

Board of Library Trustees for Caroline County Public Library

August 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Approved October 11, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President Bart Johnson at 6 pm at the Federalsburg Branch, 123 Morris Avenue, Federalsburg, MD 2nd floor meeting room.

Present were Bart Johnson, Melissa Leonard, Kaleb Hignutt, Sarah Dahl, Tamara Kelly-Molock, and Holly Trice; along with Executive Director Debby Bennett and Assistant Director Jonah Owens.

Board member Tomas Davila was not present.

President Johnson welcomed Board members Tamara Kelly-Molock and Holly Trice and had them introduce themselves and say a little about themselves.

Citizens' Time

Preston Historical Society members Robert and Gail Karge came to speak to the Board about the Society's continued desire to have CCPL give the Society the copies of the News & Farmer newspapers we have in our possession. This paper was started by Max Chambers in Preston. Its last years it was located in Federalsburg. Most of what we have are in bound books at FDBG. We have some loose copies in Central's attic. It has been our plan that once we have confirmation from the MD State Archives that they have everything we have, we will turn all these newspapers over to the Society, but it has been a slow process. It was a good conversation with the Karges. They left letters requesting the newspaper to the Board and to Ms. Bennett, then departed.

Minutes

Melissa Leonard moved to accept the June 14, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Kaleb Hignutt seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's 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 of the highlights in the report, including staffing changes, our successful Summer Reading program with some high attendance at particular programs, working with the Caroline County Public Schools to provide free lunches to youth and families at the Central Library, and the Friends of the Library's plans to have a booth at Summerfest where they will work to raise awareness and donations for our Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program in Caroline County. He also reviewed some of the highlights of the Central Library renovation, including expecting to have to close the Central Library to the public again sometime after Labor Day when the roof slate replacement work will be done. He also mentioned the issues with lack of air conditioning at our North County Branch staff work area and minimal air conditioning in the main library area, along with high humidity, even with running two dehumidifiers. Landlord Maryland Rural Development Corporation administration were contacted in June. MRDC did not resolve the issue until July 31.

For Board approval

- Proposed FY2024 Annual Plan: Sarah Dahl moved that the Board approve the plan as presented. Holly Trice seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.
- The Board reapproved by acclamation their June 26 email approval regarding a personnel issue.
- The Board reapproved by acclamation their July email approval of Change order #11 and Gant Brunnett Architects proposal for Phase 2 Central Library renovation.

- Library Internet Use Policy proposal from staff with no changes: Holly Trice moved that the Board reapproved the Library Internet Use Policy as proposed with no changes. Tamara Kelly-Molock seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.
- Review of the Library Board Rules of Procedure (last revised in 2020): Melissa Leonard moved to reapprove the Rules of Procedure as written. Kaleb Hignutt seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.
- Proposed change in hours: Sarah Dahl moved to approve the proposed hours effective 9-5-23, which are what the hours were pre-COVID. Holly Trice seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Report of the Executive Director

- Ms. Bennett reviewed the handouts in the board members' packets, which included a staff org chart, Board list, Procedures for Public Comments, and an updated Safety Pocket Response Plan
- Ms. Bennett provided some additional updates to what Mr. Owens already shared regarding the Central Library's first floor renovation – Phase I & Phase 2.
- The 2023 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees, and Library Supporters will be held Oct 21 2023 starting at 9 am at the Prince George's County Memorial Library System's Bowie Branch. Invitations will be forthcoming.
- Our FY2023 Audit by UHY is underway.
- Our Staff in-service day will be held on Oct 9 . Our focus will be on safety . EMS staff will train library staff in First Aid, CPR, and AED use.
- Our North County Branch lease with Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) and MRDC's consistent lack of response to issues such as the air conditioning was further discussed. Ms. Dahl contributed to this review. She and Mr. Johnson, along with Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens met with County Attorney Stewart Barroll, his paralegal, Mary Berneski, County Administrator Jeremy Goldman, and County Commissioner Larry Porter on July 10. The county officials agreed that the Library should stay in this facility if the roof and heating/cooling issues were resolved, and moving forward that the facility was better maintained. Also, needed was that they come up with an agreement with MRDC regarding the Lease stating that after March 31, 2025 the library will no longer have to pay rent for the next 30 years and what that means. The county officials discussed applying for grant funds to match the \$300,000 state funding MRDC is to receive to replace all the roofs of MRDC's Greensboro Community Center facility. Also discussed was that the County should look into taking over maintenance of the entire facility. Mr. Goldman was to follow up with Chris Benzing, MRDC Executive Director. He did via phone. He also sent some of his Public Works staff out to check the HVAC units for the library on July 24. They found six units on the roof. Four were not working. Two were nominally working. They could not tell which serviced the library and which the MRDC administrative offices. Mr. Goldman followed up with Mr. Benzing, offering to make the repairs and invoice MRDC. The following Monday, MRDC had someone out working on the units. By the end of the day, the air conditioning in our staff work area was working.
- County Administrator Jeremy Goldman is no longer in the County's employ as of Aug 1. President of the Caroline County Commissioners Travis Breeding called Ms. Bennett Aug 4 to let her know the Commissioners will continue to work towards resolving roof, HVAC and overall maintenance of the North County Branch and possibly the entire Greensboro Community Center facility, and coming up with an agreement with MRDC regarding moving forward with the Lease.
- Ms. Bennett reminded the Board about the free University of Maryland's Institute for Governmental Service and Research online training on Maryland's Open Meetings Act https://www.igsr.umd.edu/VLC/OMA/class_oma_title.php. She takes the course every few years and suggests that some of the Board also take it, as it is helpful to ensure we follow the Act.
- Dana Short will be joining the staff team Oct 2 as a Library Assistant III Public Services Specialist & Marketing.

Old Business

The NCB lease was already discussed.

New Business

There was no new business.

Sarah Dahl moved that the Board adjourn. Kaleb Hignutt seconded the motion. The Board voted to adjourn at 7:30 pm.

Actions taken

Approved the June 14, 2023 meeting minutes.

Approved the proposed FY2024 Annual Plan

Approved by acclamation the June 26 email approval regarding a personnel issue.

Approved by acclamation Change order 11 and Gant Brunnett Architects proposal for Phase 2 Central Library renovation.

Reapproved the Internet Use Policy with no changes.

Reapproved the Library Board Rules of Procedure with no changes.

Approved the proposed changes to the Library's open hours effective September 5, 2023.

Dates of Next Meetings: October 11, 2023; January 24, 2024, April 10, 2024; June 12, 2024, August 14, 2024

Meetings are conducted in Open Session unless otherwise indicated. All or part of Library Board's meetings can be held in closed session under the authority of the state open meetings law by vote of the Board.