



# Prince George's County Memorial Library System

**Board of Library Trustees Meeting  
November 17, 2022 - 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: 7:06 PM**

#### **September 15, 2022 Board of Trustees Minutes**

Dr. Wright moved to accept the minutes with corrections as needed. Ms. Angela Smith seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it passed unanimously.

#### **October 3, 2022 Board of Trustees Minutes**

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

#### **President's Report**

President Smith provided a written report to the Board and highlighted a few of the meetings that she attended over the past two months.

September 2 – Held Personnel and Governance Committee Monthly Meeting

September 13 – Attended United for Libraries/ALA Learning Live: Ask the Experts

September 15 - Held a closed Executive Session under Maryland Code 3-305(b)(1) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss personnel matters

September 26 – Held Personnel & Governance Committee Meeting to review and discuss drafted CBA

October 11 – Attended United for Libraries/ALA Learning Live: Let's Execute! Identifying Actionable Steps in Your Strategic Plan to Create the Impact Your Community Deserves

October 13 – Held closed Executive Session under Maryland Code Section 3-305 (b)(14) to discuss CEO Search Firm RFP bid contents and negotiating strategy

October 15 – Attended the Citizens for Maryland Libraries Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees and Library Supporters

October 25 – Attended the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of the South Bowie Branch Library celebration's special presentation by Pulitzer Prize-winner Leonard Pitts Jr., a Bowie resident, author, and syndicated columnist

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

#### **Personnel & Governance - Toni A. Smith, Chair**

President Smith reported that the Committee meets with the Director of Talent & Culture on a monthly basis. The Board has received two proposals in response to the RFP for the search firm. The Board is moving forward with Bradbury Miller & Associates.

Preparations are underway for the annual Board retreat on Saturday, December 10th.

For the calendar year 2023, the committee offered a slate of candidates for President and Vice President. Angela Smith for President and Sylvia Bolivar for Vice President.

### **New Business: 2023 Calendar Proposal**

The Personnel & Governance Committee received and reviewed the 2023 calendar proposal. After review, the committee recommends approving the 2023 calendar as proposed. Ms. Bolivar moved to approve the 2023 calendar with Dr. Wright seconding the motion. It was approved unanimously.

**Talent & Culture Report - Aishar Pinnock, Director of Talent & Culture:** Since the last meeting the Collective Bargaining Agreement has gone into effect and with that staff received a 4% increase. Ms. Pinnock conducted a supervisory staff training with major changes to the CBA.

The Library is continuing to face high rates of vacancies, which include upper level leadership with the CEO, COO, and two Area Directors positions open. Top reasons for staff who have chosen to move on are growth opportunities, compensation increases, and being overworked. Recruiting for the Surratts-Clinton branch is underway as books are scheduled to arrive mid-January.

In October there was a bit of a COVID spike in the county but it has since slowed. Staff are still wearing masks in the workplace. Mandatory masking for staff will be revisited once the county achieves a 5% or less positivity rate. Conversations will be held after the holidays with the Union, Labor Management Relations Committee, and Staff Safety Committee. The Library has provided a mobile health van that provided health screenings as well as COVID vaccinations for staff. Mr. Brown also commented that a comparison was done before and after

the customer mask mandate was lifted and masking was made optional for customers. There was no evidence of a direct correlation between staff COVID cases and customers having recommended mask usage.

### **Budget & Planning - Sylvia Bolivar, Chair**

Ms. Bolivar shared that the committee has had many meetings with the management team regarding the reallocation for FY 2023 budget as well as the budget request for FY 2024. Ms. Bolivar commended the budget narrative that management provided as a supplement to the FY 2024 budget proposal. Ms. Bolivar invited Mr. Gannon to provide a high-level overview of the reallocation proposal for FY 2023 and FY 2024 budget request.

#### FY 2023 Budget Reallocation

Mr. Gannon provided that back in May 2022 when the county budget was announced and the Library's budget was provided to the Library, the Library was still in negotiations with the Union over the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). It was yet to be agreed upon for wage enhancements and merit increases. It wasn't until September that it was agreed upon and exceeded the three percent wage increase that was budgeted by the county in the FY 2023 budget. Due to the reallocation, grants, and Foundation funds the Library was able to meet obligations to the staff in the CBA and stay within the original budget amount from the county. Mr. Crawford made a motion to approve the FY 2023 budget reallocation, which was seconded by Ms. Garnette. When put to a vote the motion passed unanimously.

#### FY 2024 Budget Request

A little over a month ago management attended the county's Budget School. Each agency was told they would receive a base budget with wage enhancements that would be adjusted for inflation. Mr. Gannon then communicated what the Library's financial commitments were according to the CBA with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). After some time, OMB relayed that the Library would not receive further funding outside of the base budget but that the Library could ask for funding in a second enhancement request, in addition to the increased staffing request. Mr. Gannon also stressed that the Library can no longer rely on the fund balance. In order to meet the county's base budget reduction of \$1.6M, both Sunday hours and Books from Birth were eliminated from the budget and the materials budget was also reduced by \$150K. One position will be kept open for the entire fiscal year. Ms. Bolivar clarified that the budget was reduced by \$1.6M and that the second enhancement request would be for an additional million dollars to fund the additional 11 positions that are needed to ensure that the Library is able to meet the basic operational needs of the organization. Mr. Gannon indicated that Ms. Bolivar's statements were correct and added that there is some concern that once the Surratts-Clinton Branch reopens that there will be staffing deficits in other locations as that staff was assigned to other locations while their home branch was closed. The operating budget request is due on November 21 and the CIP budget request is due on December 5. The only change to the CIP budget request is to ask for additional funds for the renovation fund for systemic repairs. Mr. Gannon had inquired with OMB regarding the Langley Park Branch addition to the system. He was not given any clear guidance on if a decision has been made. Typically in January, the Library will meet with OMB Staff and the Library's budget analyst to go over the budget request. Next a meeting will take place with the County Executive Staff. The CEX has to release the budget by March and then the budget will go to the County Council. In April the Library will go before the Office of Audits and Investigations and answer any outstanding questions there. The budget must be approved and released by the end of May. Mr. Gannon invited any Board members who would like to attend, to attend any of the budget meetings with the county offices. Mr. Crawford made a motion to approve the FY 2024 budget request as submitted and his motion was seconded by Ms. Garnette. The motion passed unanimously upon a vote.

### Questions & Comments from the Board

Ms. Garnett commended management for being able to pivot so quickly when presented with obstacles outside of their control. Ms. Angela Smith echoed Ms. Garnett and expressed appreciation for the easily understood information in the Board's packet on the budget as well as working diligently to ensure that cuts came across the board vs. from one area. Ms. Angela Smith reiterated that the Library is not able to keep relying on the fund balance and thus applauded management efforts to relay this to the county. Mr. Brown thanked the Board for their support as well as Mr. Gannon, Mr. Salehudres, and Ms. Sutherland for their contributions to the budget request. He also indicated that this budget request aligns with the county's priority of recruitment and retention of talented workforce at the county level for the FY 2024 budget cycle. This proposal was produced in such a way that protects the agreed upon items in the CBA. Mr. Crawford added that the Library is still underfunded even if the \$1.6M and \$1M are granted by the county. The Library is still in a position to cannibalize its budget, as it has been for years. A sustained effort will need to be made to educate the Council on what is needed to really support the Library.

Mr. Gannon also noted that this is the final year for the Murphy & Murphy LLC. contract and the Library will be putting out a new RFP. This committee will be provided with the previous FRP in the event that it would like for any changes to be made before it is submitted.

### **Community Engagement - Angela D. Smith, Chair**

Ms. Smith encouraged her fellow Board members in sharing any upcoming meetings with county officials to help planning for advocacy efforts. The chair also highlighted that Library Legislative Day is going to be on February 15, 2023.

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

Mr. Brown highlighted the media event kicking off open enrollment for the state healthcare exchange for 2023, which was conducted due to a continued partnership with the Library that has been in place since the Affordable Health Care Act being put in place. The Library has been a reminder to its community of low cost or no cost healthcare options are available for them. Mr. Brown also mentioned the Veteran's Day event at the Hyattsville Branch and the Family Literacy Month event along with Council Member Medlock. Another exciting event will be the kick off of the second annual Prince George's County Reads initiative that will be held on December 6th at the Greenbelt Branch. Civil rights activist, true crime podcast host, and author Rabia Chaudry will be joining the Library along with the Office of Human Rights and the University of Maryland, College Park. Finally Mr. Brown remarked on the slightly unusual event that the Oxon Hill Branch hosted on Friday, November 11th as the system was closed in honor of Veteran's Day. The author appearance of Tracy Dion, bestselling NY Times author in the young adult fantasy space, was co-hosted by Mahogany Books and 120 people attended this event. This event was hosted solely because of the amazing Oxon Hill staff and Communications staff that volunteered for this event.

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

Ms. Sutherland highlighted feedback received about the Accokeek Branch, programming in conjunction with Emloy Prince George's, and community engagement by staff members.

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

Mr. Gannon expressed his appreciation for Mr. Brown's composing the CEO report. Mr. Gannon also highlighted the Healthcare Exchange that recently took place at the Hyattsville Branch and thanked the staff for having the branch ready for this event.

### Administration Update

Each Monday morning the Acting Co-CEOs and Acting Interim COO for Public Services meet with the Director of Talent and Culture. They use reports and information provided by Ms. Pinnock to then inform decision making for the week as well as troubleshoot any issues that the Library is facing in the near future. Additionally, every two weeks the Acting Co-CEOs meet with the Director of Finance to discuss cash flow, invoice payment, and receipts coming in from the county and state. Mr. Gannon expressed that he is looking forward to Board members joining in for Library Legislative Day.

### CIP

Bladensburg: According to the contractors on the project, the project should be completed by June. There have been supply chain issues causing some delays.

Surratts-Clinton: The transformer will be ready to install in December. The target is to have the shelving installed starting the week of December 26th and then shelve the books sometime in mid-January. The staff have been hired for the branch and will be on-board by the first full pay period in January. Furniture has been purchased and is waiting in the warehouse so there won't be any delays on that front.

Baden: Hazmat abatement will begin soon. Estimates still put the opening in the summer of 2023, although there is an air conditioning unit that may slow progress down.

The Commons: It is expected that the Beltsville Commons will have construction documents in January 2023.

Master Facilities Plan: The goal was to have the master facilities plan by Thanksgiving but due to scheduling of focus group meetings, this was unable to be done. It is now expected that the plan will be completed in January.

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

Mr. Crawford reported that the next foundation meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2022. The Foundation leadership has recently changed as Chair Linda Washington-Douglas and Vice Chair Patti Kim stepped down and were replaced by Colin Byrd and Tracy Simpson respectively. Mr. Crawford noted the phenomenal growth that the foundation has made since being reconstituted three years ago and thanked both Ms. Washington-Douglas and Ms. Kim for their leadership.

### **Advocacy Training: Freedom to Read - Megan Sutherland, Interim COO for Public Services**

Ms. Sutherland shared the Library's Love Your Library/Advocacy page located at [www.pgcmils.info/activate](http://www.pgcmils.info/activate). Then Ms. Sutherland reported that Libraries are aware that there has been a large increase in attempts to ban books from January 2022 to the end of August. Nationally, there have been 680 attempts to ban or restrict library resources and over 1,551 unique titles have been targeted, which far exceeds challenges in the previous year. Fortunately the majority of voters oppose book bans. This is something that the Library will continue to monitor as we believe that every story should be able to be told and every reader should be

trusted to make decisions about what they are able to read. Ms. Sutherland encouraged all to sign up for advocacy text alerts by texting PGCMLS to 50457.

Questions & Comments from the Board: Mr. Fernandez inquired about local challenges and what the numbers look like within this community vs. nationally. Mr. Halliday, Director for Collection Strategies, explained that there have not been any serious challenges received from the public and only a few internal challenges have arisen. Mr. Brown indicated that there have been complaints received at the branch level that have been reported, primarily when it comes to children's books where the subject matter is LGBTQIA+ identity. Staff are savvy in their explanation but this causes stress on LGBTQIA+ staff, unfortunately. Ms. Sutherland also noted that conversations with neighboring county libraries are had to keep aware of new challenges and to prepare this system should any arise. As budget season is in swing, President Smith encouraged Library advocates to get in touch with their local council members to advocate for the Library's budget. Mr. Gannon also reported that as part of the general election this year there were a number of bond issues on the ballot for schools, the library, and community college. Annually the county sells bonds to fund library CIP projects. This passed with a high rate of approval this year and so the Library's CIP budget is well funded for the next few years.

### **Requests to Address the Board**

No requests to attend the Board.

**Closing Statements:** President Smith thanked everyone for their attendance and indicated that the Board will not have a December meeting. She also wished everyone happy holidays. Ms. Angela Smith moved to close the public Board meeting and enter into a closed Executive Session according to the Maryland code section 3305 B, sub sections one, eight and nine of the open meetings act. Ms. Bolivar seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

- **Adjourn:** 8:17 PM