



# Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting  
May 20, 2021 - 7:00 PM  
Zoom Video Conference Call**

## **Minutes**

### **Board Members Present**

Brett Crawford, President  
Samuel Epps, IV, Vice 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  
Jessica Freeman, Executive Assistant  
Steve Fitzgerald, Director Dynamic Content and Engagement

Absent:

### **Welcome and Call to Order by President Brett Crawford: 7:03 PM**

### **March 18, 2021 & April 12, 2021 Board of Trustees Minutes**

When put to a vote the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Board of Trustees Committee Reports**

#### Personnel & Governance Committee - Toni A. Smith, Chair

Ms. Smith reported that planning for the annual Board retreat has begun and that the CEO's annual review. The committee is continuing to review Library and personnel policies.

### Finance & Planning Committee - Brett Crawford, Chair

Mr. Crawford provided that the committee would be meeting prior to the July Board meeting to discuss strategic budget priorities for the next budget cycle and beyond.

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

#### Phase II Reopening

Along with libraries across the nation, PGCMLS entered into Phase II and experienced slow reentry on the part of customers. It is taking time for them to realize that the Library is reopening to them for limited browsing and computer appointments. Mrs. Phillips gave kudos to the branch staff who have made their lobbies look much like little book stores in order to provide some browsing experience for the customers.

#### Transformation for Libraries Training

A great training opportunity has been offered through the Maryland State Library that Mrs. Phillip, two members of the Leadership Team and Mr. Brown have been accepted to attend. The goal behind the training is to learn a strategic framework that enables the organization to continuously learn-unlearn-relearn to lead discussion and action in the transformation of libraries. The training will take place over the course of three full days May 25 - 27.

#### Oxon Hill Weekly Food Distribution

Mrs. Phillips gave kudos to South Area Manager, Melanie Townsend-Diggs for taking on a partnership with Believers of Faith Ministries in order to bring a food pantry service to the Oxon Hill community at the Oxon Hill Branch. Service started slowly but on average 60-65 families are being served each week.

#### VOYA Black Lives Matter Issue

PGCMLS staff established a content partnership this year with Voices of Youth Advocates (VOYA) Magazine, which is a literary magazine for library workers who serve teens. In addition to contributing articles and book lists on a regular basis, PGCMLS staff had the opportunity to guest-curate a full issue, based on its national leadership with anti-racism programming in 2020. The editorial effort was led by Teen Services Specialist Isaiah West, with support from the PR/Marketing Department. Isaiah worked with staff throughout the Library and partner organizations (Maryland State Library and Prince George's County Human Relations Commission) to solicit contributions and ensure broad representation of the Library's anti-racism initiatives and diverse collections.

#### The Horn Book Feature

The Library's virtual bilingual programming and outreach efforts during COVID-19 are featured in

the May/June issue of The Horn Book, a national literary magazine for library workers, educators, and the publishing industry who serve children. The special issue commemorates the 25th anniversary of the Pura Belpré Award. COO for Communication and Outreach Nicholas Brown authored the article on behalf of PGCMLS, which was featured in the Field Notes bimonthly column. Read the article [here](#).

#### Teresa Miller Awarded 2021 Maryland Library Association Emerging Leader Award - Michelle Hamiel

Teresa Miller (Librarian I, Spauldings Branch) was awarded the 2021 Maryland Library Association Emerging Leader Award on Thursday, May 6 during the virtual Maryland Library Association/Delaware Library Association Conference. The Emerging Leader Award recognizes a member of MLA working in a library who demonstrates strong leadership potential and encourages the recipient to assume an increasingly responsible role in librarianship. Teresa is the staff lead of the LGBTQ+ Team and has been instrumental in advancing the Library's support of LGBTQ+ community members and staff through the development of a staff toolkit, numerous programs and outreach programs, and training for all staff. Ms. Miller joined the meeting and thanked the Board, Executive Team, and Branch staff for being so supportive. Mr. Crawford indicated how pleased he is that PGCMLS staff are being recognized statewide and that he believes there will be more to come given the caliber of the Library staff.

#### **Financial Information and Report - Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance**

Mr. Salehudres provided an overview of the Library's financial activities and budget status for fiscal year-to-date through March 31, 2021, which is 75% through the fiscal year, and year over year comparison.

Year-to-date operating revenues were \$24.7M, which is 73.2% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$24.8M, or 74.7% in fiscal year 2020. Compared to last year, the operating revenues are down .3%. This is primarily due to lower than budgeted revenues received from the branches. This was positively offset by both County and State contributions.

Year-to-date operating expenditures were \$23.9M, which is 70.8% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$24.9M, or 74.9% a year ago. Compared to this time last year, operating expenses are lower by 3.9%. This is due to lower than expected expenses related to both salaries and fringe benefits as well as lower operating expenses. However, this was offset by higher operating expenses in both computer software and support as well as building and equipment line items.

Today's net change in fund balance is a surplus of \$118K due to lower than budgeted expenditures in compensation, library materials, operating services, as well as building and equipment expenditures. The surplus was negatively offset by higher than budgeted expenses in both computer software and equipment as well as building and equipment. Operating revenues were lower by roughly \$593K but expenditures were

lower by \$1.7M. Although it is yet to be seen, the Library expects to have a surplus in the ballpark of \$250K - \$300K. It is anticipated that there will be some expenditure increases with the Library opening into Phase II.

In terms of the CIP budget, the Library has incurred \$3.6M in CIP expenditures and recognized the same amount as revenue.

Grant related revenue and expenditure were about \$410K and \$403K respectively.

#### Comments and Questions from the Board

Mr. Crawford expressed some concern in having too large a projected surplus. Mr. Brown indicated that the Library agrees with this assessment and that there will be some spending down in the PR department around Phase II reopening. Mr. Crawford indicated that through the pandemic it was good to hold back spending to navigate through unknown waters but that now that the path forward is a little more clear, spending can be done to plan for future and immediate needs. Dr. Larew asked if the surplus can be carried over to the next fiscal year. Mr. Salehudres responded that any surplus will go into the fund balance.

#### **Capital Improvement Plan Report: Michael Gannon, Chief Operating Officer for Support Services** Hyattsville Branch

The shelving was delivered and installation will take roughly two to three weeks. Once installed, the opening day collection will arrive and be shelved. Although a stocking permit has not yet been issued, it is expected shortly, and will allow branch staff from the branch and Materials Management to begin shelving. The opening day collection is scheduled to arrive on June 1st. The apple tree for the children's area has been installed, much like South Bowie Branch's tree but with a friendly face.

#### Surratts-Clinton Branch

It is believed that the exterior water issues have been resolved. Now work can be done on the walls and floors inside the building. The contractor has done the installation of sprinkler systems overhead, conduit, and HVAC systems. Now that the water issues have been fixed, the project should move along faster. At a construction meeting on Tuesday an updated construction schedule was promised.

#### Bladensburg Branch

Staff have relocated to the temporary site, which will open for curbside the week of May 24th. The old building has been turned over to the contractor who is completing hazmat abatement. After abatement, the building will be demolished. Unfortunately, the County real estate office and Mr. Gannon were unable to find a temporary site within Bladensburg proper due to most of the landlords wanting a five year lease, which the County would not agree to. The temporary site is located at 6527 Annapolis Road,

MD 20784, which is across the street from Walmart on Annapolis road. There is good signage in both English and Spanish to direct customers to the temporary location during construction of the new branch.

### Baden Branch

Support Services has submitted an application for a state capital grant today to help fund the build out of the Health Center. The County has agreed to match the \$1.58M that the Library is applying for from the state with \$1M. It is unlikely to receive notification of the award from the state until the end of the calendar year. The County real estate office is working with PGCPs to have the building surplused to the County. This action will need to be approved by the state of Maryland.

### Langley Park

The County is still negotiating with the developer. There is still an option for the Boys and Girls club; however, liens on the property were recently discovered, so that is slowing the process as well. At the last County Council review of the CIP budget Council Member Glaros added \$250K to FY 2022's budget for the design element to get started in that fiscal year.

### Smaller Projects

- Hillcrest Heights had a new roof replacement, which has been completed.
- Largo-Kettering is having new hydraulic pumping for the chilled water for the HVAC as well as ceiling replacement.
- The architect is doing the design for the Fairmount Heights D.R.E.A.M Lab expansion

### Comments and Questions from the Board

Ms. Bolivar commented on and praised how much work Mr. Gannon has been able to get done during the pandemic. Ms. Bolivar also inquired about energy efficiency in the buildings and if ARPA funding is being sought for capital needs for new buildings. Mr. Gannon responded that it is now County law that all new buildings have to have sustainable energy. Many of the new builds already have these elements built in like the Laurel, Hyattsville and Bladensburg Branches. There have also been other conservation and sustainability efforts that have been made over the years like LED retrofitting and the Library's energy contract stipulates that 10% of all power is wind generated. Mrs. Phillips also added that more electric car charging stations are being added to the branches as well, which are not revenue sources for the Library. The Library only charges enough to cover the expense of the electricity as well as maintenance on the charger. These chargers are currently located at Laurel, Bladensburg, and Hyattsville. The County has entered into a deal with Pepco and will be adding charging stations to Largo-Kettering

and Spauldings Branches with ones at Oxon Hill and Accokeek in the works. In response to Ms. Bolivar's question about how to determine the placement of the chargers, Mr. Gannon provided that Pepco make the evaluation and he either approves or denies them. The Library has been involved in sustainability efforts for a number of years now. Ms. Bolivar recommended marketing the Library's sustainability efforts. Mr. Brown indicated that PR would be produced once the installation of the electric car chargers has been completed.

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

The Phase 2 MOU stipulated that staff providing public-facing service shall receive the COVID-19 differential of \$1.25 in addition to the supplemental annual leave. Effective April 30, the accrual of all supplemental annual leave and COVID-19 pay differentials ended. The Phase 2 MOU will terminate upon moving to Phase 3 and PGCMLS will return to the original collective bargaining agreement.

By May 28th, any employee who had elected to get vaccinated through the cooperative opportunity offered by the County to PGCMLS staff, will be fully vaccinated. Distancing among staff and customers as well as the wearing of masks is still required. Security guards are being utilized to help screen customers coming into the branches. A/B and A/B/C week schedules are still in place during Phase II. Recruitment is picking up as we enter Phase II and in preparation for further phases.

Through American Rescue Plan Act funding, under the Biden administration, Emergency Paid Sick Leave is able to be extended through September 30, 2021 for both hourly and salaried employees for those impacted by COVID-19.

#### **Foundation Report: Nicholas Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communications & Outreach**

In Ms. O'Brien's absence Mr. Brown indicated that he would take any questions regarding Ms. O'Brien's report. Mrs. Phillips provided that the Foundation is putting forth some diverse and interesting items that will soon be available on the Foundation's store. The Events Committee on the Foundation Board has also met and is proposing a fall event as a fundraiser.

#### Comments and Questions from the Board

Mr. Crawford advised that the opinion of a tax attorney be sought on how selling items may have tax implications with the IRS for the Foundation. Mr. Brown provided that the Director of Finance for the Library has been in charge of compliance with state and federal tax law in addition to a lawyer on the Foundation Board guiding the Board but will advise Ms. O'Brien to look into this further.

### American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

Mr. Brown provided an update on the municipal outreach for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Thus far the response has been overwhelmingly positive. In many instances the Library already has the infrastructure to launch programming that the municipalities are interested in, such as laptop loaning, that the municipality will not have to develop infrastructure for. Mrs. Phillips provided that the Library is offering municipalities digital equity packages.

### Comments and Questions from the Board

Ms. Bolivar asked about the application process for ARPA funding through the municipalities and County. Mr. Brown responded that the municipalities and County have been funded separately and that each municipality as well as the County have a different process to access funds. Since the Library's initial foray with the County Council, awareness of the funding has been much more widely known. Ms. Bolivar shared that in some cases the funds have to be obligated by December 2024 but may be spent at a later date than that.

### **Race & Social Equity (RSE) Framework Report: Michelle Hamiel, Chief Operating Officer for Public Services**

Prior to COO Hamiel's report Mrs. Phillips highlighted all of Ms. Hamiel's work on behalf of race and social equity throughout library organizations in both the state and nationally. Ms. Hamiel thanked the sensitive, thoughtful, empathetic, and caring team that has joined her for this important work. The RSE team is made up of 24 cross-departmental members who all individually contributed to the three year strategic plan for the team. The team is made up of four subcommittees; communication, community engagement, staff support, and training. Ms. Hamiel invited the Board to join the PGCMLS in the Changing the Lens: Optics Workshop the weeks of June 1 - 11. Members of the training subcommittee and a few of the larger team took part in the statewide Dismantling Institutional Racism Audit training. Those members will then audit the Library system to ensure that the Library is eliminating its racist practices along with two team members from both the Prince George's County Human Resources Department and the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission have given members of their staff to join the PGCMLS RSE team. Along with the framework and System audit, the team is working on

- staff intranet page,
- finding a way for staff who have faced inequities to communicate directly with Talent & Culture
- unify and combine resources throughout the System in order to be able to better service the community as a whole (working with Community Engagement as well)
- continue/further the race and social inequity discussions that began within the system during the Spring/Summer of 2020.

**Mission:** The PGCMLS Race and Social Equity Team will create an environment that is welcoming to all staff and customers. Inclusion is essential to the relationship we cultivate that builds a foundation of equity. We celebrate the full spectrum of human differences. We understand that such differences help us connect better with each other and our community. Our diversity will create a culture of belonging where everyone will thrive. Everyone feels valued, respected, and accepted. Our voices, actions, and contributions affect change. This team is up for the challenge and is ready to commit to this hard work.

**Vision:**

We hear you

We respect you

We value your contributions and perspectives

The strategic framework has been broken into three focus areas but is also meant to be a living document that changes along with the organization. The document will be reevaluated frequently. The focus areas are:

1. Leadership & Training
2. Policies and Procedures
3. The Workforce

Comments and Questions from the Board

Mr. Crawford thanked Ms. Hamiel and this team for this well thought out plan and commends the work that the team is doing. Mr. Crawford is sharing the strategic framework created by the RSE team with another organization that he is involved with as a template for their work. Dr. Larew asked what is the timeframe to complete the audit? Ms. Hamiel provided that the timeline is being determined as the system is working on a timeline for Phase III of reopening. Dr. Larew recommended that the team consider how the work will be sustained. Mr. Crawford inquired about what the career ladder finalization entails that was referenced in the RSE strategic framework. Ms. Hamiel responded that there is a traditional hierarchy within libraries that limits how far a staff member can go who has a Bachelor's degree. PGCMLS is looking to create a path for those with Bachelor's degrees beyond the Library Associate II level although they cannot legally be called Librarians if they do not hold a Master's in Library Sciences. This will take into consideration years of experience and qualifications. The only MLS required positions will be Area Managers, Area Assistants, and above. Mrs. Phillips added that this is to eliminate barriers to success within the organization and place value on years of service and on the job learning.



### **Spotlight: Partnerships & Programming, Nicholas Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communications & Outreach**

Mr. Brown provided a written report to the Board but wanted to highlight the partnership between the Library and the Washington Nationals baseball team. The Library has received amazing press and promos through this partnership on Mid-Atlantic Sports Network (MASN) radio and on television. The Library is very excited to host Josh Bell's book club, which begins on Sunday at 7pm. Registration has nearly hit capacity. The Library looks forward to a long and continuous partnership with the Nationals.

Mr. Brown also highlighted the now long term relationship between the Library and the Washington Wizards as well as the continued partnership with the Maryland State Library.

Although the Vaccination Hotline is scheduled to come to an end in June, the focus has shifted from taking calls from interested community members who wanted to register to receive their COVID-19 vaccination, to now proactively calling customers in areas of the County with the lowest vaccination rates.

### **Comments and Questions from the Board**

Mr. Crawford asked how the Library is staffing the new programs and building partnerships with new organizations that the Library wasn't doing two years ago. Mr. Brown provided that in part it was due to the restructuring to create the Communication and Outreach Department that eliminated some barriers. The work team approach has also allowed for more cross-department collaboration and allowed more focus on priorities with more team members working on them. In some cases AO staff will either begin or advance a partnership and then hand it over to the appropriate work team. In other cases, the work team cultivates the partnership and will bring it to AO for advancement or scaling. Dr. Larew recommends adding the work teams participation into the evaluation process or merit system. Ms. Angela Smith inquired as to whether or not the Library would be participating in providing summer meals. Ms. Hamiel indicated that she would need to check if it would be possible. Dr. Larew inquired as to how the Council budget hearings went. Ms. Phillips provided that design funds were moved into FY2022's budget for Langley Park and that additional funding was also provided so that the Library can resume Sunday hours.

### **New Business: Proposal for Juneteenth Holiday Closure Proposal**

The County has recently officially recognized the holiday for the County and the Library has increased its commitment to Juneteenth programming and recognition of the history as well as impact on daily life. The Executive Team is proposing that the Library adopt Juneteenth as an official Library holiday as well. Ms. Bolivar moved to accept the proposal. Dr. Wright seconded the motion and when put to a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

## **New Business: Proposal Leave Roll Over Limitations Adjustment**

Tabled until later in the year as there may be opportunities for staff to utilize their leave as things reopen.

## **New Business: Proposal for Phase III Reopening**

Mrs. Phillips relayed that there are more organizations reopening. After conversations with supervisory groups and the Phase III work group, the Executive Team would like to open into Phase III on June 14, 2021, which would entail:

- Unified hours across the system
  - Monday & Tuesday: 10:00 - 6:00
  - Wednesday: 12:00 - 8:00
  - Thursday & Friday: 10 - 6:00
  - Saturday: 10:00 - 5:00
- Unlimited browsing
- Half of available public computers at each location will be available for use to maintain distancing.
- Elimination of telework while the telework policy is being revised based on findings learned from the pandemic closure.
- No in person programming but will be providing outreach at outdoor activities.
- Safety precautions will be in place and masks will be worn in order to enter the buildings.
- Meeting rooms will remain closed.
- Toys will not be provided in children's areas
- The health and safety committee has agreed to an end of quarantining of materials once in Phase III.
- Donations of books are still not permitted and Friends will not be able to sell donated/discarded books.

## **Comments and Questions from the Board**

Ms. Angela Smith asked how capacity restrictions will be enforced. Ms. Hamiel indicated that the Library has calculated 150 sq. ft. per person which is more than any mandated requirements. In most cases, even in the smaller branches, these limits are not reached. Mr. Brown also chimed in that Mr. Gannon reviewed pre-COVID-19 building traffic and when in-person programming isn't available, the numbers won't reach capacity limitations. Dr. Larew made a motion to approve the proposal as presented and Dr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Based on Dr. Larew's question, Mr. Brown announced that a staff announcement will be made Friday morning but that public announcements will likely be made on Monday.

## **Requests to Address the Board**

### **Steve Valentich, PGCMILS Staff Member and MCGEO Shop Steward**

Indicated that the career ladder working group was tasked with separating the Librarian I and Library Associate II positions to differentiate them. Library Associate IIs are paid two grades lower than Librarian Is

but are for all intent and purposes, doing the same job. Thus far, this task has not been accomplished. Mrs. Phillips indicated that a change is coming and will be presented to the work group.

**Closing Statements:** Ms. Bolivar moved to close the public session of the Board meeting and enter into a closed executive session to discuss the annual Board retreat. Mr. Epps seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Adjourn:** 8:50PM