

Board of Library Trustees for Caroline County  
October 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes  
Approved January 23, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Bart Johnson at 6 PM at the Central Library, Denton First Floor Study Room.

Present were Bart Johnson, Sarah Dahl, Tomas Davila, Tamara Kelly-Molock, and Holly Trice; along with Executive Director Debby Bennett and Assistant Director Jonah Owens. Also present were UHY LLP Library auditor Roy Geiser and Library Office Manager Jennifer Dorr.

Board members Melissa Leonard and Kaleb Hignutt were not present.

**Citizens' Time**

There were no citizens present.

**FY23 Audit**

Auditor Roy Geiser reviewed the FY23 audit with the board. Mr. Geiser also reviewed the Board's Investments Management document with the Board. After answering questions from the Board, Mr. Geiser left the meeting.

**Minutes**

Holly Trice moved to approve the August 9, 2023 minutes as written. Tomas Davila seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

**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 highlights from the staff progress report, including staffing updates and the staff's progress reshelving the Central Library's collection on the first floor, which the Board was able to see this evening.

At 6:58 pm Sarah Dahl made the motion to 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). Tamara Kelly-Molock seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Attendees: Johnson, Dahl, Kelly-Molock, Trice, Davila, Bennett, Owens, Dorr

At 7:03 pm President Johnson asked Mr. Owens and Ms. Dorr to leave the room for a conversation regarding another employee.

At 7:28 pm Sarah Dahl made the motion to move back into Open Session. Tomas Davila seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved. Mr. Owens and Ms. Dorr returned to the meeting.

**For Board approval**

- Sarah Dahl made the motion to approve Ms. Bennett signing a Memorandum of Approval to join Maryland Assoc of Counties (MACO), Maryland Assoc of Boards of Education (MABE) and Maryland Municipal League (Assoc of MD Cities & Towns) Time to Care Act Insurance Collaborative. Tomas Davila seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.
- Tomas Davila made the motion to approve closing the Library Saturday, December 23rd. Holly Trice seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

## **Report of the Executive Director**

- Ms. Bennett announced that she will retire on June 30, 2024.
- Ms. Bennett and Mr. Owens gave an update on the Central Library Phase I and Phase 2 renovations. The roof slate replacement is almost complete. The Board will be able to tour the first floor after the meeting.
- This year's Staff In-Service Day was held on Oct 9. Staff were trained in CPR, AED use, and basic First Aid. In the afternoon CASA of Caroline Executive Director Amy Horne gave an overview of CASA. Afterwards staff toured His Hope Ministries office and Youth services facility on Gay Street, learning about their work to serve the Homeless or those in danger of becoming homeless in Caroline County.
- A copy of the Library's FY23 Annual Report was included in the Board members' meeting packets. It will also be emailed to the County Commissioners' office and the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA).
- Ms. Bennett reminded the Board of the 2023 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees, and Library Supporters on Saturday, Oct 21, 2023 in Bowie, MD.
- A reminder that this year Library holiday Christmas Eve will be recognized on Monday, December 25 and Christmas Day will be recognized Tuesday, December 26.
- The Federal Exempt Law Threshold recently was increased to \$55,068. Administration will be looking at which positions will be affected regarding Exempt/Non Exempt status.
- The Library is on the Caroline County Commissioners agenda for October 17 to discuss NCB and the status of MRDC's work to replace the HVAC units and roof. County Attorney Stewart Barroll and County Commissioner Larry Porter will be meeting with MRDC Executive Director Chris Benzing on Oct 12 to discuss these items.
- The Library's local bank, Provident Bank recently merged with a bank called Summit Bank and was renamed Summit Bank.
- Ms. Bennett provided a document giving a summary of the recent work of the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators' (MAPLA) Intergovernmental Relations Task Force. Priorities include funding for the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) and Freedom to Read legislation. There will also be ongoing work to address collective bargaining legislation and capital funding for Maryland Public Libraries.

## **Old Business**

North County Branch/Maryland Rural Development Corporation – lease and needed repairs was discussed earlier in the meeting. Ms. Bennett also stated that she emailed copies of financial reports of all that the Library has paid MRDC as of Sept 29, 2023 in rent (\$423,702) and CAM (common area maintenance) costs (\$91,269) to Bart Johnson, Sarah Dahl, and the County Attorney. This was on request from County Commissioner Larry Porter, who also received copies.

## **New Business**

President Bart Johnson discussed creating a Board committee to come up with a plan to find a successor for the Executive Director position. It was decided that he and Sarah Dahl will be on the committee. The Board also discussed asking former Board member & President Carroll Visintainer to be on the committee.

Holly Trice made a motion to adjourn. Sara Dahl seconded the motion. The Board adjourned at 7:55 pm.

## **Actions Taken**

- Approved the August 9, 2023 meeting minutes.
- Approved Ms. Bennett signing a Memorandum of Approval to join Maryland Assoc of Counties (MACO), Maryland Assoc of Boards of Education (MABE) and Maryland Municipal League (Assoc of MD Cities & Towns) Time to Care Act Insurance Collaborative.
- Approved closing the Library Saturday, December 23rd.

Dates of Next Meetings: January 24, 2024, April 10, 2024; June 12, 2024; August 14, 2024; October 9, 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.*