

**Board of Library Trustees for Caroline County**  
**January 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes**  
**Approved April 5, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by President Caroll Visintainer at 6:07 PM at the Federalsburg Branch, 123 Morris Avenue, Federalsburg 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room.

Present were Caroll Visintainer, Steve Fleegle, Bart Johnson, Kaleb Hignutt, and Tomas Davila; along with Executive Director Debby Bennett and Assistant Director Jonah Owens. Library staff members Corey Christian and Jessica Collins were also present.

Board members Melissa Leonard and Sarah Dahl were not present.

There were no citizens present.

Mr. Owens introduced Corey Christian and Jessica Collins, who are attending this meeting to meet a Library Associate Training Institute assignment about learning about their Board of Library Trustees by attending a meeting.

#### **Minutes**

Steve Fleegle moved to approve the minutes as written. Bart Johnson seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

#### **Treasurers Report**

Ms. Bennett reviewed with the Board both the Balance Sheet and the Treasurer's Report. The reports were accepted to be filed for audit.

#### **Staff progress report**

Mr. Owens reviewed some highlights from the report; including staffing updates, the great attendance at our Storytimes at our North County Branch, our first Storybook Trail project, and an update on our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Reading Challenge. He also mentioned our upcoming Meet the Author event in March featuring Hillsboro resident, Ernst Selig.

#### **For Board approval**

- The Board reconfirmed its 12-2-2022 email vote to approve changes to open hours for the duration of the Central Library first floor renovation
- The Board reconfirmed its 12-19-2022 email vote to approve making Friday, Dec 23 a holiday for this year. It was noted that the State and Caroline County Government also made this a holiday for their staff.
- The Board reconfirmed its 12-21-2022 email vote to approve closing the Central Library on Dec 31 due to lack of sufficient staff and necessary additional work to transition to the temporary second floor mini-library by January 2.

#### **Report of the Executive Director**

- Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens will be providing a Library orientation and tour of the three facilities for the two new Caroline County Commissioners on Jan 31 starting at 1 pm at the Federalsburg Branch. County Commissioner Larry Porter and Board President Visintainer also plan to attend. Ms. Bennett invited other Board members to join the group if they wish, even if it is just at one library facility.
- The automated Circulation system Polaris managed by the Eastern Shore Regional Library (ESRL) will be down on Feb 13. That means no checking in or out of materials, no Interlibrary Loan activity, no public computers. Given there will be little we can offer that day, Ms. Bennett requested board approval to close to the public that day and use it as a staff training day to conduct basic and safety training. Steve

Fleegle moved to close the library to the public on February 13 and that it be used for staff training. Tomas Davila seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

- Ms. Bennett gave a Central Library renovation update, including some unforeseen work that will need to be done, including the relocating of some sprinkler pipes in the children's rooms in order to remove the wall currently separating the rooms and some HVAC ductwork repairs. She also gave an update on the RFP for Interior Data Cable installation.
- This year the Maryland Library Legislative Day will be in person in Annapolis on February 15. The reception for our state legislators will be an early morning drop by for breakfast this year. Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens plan to attend. ESRL staff are setting up appointments for all the eight Eastern Shore public libraries representatives attending that day to meet with our senators and delegates.
- Ms. Bennett discussed what has been going on in the state regarding bills on collective bargaining in Maryland public libraries. There was one last year that did not pass. There is another bill on collective bargaining in Maryland public libraries submitted (HB65) this year. The Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators was encouraged by legislators to come up with their own bill on collective bargaining, which MAPLA is doing. Ms. Bennett is also keeping the County Commissioners' Executive Assistant updated, who will keep the Commissioners and Executive Administrator informed.
- Ms. Bennett reviewed other Maryland public library bills that will be submitted this session.
- Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens will attending a series of meetings as a part of a Statewide Futures Blueprint project to identify non-library trends shaping the future of public library services in the state, and strengthen statewide collaboration and vision to address those trends.

At this time Corey Christian and Jessica Collins left the meeting.

At 6:57 PM Kaleb Hignutt made the motion and Bart Johnson seconded the motion that the Board move into a Closed Session for discussion of the performance and assignment of specific employees. Authority: 2014 Md. Code, State Government 3-305(b) (1) Attendees: Visintainer, Johnson, Fleegle, Davila, Hignutt, Bennett, Owens. At 7:20 pm Dr. Visintainer asked Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens to leave the room.

At 7:35 PM Tomas Davila made the motion and Bart Johnson seconded the motion to move back into Open Session. Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens returned to the meeting.

### **Old Business**

- Ms. Bennett submitted a proposed revised FY23 Operating Budget for Board approval. Steve Fleegle moved to approve the revised FY23 Operating Budget. Kaleb Hignutt seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.
- The Board briefly discussed that the NCB lease runs through March 31, 2025.
- Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens created a draft job description and online application for those interested in serving on the board. Also discussed was the process and timetable for the search for candidates to choose to submit to the Caroline County Commissioners to appoint to fill two board positions beginning July 1, 2023. Dr. Visintainer and Mr. Fleegle will have completed their second 5 year terms June 30, 2023.

### **New Business**

- Ms. Bennett reviewed the County FY2024 Budget calendar with the Board. Mr. Hignutt and Mr. Johnson plan to attend the March 14 public budget hearing in Preston. Dr. Visintainer plans to attend the May 2 public budget hearing in Greensboro.
- The Library's proposed FY2024 Capital budget to the County will include the requested local match of \$132,000 for the FY24 State Library Capital Grant Ms. Bennett submitted. The state funding is in the Governor's FY24 budget, but we don't have official word yet. The state funding would be 78% (\$467,000) of the project estimated to cost \$599,000. This is to replace the Central Library elevator and the slate on the roof of the Central Library 1995 addition.
- The Board discussed the proposed FY2024 Operating budget. Kaleb Hignutt moved to approve the budget as presented with the understanding that Ms. Bennett will update it with the state aid amount when she

receives notice of what it will be for FY24. Steve Fleegle seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Bart Johnson moved to adjourn. Kaleb Hignutt seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously. The Board adjourned at 8:05 PM.

**Actions taken**

- Approved the October 12, 2022 meeting minutes.
- Reconfirmed the 12-2-2022 email vote to approve changes to open hours for the duration of the Central Library first floor renovation.
- Reconfirmed the 12-19-2022 email vote to approve making Friday, Dec 23 a holiday for this year.
- Reconfirmed the 12-21-2022 email vote to approve closing the Central Library on Dec 31 due to lack of sufficient staff and necessary additional work to transition to the temporary second floor mini-library by January 2.
- Approved closing the Library on February 13 to be used as a staff training day.
- Approved the proposed revised FY23 Operating Budget.
- Approved the proposed FY24 Operating Budget.

Dates of Next Meetings: April 12, 2023; June 14, 2023, August 9, 2023, October 11, 2023