



Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting
January 12, 2023 - 7:00 PM
Zoom Video Conference Call**

Minutes

Board Members Present

Toni A. Smith, President
Brett Crawford, Vice President
Angela D. Smith
Dr. Arthuree Wright
Patrice Garnette
Robert Fernandez
Sylvia Bolivar

Prince George's County Memorial Library Attendees

Michael Gannon, Acting Co-CEO
Nicholas Brown, Acting Co-CEO
Megan Sutherland, Interim COO for Public Services
Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture
Blane Halliday, Director for Collection Strategies
Carla Moore, Director of IT
Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance
Jessica Freeman, Executive Assistant

Welcome and Call to Order by President Toni A. Smith: 7:05 PM

November 17, 2022 Board of Trustees Minutes

Mr. Crawford moved to accept the minutes with amendments as needed. Ms. Angela Smith seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it passed unanimously.

President's Report

President Smith provided her final report as President. Much of November and December were spent preparing for the CEO search, which was formerly kicked off on December 22nd. President Smith thanked her fellow Board members for allowing her to be their representative for the last year. She is also looking forward to 2023 being a successful year for the Library.

Board of Trustees Committee Reports:

Community Engagement - Angela D. Smith, Chair

Ms. Smith reported that the latest committee meeting was on January 5th. The Committee will be transitioning leadership to Robert Fernandez although both Angela Smith and Toni Smith will remain on the committee.

Ms. Smith reminded everyone of the newly released [2022 annual report](#) and indicated that it will be a great tool for advocacy efforts this year. She also thanked the staff involved in the annual report's creation.

Ms. Smith reported that the county has approved for the construction of the Dyer Behavioral Health Center that is planned to be located neighboring the Surratts-Clinton Library Branch. There was a hearing on December 20th that Mr. Crawford attended. Mr. Crawford reported that there were 20 - 30 attendees at the hearing and he was the second attendee on behalf of the Library. The plans have already been approved to move forward and so the Library would not be in a position to halt any planning but perhaps could be heard on the implementation of the facility as it shares a driveway with the Library. The Public Health Center will be expanded somewhat and will be able to accommodate 17 beds for substance abuse treatment on an urgent basis as they are in crisis. The facility is not a long term care facility but will assist the patients in arranging longer term care. The management company for the facility explained implementation and their model in other surrounding communities and throughout the country. Mr. Crawford believes that the management company is taking the safety and security of not only the Library but the surrounding community seriously. Although there have been many conversations with differing agencies to ensure the success of the facility, the Library has been left out of these conversations. Mr. Crawford expects that the Acting Co-CEOs will be receiving some communication shortly on the plans in place and to address safety concerns. Stephen Valentich suggested a meeting with or representatives of the staff to help address safety concerns coming from the branch staff. Ms. Smith relayed that staff safety is of significant importance to the Board and the facility planning will be closely monitored.

Communication & Outreach Report - Nicholas Brown, COO for Communication & Outreach:

Mr. Brown relayed that the upcoming Maryland Library Legislative Day will be held on February 15th, which is an annual event that is a meaningful opportunity for the Library to connect with the legislators and remind them of the Library's great work in the community that they represent. The Area Directors are coordinating meetings with the state legislators that represent their respective branches. Advocacy information will be updated shortly on the [PGCMLS Activate website](#). All board members are encouraged to attend.

Mr. Brown highlighted that he recently participated in a PGC Health Connect webinar encouraging a late push for health insurance enrollment prior to the enrollment deadline on January 15th. The Library has been a key partner with PGC Health Connect and will be hosting a PGC Health Connect event at the Hyattsville Branch on January 18th. This partnership is being used as the model to the whole state.

Mr. Brown was happy to announce that the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) has been awarded \$2.2 million in the FY23 federal budget to acquire and launch a mobile library vehicle, Rover: Library 2Go. Mr. Brown thanked Former Representative Anthony Brown, Senator Van Hollen, Senator Cardin, and Representative Hoyer, the Foundation Board, Friends of the Laurel Branch, and former Council Member Glaros.

Mr. Brown included that he represented the Library on with the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) in December 2022. ULC convened 20 organizations, including library representatives from urban and rural areas and several outside food experts for visioning activities, panel presentations and peer discussions focused on the role of libraries in food justice. The conveners explored the library's role in the food justice space, provided examples of successful (and in some cases unsuccessful) programs, and assessed their capacity to provide programs/resources and form partnerships to sustain the work. This was supported by Walmart and will result in a white paper: "[Food is a Right: Libraries and Food Justice](#)."

Public Services Report - Megan Sutherland, Interim COO for Public Services:

Ms. Sutherland highlighted the Mount Rainier partnership with the local elementary school, which enabled the branch staff to provide outreach at a distribution event held at the school. Ms. Sutherland also pointed out that both the Hyattsville and New Carrollton staff have posted 22 ESL classes from the Community College over the past 2 months. Another focal point was that the Laurel staff have connected with Side by Side Incorporated who builds school readiness skills for young elementary school aged students and their families.

Budget & Planning - Sylvia Bolivar, Chair

Ms. Bolivar shared that Patrice Garnette will be the incoming chair of the Budget & Planning Committee. In upcoming events, there will be an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) meeting to discuss the FY 2024 budget request on January 19th. If any Board members are able to attend, please let Ms. Bolivar know. The Committee will be turning its focus to the FY 2022 audit report, which can then be reviewed and voted on at the March meeting.

Financial Report: Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance

Year-to-date operating revenues were \$14.8M, which is 41.7% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$13.9M, or 41.7% in the fiscal year 2022. The higher revenue is primarily due to higher revenue received from both the state of Maryland and Prince George's County. Year-to-date operating expenditures were \$14.1M, which is 39.7% of the budgeted amount, compared to \$13.4M, or 40.0% a year ago. Expenditures were higher due to higher costs of library materials, operating services, and supplies. As well as increased costs of both building equipment and utilities. These costs were offset by lower than budgeted composition and computer software costs. Overall the physical year to date net change in fund balance for budgetary bases was a surplus of \$702,000, for the most part due to lower than budgeted expenditures in compensation and other expenditure categories. Overall fund balance increased by \$536K, due to the net effect of the year-to-date surplus, less the use of fund balance in the amount of \$167K. The Library has incurred \$1.9M through November 30, 2022 in CIP expenditures and submitted reimbursement requests to the County. Grant related revenue and expenditure were about \$483K respectively.

New Business: Restricted Funds for Emergency Repairs Proposal

Mr. Brown expressed his gratitude to the finance team in completing the extra work needed to complete the proposals. Ms. Bolivar also relayed her appreciation for the detailed briefing memos. The first proposal is requesting to reduce the amount that is restricted for emergency capital repairs to 2.5% rather than 5%.

New Business: Restricted Funds for Emergency Repairs Proposal

Ms. Bolivar explained that this proposal is to reallocate \$1M to the operating budget to improve cash flow. Mr. Gannon provided that it is not intended for the monies to be spent but rather to float when CIP monies have not yet been reimbursed by the county.

New Business: Legal Fees Restriction Proposal

Relocation of funds to be set aside in the amount of \$500K for legal matters.

Without discussion, Mr. Crawford offered a motion to approve the three proposals, which Dr. Wright seconded. When put to a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Budget update: Since submission of the FY 2024 budget request, OMB has sent detailed follow up questions to which the Library has provided answers. Coming up next week Library management will be meeting with OMB and Dr. Areola for the initial budget review.

Personnel & Governance - Toni A. Smith, Chair

President Smith reported that the Committee meets the first Friday of every month. Following an update from Ms. Pinnock, the committee focused on the December board retreat and follow up from that. The committee also discussed the CEO search process, which was kicked off on December 22nd. There will be a search committee made up of Board members as well as other stakeholders. The position description is being refined, focus groups are being prepared, and a survey is being developed. Simultaneously, the committee is looking to update the Board bylaws.

New Business: 2023 Board Meeting Schedule

As discussed at the December Board retreat, the Board will continue to meet on the third Thursday of every other month.

Talent & Culture Report - Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture: In Ms. Pinnock highlighted promotions, hires, and terminations in her written report to the Board. Coming up in February, per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, all salaried staff will receive a 2% general wage adjustment and for those staff who are eligible, will receive a 3.5% merit increase as well after the first full pay period.

As of January 1st, the Maryland minimum wage increased from \$12.50/hour to \$13.25 per hour. Payroll has been adjusted to reflect the increased minimum wage.

There has been a spike in COVID cases since the Thanksgiving holiday. Around December 20th there was a county positivity rate of 18% which has increased to 20% around the new year. Slowly numbers are coming back down. TC has met with the Union as well as the Health & Safety Committee regarding removing the staff mask mandate once positivity rates decline further. Originally, it was discussed that the mandate could be removed once positivity rates reach five percent but the county has not recently reached five percent positivity or lower. A six to seven percent positivity rate is being discussed now. According to feedback from staff, they are ready. Masks will become optional for staff at some point and staff may elect to continue to wear them once the mandate is removed.

New Business: Board Officer Elections

Angela Smith was nominated for president and Sylvia Bolivar was nominated for vice president in November. When put to a vote, both Angela Smith and Sylvia Bolivar were voted into president and vice president roles respectively.

Former President Smith welcomed both Ms. A. Smith and Ms. Bolivar to their new roles and thanked the Board for her 2022 term as president. The incoming President A. Smith thanked Toni Smith for her leadership in 2022 despite a lot of changes and challenges. She also recognized Mr. Crawford for his service as Vice President and congratulated Ms. Bolivar for stepping up into this position. President A. Smith also expressed appreciation for the staff for their hard work and dedication of the past year. She is both honored and excited about her new role. Ms. Bolivar thanked her fellow Board members for their support and made her remarks on the upcoming struggles for the library but expressed how amazing the library team is.

CEO & State of the Library Report - Nicholas Brown, Acting Co-Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Brown expressed appreciation for the former president and vice president on behalf of the executive team and all staff for their leadership in the previous year. He also expressed thanks to the former chairs of the committees for their collaboration over the past year.

Mr. Brown noted and showed the Board the recently professionally printed new CBAs that the Union and PGCMLS jointly paid for. Mr. Brown highlighted the work being done with the Union and various ad hoc subcommittees to implement some of the procedures for various new employee programs that were established in the new CBA.

The Black History and Culture team is hosting a celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy with renowned author and Montgomery County Council Member, Will Jawando. The event will be on Saturday, January 14, 2023 at 2:00 at the Hyattsville branch. Also, on Saturday evening there will be the first presentation of Out of the Vineyard, which was co-commissioned with Joe's Movement Emporium, The County Office of Human Rights, and Prince George's County Community College.

From the executive side, the Library will be participating in gubernatorial inauguration festivities. The Library has been involved in education policy work in advance of the new administration, and on behalf of the entire statewide library community, advocated for state resources for digital equity to continue programs that libraries have launched during the pandemic so that those resources can continue to be available beyond June 2024, when much of the ARPA funding will expire. Since the first implementation of providing Chromebooks, PGCMLS has served over 19,000 Prince Georgians with home internet.

The Library is implementing two grants around digital literacy classes that were provided by the both Public Library Association and AT&T as well as another from Capital One. During the last week of the month the Library will be launching a new technology site on the PGCMLS website where the Library will launch NorthStar Digital Literacy, which is a tool that has been piloted internally but will be rolled out to the public. Participants will be able to do self-guided coursework for self development and be able to take proctored classes to earn certifications to help their eligibility for employment. PGCMLS is also working on a wide range of digital literacy programming and services for both Dari and Pashto speakers. There will be a series of workshops for Pashto and Dari speaking parents of children in neighborhood schools to get digital literacy skills and access to the Library system. In addition, there will be some new Dari resources on the website and in branches.

CIP

Surratts-Clinton: The transformer needs to be installed in order to have permanent power, which is required to receive an occupancy permit. 17 pallets of books have already been delivered and are awaiting being shelved. Late March or April will likely be the reopening time frame for the branch if the transformer is installed soon.

Bladensburg: The transformer installation was postponed to February. In order to install the drywall and maintain reasonable temperatures, the contractors are using propane heaters. Should there be more delays around the transformer, opening will be pushed to July or later. There are sheets of glass that are also delayed due to supply chain issues. Ms. Bolivar recognized and publicly thanked former Board member Judge Josef Brown for his generous \$20K donation to the Bladensburg Branch Library. Ms. Bolivar requested that Judge Brown be invited to the grand opening of the branch and be formally recognized for his contribution.

Baden: 73% of the submittals to the architect from the contractor has been provided. Hazmat remediation is scheduled to begin shortly.

D.R.E.A.M Lab: There have been some delays with the upgrades to the lab. It has been determined that once the roof replacement and demolition of the upstairs is complete, the branch will be reopened to the public. It is unfair to the community that their branch has been closed for this long.

The Commons: This project is getting ready to go to permitting.

Master Facilities Plan: The draft will be ready by the March meeting and the consultant will present it at that meeting.

Library Associate Training Institute Cohort

Mr. Brown introduced the current LATI cohort that is attending the Board meeting. Arianna from Beltsville Branch, Kennedy from Oxon Hill Branch, Jordan from Upper Marlboro Branch, and Mark from Glenarden Branch. Mr. Gannon then provided an overview of the LATI program.

Questions/Comments from the Board

Ms. T. Smith highlighted the upcoming mini-golf library fundraiser which will be held at the South Bowie Branch on March 16th and 17th. She encouraged board members to consider sponsorship and has pledged that her non-profit, In Reach, Inc., will be sponsoring at least a hole.

Ms. T. Smith inquired about if there are requests to hold weddings at a branch library. Mr. Brown responded that in order to host special events like weddings, meeting room policies would need to be reexamined as there are currently preclusions for personal parties.

Foundation & Friends Report, Brett Crawford, Ex-Officio Foundation Member

The PGCMLS Foundation Board had a quick meeting in November to approve a couple of disbursements and appoint a new board member. The annual PGCMLS Foundation Board meeting will take place on January 25th. Mr. Crawford also reported that the Foundation Board is working with PGCMLS management on some of the implementation aspects of the memorandum of understanding that was approved a year ago, specifically around streamlining the spending of funds once a budget is approved.

Mr. Brown reported that the Foundation experienced a very successful end of year period from Giving Tuesday through the end of the year. There was significant growth in both the number of donors and the amounts that existing donors gave. Mr. Pfeifer is piloting a new giving circle that is for donors who give over \$500 a year. There are a number of grants in development currently. Mr. Brown also showed the Foundation annual report to the Board.

Advocacy Training: Megan Sutherland, Interim COO for Public Services

Ms. Sutherland shared that the upcoming Library legislative day will be on February 15th. While Ms. Sutherland does not yet have bill numbers as the general assembly convened yesterday, she provided that there will be a formal statewide briefing on Friday, February 10th, which will be shared with the Board once details are finalized. A bill is anticipated that will provide funding for the State Library Resource Center. Additionally there will be a funding bill for the Regional Libraries in the state to receive funding. The three regional libraries in Maryland are in Western Maryland, Southern Maryland, the Eastern Shore. Last year there

was the Young Readers Act targeting Baltimore City's equivalent books from birth program. This year there is an opportunity in that act to expand some funding beyond Baltimore City. At first, there would be a small pot of money available in the amount of \$200K. Over the next several years there will hopefully be more funds available that would allow for the opportunity for PGCMLS to receive matching funds for the Books from Birth Program. PGCMLS is also closely monitoring any potential censorship or intellectual freedom bills that might impact libraries. There will also be a bill enabling legislation for collective bargaining for library systems that do not currently have a union. Ms. Sutherland provided a general overview of legislative day.

Requests to Address the Board

No requests to attend the Board.

Closing Statements: President A. Smith thanks Ms. Freeman for her work and support. Ms. Bolivar moved to close the public session and move into a closed executive session. Ms. Bolivar's motion was seconded by Mr. Crawford. The meeting closed upon unanimous vote.

- **Adjourn:** 8:20 PM