands presentation, a youth member of the Oxon Hill Branch, Rebecca Appiah, shared a poem that was inspired by her use of the Library.

Foundation & Friends Report

Dr. Larew indicated that the next Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for April 19th. The Foundation is looking into liability insurance at the moment.

Mr. Brown provided that staff throughout the Library are submitting funding requests for differing programs/projects from the Foundation. Talks from major corporate funders are taking place to renew partnerships. Brick purchases for the Bladensburg Branch will be available shortly. Local artists are also providing commemorative items for the Foundation to sell as a fundraiser for Bladensburg. Additionally, a Countywide Friends meeting in order for members of the Executive Team to provide updates is in the works.

Requests to Address the Board

Effie Levner

Ms. Levner is a primary user of both the New Carrollton and Greenbelt branches. Her primary question is it possible for the Library to obtain a better quality and quantity of foreign language poetry. Interlibrary loan was offered but has proven to be tedious due to wait times. However, Mr. Brown provided his contact information so that he may work with Ms. Levner to further address her concerns.

Closing Statements: Mr. Crawford moved to close the public Board meeting and enter into a closed Executive Session according to the Maryland code section 3305 B, sub sections one, eight and nine of the open meetings act. Ms. Bolivar seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

- **Adjourn:** 8:22PM