



Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting
November 18, 2021 - 7:00 PM
Zoom Video Conference Call**

Minutes

Board Members Present

Brett Crawford, President

Angela D. Smith

Dr. Arthuree Wright

Dr. Hiram Larew

Sylvia Bolivar

Toni A. Smith

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

Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture

Blane Halliday, Director for Collection Strategies

Carla Moore, Director of Information Technology

Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance

Steve Fitzgerald, Director Dynamic Content and Engagement

Jessica Freeman, Executive Assistant

Absent: Samuel Epps

Welcome and Call to Order by President Brett Crawford: 7:06 PM

September 23, 2021 Board of Trustees Minutes

Ms. Toni Smith tabled the minutes for clarifications and revisions to the minutes.

October 10, 2021 Emergency Board of Trustees Minutes

Ms. Toni Smith moved to approve the October 20, 2021 Board of Trustees minutes with Ms. Angela Smith seconding the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Board of Trustees Committee Reports

Personnel & Governance Committee - Toni A. Smith, Chair

Ms. Toni Smith reported that the committee has been busy for the last few months. The committee met with the CEO in October for a mid-year evaluation. Concurrently the committee has been reviewing the applications to fill the Board's vacancy and is interested in interviewing 11 candidates.

For calendar year 2022, the committee offered a slate of candidates for President and Vice President. Toni A. Smith for President and Brett Crawford for Vice President. Mr. Crawford volunteers if there is not another Board member who wishes to step into this role but encourages his fellow board members to do so.

Unfinished Business: System Closure During Holidays Proposal

The Personnel & Governance Committee received a revised proposal from management, which proposed closing the System the Mondays following both the Christmas and New Year's holidays. This was changed from the original proposal, which proposed closing the System the week between the Christmas and New Year's holidays. The Committee recommended to the Board to accept the proposal to close the two Mondays following Christmas and New Year's holidays.

Board Questions and Comments

Ms. Angela Smith inquired about the Collective Bargaining Agreement's Article 14 Section A in terms of justification. Ms. Pinnock explained the article and indicated that an employee whose normal day off falls on a holiday will be given personal leave to be used within the calendar year; provided that those whose normal day off falls on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and/or New Year's Eve may use their personal leave day(s) within the next calendar year. Dr. Larew clarified that all branches would be open December 28, 29, and 30 under the new proposal and this was confirmed by Mr. Crawford. Mr. Crawford indicated that the Board is cognizant of both the staff's need to recharge following a stressful 18 or 20 months but have to weigh this against great community needs. Ms. Bolivar added that this System is serving an underserved population and the Board is wanting to address those needs as well as struggling to balance the health and wellness needs of the Library system. Dr. Wright moved to accept the amended proposal with Ms. Toni Smith seconding the motion. When put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

New Business: 2022 Library Calendar Proposal

Ms. Toni Smith reported that the Personnel & Governance Committee recommends acceptance of the 2022 Library Calendar as presented. Mr. Crawford noted that the updated calendar proposal was well done and provided nearly the perfect amount of context. Dr. Wright moved to adopt the 2022 Library calendar. Ms. Angela Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget & Planning Committee - Brett Crawford, Chair

New Business: FY 2023 Budget Proposal

The Committee met a few weeks ago with upper management to get a status of the FY 2023 budget proposal and to propose alternatives to management on how to deal with a likely challenging budget season. The County is projecting a lower contribution than two years ago before the pandemic, which complicates expanded programming, services, and increased demands on the Library. There were discussions on the sustainability of the budget since there has been reliance on the County's part in the Library's utilization of the fund balance to make up for budget shortfalls. This reliance has grown in recent years and there is concern about this. The committee instructed management to explore alternatives that would require less of a use of the fund balance along the lines of \$400,000. Since this meeting, upper management has considered a number of alternatives and made a proposal as it is due to the County next week. The committee recognizes, at least for the time being, that the proposed budget is reasonable for the Library even though it may not be sustainable or even a good budget. It is also fluid. Priorities may change and may need to be adjusted prior to the new fiscal year. There will be continued conversations as to how to manage the resources from both County and State in the most efficient manner. Mr. Crawford asked Mrs. Phillips to provide a high level overview of the budget.

Mrs. Phillips reported that management is trying to stay within the budget set forth by the Office of Management and Budget. Management is well aware that the funding is not sufficient and that advocacy work on behalf of the Library needs to be done, especially in the areas of staffing and operational spending which have been historically underfunded. The Committee instructed management to explore alternatives that would require a \$00K reduction in the use of the fund balance. However, 75% of the budget is utilized for staff salaries and fringe benefits. There is little wiggle room in the budget to cut costs. The most fluid budget is the materials budget and nearly the only option to cut costs.

Mr. Salehudres provided that the overall budget request is \$33,193,300, with a County contribution of \$24.3M and a flat State contribution of \$7.7M, but the state contribution has not been confirmed. Additionally, the Library is projected to generate \$1.2M in revenue internally, which includes the use of the fund balance in the amount of \$400K. The Library anticipates salary spending to increase by \$221K and fringe benefits increase of \$153K over the previous year.

Mr. Crawford provided that only two years ago the Office of Management and Budget indicated that the Library would receive an annual increase of about 2% per year for the next several years. However, now the Library is receiving a 1% increase for the next several years, which is calculated on a base that was reduced by the pandemic during the last year. The Budget and Planning Committee has met and reviewed the proposal. The Committee recommends approval of the budget proposal despite it being less than ideal and with the strong recommendation to management to free up resources to avoid having to make drastic cuts to the materials budget between now and the next fiscal year. Mrs. Phillips indicated that there are fundraising

efforts underway to supplement the collections budget. Dr. Larew indicated his intention to vote against the budget proposal due to his concerns over the message that it sends to the County regarding the unimportance of the materials budget. He expressed his belief that fundamentally, the Library is based on its materials, both electronic and print copy, and that the budget reduction should be spread out throughout the system rather than just taken from the materials budget. Ms. Phillips reported that the management team evaluated other cost savings opportunities which included eliminating hourly positions and incentivising those who qualify for retirement to retire; however, those options were deemed not viable. Mr. Crawford made a proposal to approve the FY 2023 budget proposal on behalf of the Committee with the proviso that management continue the process of scrubbing the budget to try to find either additional resources or ways to repurpose existing resources to achieve greater financial flexibility. Ms. Bolivar seconded the motion and when put to a vote, the motion passed with one vote against.

Community Engagement Committee - Angela Smith, Chair

The committee met on November 1st with the CEO, COO for Communication and Outreach, and the lead of the Library's staff committee for Community Engagement. The committee was given:

- Highlights of the fiscal year budget planning for the County and State budgets
- Shared indoor and outdoor programming plans
- Plans for the Library to host vaccine clinics for ages 5-11
- Plans on how to capture customer stories, which will be used to help advocacy efforts
- The fall customer survey went out on November 17th, which will be available until December 23rd

The committee's next meeting will be on December 1st.

Chief Executive Officer's Report - Roberta Phillips, Chief Executive Officer

Nicholas Brown Receives Governor's Citation

Governor Hogan recognized Nicholas Brown with a Governor's Citation "in recognition of leadership and tireless contributions to the immigrant, Latino/a and LGBT community in the state which led to the access of the COVID-19 vaccine, food, coats, books, and cash assistance." Several dozen community leaders throughout the county and state received this recognition for their work on advancing equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations throughout the year.

PGCMLS Submissions for Urban Libraries Council Innovation Awards

The Library has nominated 10 initiatives/services for the 2021 Urban Libraries Council Innovation Awards. Nominations will be posted on the ULC Innovation Awards website over the coming days.

Bladensburg Branch Library Groundbreaking

The Bladensburg Branch Library Groundbreaking Ceremony was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The event featured remarks by Roberta, DCAO George Askew (on behalf of the County Executive), Council Member Jolene Ivey, Bladensburg Mayor Takisha James, Michael Gannon, and Board of Library Trustees President Brett Crawford and Toni Smith. Senator Augustine, Delegate Ivey, and Delegate Fennell were also present, along with State Librarian Irene Padilla and Foundation Board Chair Linda Washington Douglas. Huge kudos and thanks to the event planning team for an superbly executed event: Bridget Barnes, Heather Jackson, Debra Capponi, Sara Mitchell, Nestor Diaz, and Maribel Rodriguez. Additional thanks to James King and Support Services for supporting the event.

Council Member Dannielle M. Glaros/Greater Riverdale Cares Distribution Events

The Library regularly participates in outreach events throughout the county and region. These events are hosted by a range of partner organizations and civic leaders, and they provide excellent opportunities for staff to promote Library programs and services. The Library partnered with Council Member Danielle M. Glaros and participated in three relief supplies distribution events hosted by the Council Member. Council Member Dannielle M. Glaros, who provided the Library and PGCMLS Foundation with funds to distribute almost 2,000 books to English and Spanish speaking children in her district. Upcoming distribution events are on Friday, November 19 and Saturday, November 20th.

COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts

Nine of the Libraries will be hosting vaccination clinics shortly. Also, there will be 1,700 COVID-19 self-test kits will be available to customers on a first come, first served basis. On Saturday, November 13, 2021, the Library attended a vaccination clinic at the Wayne K. Curry Sports & Learning Center to provide storytimes and allow for people to sign up for library cards.

Financial Information and Report - Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance

Operating Budget Status and Financial Highlights - YTD September 30, 2021

Year-to-date operating revenues were \$8.20M, which is 24.6% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$8.24M, or 24.4% in the fiscal year 2021. This is mostly related to a lower County contribution over the previous year. Year-to-date operating expenditures were \$8.0M, which is 24.0% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$8.2M, or 24.4% a year ago.

The fiscal year-to-date net change in fund balance, budgetary bases, was a surplus of \$141K, for the most part due to lower than budgeted expenditures in compensation, operating services & supplies, and building & equipment; negatively offset by higher than budgeted activities in computer & software, utilities and lower than budgeted revenue from branch revenue and miscellaneous revenue sources. Overall fund balance

decreased by \$60K, due to the net effect of the year-to-date surplus and use of fund balance in the amount of \$202K.

YTD Capital Improvement and Grant Activities

The Library has incurred \$2.2M through September 30, 2021 in CIP expenditures and submitted reimbursement requests to the County. Grant related revenue and expenditure were about \$35K and \$94K respectively.

Capital Improvement Plan Report: Michael Gannon, Chief Operating Officer for Support Services

Hyattsville Branch

Both Materials Management staff and branch staff have begun working to shelve the Hyattsville collection in the branch. Due to a new code, the elevator needs an update to the shaft. As a result a use and occupancy permit will not be granted until the elevator passes inspection. The contractor is waiting on the cast stone that goes along the railing installation. Planning for reopening is underway.

Surratts-Clinton Branch

Windows are being installed now, which makes a large difference in the lighting of the branch.

Bladensburg Branch

Contractor failed to cover the fill dirt and it rained. The fill dirt will not compact and needs to have a mix-in component to be added to it in order to have it compact before the slab is poured. The pouring of the slab is delayed.

Baden Branch

The Governor's budget is expected to be released in January and it will be made known at that time whether or not the funding will be granted by the state for the Baden branch relocation.

Langley Park

The feasibility study is under review and a staffing study is underway. After the staffing study a conversation with the Office of Management and Budget will be had to determine, which location will be moved on.

Public Services Report: Michelle Hamiel, Chief Operating Officer for Public Services

Race and Social Equity

The RSE audit team continues to process and analyze the data from the survey.

Part II of diversity training, "Zoom Lens", offered by Changing the Lens is complete. Three hundred twenty five staff members registered for the training.

ALA Emerging Leader

Kelsey Hughes, Librarian III, South Bowie was recently selected as an ALA Emerging Leader! Ms. Hamiel gave her congratulations for this honor. She is expected to attend both the LibLearnX Virtual Event, and the ALA 2022 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

Service Design Team

Moneik Frazier is facilitating the Service Design team. This is a cross departmental team trained and charged with creating more effective, efficient, and meaningful service experiences for customers and making it easier to identify and prioritize which services to deliver. The team received training from Harmonic Design.

Full Operations

Sunday service resumed on October 3, 2021 and passport services resumed on November 3, 2021. The busiest branches are proving to be both Laurel and New Carrollton for passports. Chromebooks usage and PC usage are up since reopening but call center numbers have been down since full operations began in September. Door counts, reference questions, and PC sessions compared to pre-COVID counts are all down significantly.

Comments & Questions from the Board

Mr. Crawford inquired about the door counts and if more analysis is available on the cause to the dramatic decrease in library attendance. Ms. Hamiel provided that it was likely due to many factors, one being the indoor programming is still not being offered and outdoor program attendance is low. However, following the December and January holidays to avoid any COVID spikes, the Library is considering piloting indoor programming. Ms. Toni Smith inquired about surrounding counties and if they are offering indoor programming. Ms. Hamiel provided that some are and others aren't. Mr. Brown also explained that libraries throughout the country are experiencing similar disparities in door counts from previous years and to reopening closing due to the pandemic. Ms. Toni Smith noted Ms. Hamiel's work with the Maryland Library Association and leading their Equity, Diversity and Inclusion task force and commended her work there.

Communication & Outreach Report: Nicholas Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communication and Outreach

Mr. Brown recognized Carla Moore, Director of Information Technology, for securing \$1.127M in emergency connectivity funds to expand the Chromebook and hotspot inventory by over 2,000 units. Mr. Brown also recognized Donna Scott-Martin who will be retiring after 13 years with the Library.

Mr. Brown provided information on a new project that is underway, which the Library received grant funds from the Maryland State Library to support the Guide to Indigenous Maryland Project. It is a statewide effort that the Library is leading. Libraries throughout the state are working with curator Elizabeth Ruhl to develop an app and website for the general public to learn about indigenous communities and heritage.

The Surratts-Clinton temporary location is open as of this past Tuesday thanks to the South Area Manager and her team. This will bring 400 additional service hours to the community in the southern part of the county, which includes computer access. The hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am - 2 pm.

Ms. Hamiel recognized both John Krivak and Maria Escobedo who recently retired from the Hyattsville branch. Mr. Krivak had roughly 50 years of service to this Library system.

Comments and Questions from the Board

Dr. Larew inquired if a fundraiser has been hired as of yet. Mr. Brown indicated that although there were several candidates at the interview phase, they did not work out for various reasons. There will be another publicity push on the opening. If that is unsuccessful, then the position description will be reconfigured and will be put on hold until the Joint Committee has established an MOU between the Library and Foundation. Mr. Crawford reported that the work of the Joint Committee is going well. Meetings have taken place and another is scheduled for Monday. The goal is to have a solid draft of the MOU by the end of the year.

Talent & Culture Report: Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture

Retirements

Since the September meeting, there have been four more retirements and between December and January there will be three more. For the calendar year, that will put the Library at 15 retirees.

COVID-19 Updates

Since the October meeting where the vaccination policy was approved, roughly 82% of PGCMLS staff are fully vaccinated with about 18% who are unvaccinated. Those that are unvaccinated are tested weekly. In terms of weekly testing, 99% of staff are in compliance. Staff feedback has been positive and staff are feeling safer. COVID protocols are still in place despite locations not closing for an exposure. The Support Services team is disinfecting prior to staff returning to the building. Masks are still required and social distancing is promoted. As the holiday season approaches, reminders of mindfulness will be communicated to staff.

Requests to Address the Board

Steve Valentich - MCGEO Representative

Requested clarification on the fact that staff whose normal day off falls on a holiday, they will receive a personal day for Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. Ms. Pinnock indicated that would be the case per the contract.

O. Horvath, Digital Services Specialist

Indicated their appreciation for the Board's consideration of the proposal to close for the week of the Christmas and New Year's holidays but relayed their dismay in the decision making process as the community and staff needs are not necessarily separate.

Closing Statements: Ms. Toni Smith moved to close the public Board meeting and enter into a closed Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Board interviews. Dr. Wright seconded the motion and the motion carried. Mr. Crawford wished all a wonderful holiday season.

- **Adjourn:** 8:24PM