



# Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting  
September 21, 2023 - 7:00 PM  
Zoom Video Conference Call**

## **Minutes**

### **Board Members Present**

Angela D. Smith, President

Sylvia Bolivar, Vice President

Toni A. Smith

Dr. Arthuree Wright

Patrice Garnette

Robert Fernandez

Brett Crawford

### **Prince George's County Memorial Library Attendees**

Richard AmRhein, Interim CEO

Michael Gannon, COO for Support Services

Megan Sutherland, Interim COO for Public Services

Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture

Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance

Blane Halliday, Director for Collection Strategies

John Pfeifer, Donor Engagement and Grants Officer

Jessica Freeman, Executive Assistant

Nestor Diaz, Communications Manager

Quemar Rhoden, Central Area Director

### **Welcome and Call to Order by President Angela Smith: 7:04 PM**

#### **July 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes:**

President A. Smith opened the meeting and called for the approval of the meeting minutes from the July 20, 2023 meeting. One change was requested regarding the correction of Ms. T. Smith's attendance at the meeting. She was identified as a virtual attendee but was actually present in-person. Dr. Wright motioned to accept the corrected minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Bolivar. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

#### **Board Report:**

President A. Smith provided updates on the following matters:

- CEO Search: The job listing for the CEO position was published in August, and applications will be accepted until October 8th.
- 90-Day Report: The full board met with interim CEO Rick AmRhine at the South Bowie Branch to discuss library organizational structures.
- Board Recruitment: The board will start the call for applications to join the Board of Library Trustees.

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

##### **Budget and Planning: Patrice Garnett, Chair**

Ms. Garnett reported that the committee met on September 15, 2023. The committee reviewed financial activities, including operating activities, a new dashboard form of presentation for the Board, and finally budget changes for fiscal year 2024.

##### **Financial Report: Dereje Salehudres, Director of Finance**

Mr. Salehudres provided a dashboard to the Board with financial activities, including expenditures by category, cash balance comparisons, and revenue budget comparisons.

#### **Questions from Board Members:**

Ms. Bolivar asked about the expenses for vehicles, utilities, and the potential use of CIP funds for major equipment purchases. Mr. Salehudres indicated that the \$175,000 does not include the actual purchase of vehicles but rather their maintenance and upkeep, including gasoline and oil. He also reported that there has been a significant increase in utilities spending due to inflation and increased costs. Major equipment purchases can be coded under the CIP budget, which would include heating and cooling systems but parts or control boards would not.

##### **Community Engagement : Robert Fernandez, Chair**

Mr. Fernandez provided updates on the following matters:

- The Library and this committee are monitoring the situation with Dyer Regional Health Center, which had a delayed opening to late September, causing concerns due to its proximity to the Surrats-Clinton branch. President Smith also noted that she has contacted Councilmember Harrison's office regarding the health center but has not received a response.
- There has been an update on the partnership with the county office of Human Rights, with positive progress and the memorandum of understanding remaining current.
- The tutoring program budget would not cover all 18 schools, so it will be scaled to target schools with the largest achievement gaps.
- Collaboration with the county on their stuff-a-truck program for donations with donation boxes placed in libraries.

##### **Personnel and Governance Committee - Toni A. Smith, Chair**

Mr. Crawford provided the Personnel and Governance Committee report in lieu of Ms. Smith since she was not present at the time of the report. The primary focus was on the proposal to revise the material selection policy. This proposed revision aimed to clarify criteria for evaluating materials based on

community values and priorities. It sought to ensure that community standards, values, and priorities guided the evaluation of all library materials. The committee's approach was to bifurcate the process into two steps, separating the evaluation of the criteria from the procedures. The evaluation criteria for materials would be presented now, with the procedures related to challenges to be addressed in November. This would help protect the library system and staff from repetitive or spurious challenges. Mr. AmRhein added that any repeated challenges to the same book would be evaluated against the community standards, with the goal of simplifying the process for the library staff. President Smith clarified that the current action form inaccurately reflected the two-step process and emphasized that they were voting on the revised selection policy tonight. The committee recommended the policy's approval. After Brett's presentation, a motion to accept the proposed policy revision was made by Mr. Crawford and seconded by Ms. Bolivar. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

Ms. Pinnock reported that the department has been working to fill open positions for the Bladensburg branch prior to opening. General wage increase negotiations are still underway with MCGEO. As of today, the department wrapped another session of onboarding for 28 new hires who started between April and August. Ms. Pinnock also shared that there has been a resurgence of COVID-19 and the library's adherence to established safety procedures.

#### **Chief Executive Officer Report: Interim Chief Executive Officer, Richard AmRhein**

Mr. Amrhein was pleased to see that the County Executive featured the Library's Hispanic Heritage Hub in the most recent community connection newsletter and recognized all of the work that the teams have put into the Hispanic Heritage rebrand and programming. He also reported that the library's digital navigation team has been reactivated recently to assist the communications team in improving the user interface and experience for internal and external electronic content. Recruiting is underway for new members. Mr. Amrhein announced that the Bladensburg Branch grand opening will be November 1, 2023 at 11AM. Both the County Executive and Council Member Ivey have confirmed this date. Mr. Gannon reported that planning for the grand opening is underway. Staff and book deliveries are scheduled for October 10th. Save the date announcements will be going out shortly.

#### **CIP Report: Chief Operating Officer for Support Services, Michael Gannon**

Mr. Gannon reported that the Surratts-Clinton renovation project is waiting for the stocking permit. Once that is in hand staff can return to this building and begin preparing the branch for the public. The Baden relocation is going well. The only delay that is expected is the furniture. The construction on the building has gone smoothly. Furniture and shelving should be in November/December.

#### **Friends & Foundation Report: John Pfeifer, Donor Engagement and Grants Officer**

Mr. Pfeifer highlighted that Bladensburg bricks are on sale. Thus far 190 have already been sold. Mr. Pfeifer highlighted Capital One's financial contributions to the Foundation, which have mostly been for the use in the areas of digital equity and workforce development. At the last Foundation Board meeting,

\$727,000 was approved to be invested in a series of three short term CDs, which should earn \$28,000 in revenue prior to the end of the fiscal year. Finally, Mr. Pfeifer reminded the Board of the upcoming Citizens for Maryland Libraries annual conference on October 21st, which is being held at the Bowie Branch Library. President Smith encouraged her fellow Board members to attend if possible.

**Area Director Presentations: Central Area Director, Quemar Rhoden**

Mr. Rhoden gave highlights and demographics of the branches in the Central area of the county.

**Requests to Address the Board**

No requests were made to address the Board.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn to move into a closed executive session was made by Ms. Bolivar and seconded by Mr. Crawford, and carried unanimously.

**Adjourned:** 8:07 PM