

**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**July 28, 2020**

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held via Zoom Webinar on Tuesday, July 28, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 am by Board President Maureen Walsh David, and a notification of recording was given. Other Board members present were: Yara Cheikh, Jane Eickhoff, Michael Netzer, Paul Schwab, Aaron Slater, and Anne West.

Staff in attendance: Paula Miller, Director; James Cooke, Assistant Director; Natalie Edington, Assistant Director; Jen Evans, Administrative Assistant; Emily Gamertsfelder, Planning, Projects and Data, Coordinator; Ann McElroy, Staff Association President; Helen Rowe, Fiscal Services Manager; and Liz Sundermann, Virtual Services and Media Creation Manager.

Those wishing to speak during Public Comment were asked to sign up in the Q & A section of Zoom. The process for public comments was shared: Individuals are called in order by the Board President and will have 3 minutes to speak. No decisions/comments are made today based on issues brought up in Public Comment.

**COMMUNICATION**

***Minutes***

The Board approved minutes for the June 9, 2020 (**Cheikh/Slater**) and June 23, 2020 (**Schwab/Eickhoff**) meetings.

***Correspondence***

None.

***Upcoming Events***

United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, will be hosting a virtual event for Trustees, Friends, and Foundations from August 4-6, 2020. Trustees will be provided with additional information as it becomes available.

***Public Comments***

Ms. Anita Bass spoke to the Board. On July 14 Ms. Bass saw the ULC Statement on Race and Social Equity on the BCPL website. She was surprised to see it on the BCPL website and asked other staff members if they had seen it before, and those she spoke with indicated they had not. About a week later she was told that the statement was posted earlier in July, but no alert was sent to the staff. It was a topic at the Board meeting in October 2017 where the Board unanimously approved its adoption and gave it BCPL's full support. Ms. Bass thanked the Board for approving it but wished she had known about it in 2017. In a B Heard session summary earlier in July there was nothing mentioned about the ULC Statement on Race and Social Equity.

Ms. Bass then had questions for the Board. Why wasn't the staff told about this statement in 2017? Why did BCPL wait so long to post it? Why did BCPL choose to post it this month? Where is the transparency?

Ms. Bass felt that the ULC Statement on Race and Social Equity should have been posted almost 3 years ago and staff should have been alerted. She thanked the Board for listening and was looking forward to the answers to her questions.

Ms. Walsh David thanked Ms. Bass and assured her that her words would be taken into consideration.

## **REPORTS**

### ***Director's Report (Miller)***

Director Miller briefly reviewed the written Director's Report which will be filed with the minutes. Items in the report about pandemic related services will be discussed later in the meeting. Director Miller spoke briefly about the listening session held earlier this month, and of the summary response sent to staff indicating that there will be follow-up items in the future.

### ***Facilities Update (Cooke)***

Assistant Director Cooke reported on capital projects. The Reisterstown renovation is at 50% of the necessary demolition of the interior of the building. This project is scheduled to finish in twelve months.

The Library portion of the HVAC system, ceiling, and shelving at Loch Raven is almost complete. In the next phase the Health Department portion of the building and the meeting room will be done. Plans are underway for opening the book drop and providing curbside pickup at Loch Raven.

Construction drawings for Catonsville should be completed in the next few months. This project is currently scheduled to begin in May 2021 and end in March 2022.

The Rosedale meeting room/bathroom refresh project is scheduled for October 2020 through March 2021.

There have been a number of HVAC issues throughout the system, which is typical of the summer months. Property Management has been quick to respond.

## ***Staff Reports***

### ***Finance Report (Rowe)***

Ms. Rowe did not present a Financial Report as the Fiscal Services staff are working to complete FY 2020 invoicing by July 31. She spoke briefly about changes to this year's audit process, which is being conducted remotely by CliftonLarsonAllen.

### ***Staff Association (McElroy)***

Ms. McElroy shared plans for upcoming social events for the staff, which will be held virtually, and encouraged participation in the Wellness Challenge.

### ***Board Reports (Walsh David)***

As this was her first meeting as Board President, Ms. Walsh David acknowledged and thanked Mr. Slater for his service as past Board President.

Ms. Walsh David, Ms. Cheikh, Mr. Slater, and former trustee Mr. Holman have been appointed as the Director's Search Committee. The committee has selected Bradbury Miller Associates to

assist in the search process. Ms. Walsh David called attention to an email with a link to a survey the firm is using to gather input on the characteristics desired in a Director. Mr. Schwab and Ms. Cheick commented on the amount of thought that went into the survey.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### ***BCPL FY 21 Budget (Rowe, Miller)***

BCPL has received the final details for the FY 2021 Budget, showing overall increase of about 1% over FY 2020. The Board accepted the final FY 21 Budget (**Schwab/West**). Mr. Netzer asked if there have been retirements due to the COVID-19 situation. There have been some retirements since March, but it is unknown how many are directly due to the pandemic.

### ***Pandemic Impact on BCPL (Miller, Cooke, Edington, Gamertsfelder)***

Mr. Cooke has been working the Reopening Planning Team on plans for next steps in the reopening process, focusing on Phase 2 B. This phase will include expansion of curbside service to add some late afternoon and early evening hours. There is no specific date identified for this phase, but enhancing our curbside offerings is a safe and effective next step for both customers and staff. External and internal conditions, readiness, and guidance from the County will help to determine the “when”. There is even less certainty for moving to Phase 3, which would include opening the facility to the public for some limited services and hours.

The most recent IMLS/Battelle testing on COVID-19 and library materials included interior page testing on types of materials not previously included. This testing showed that after four days (96 hours) of quarantine in a stacked configuration, the virus was not detectable on any of these items. Out of an abundance of caution, BCPL has increased the quarantine time of all returned materials from 72 (the previous recommendation) to 96 hours. Other library systems in the region are doing the same.

Mr. Schwab asked about in library service that has resumed in Anne Arundel County. Mr. Cooke had no specific details but noted that it is not full service.

Assistant Director Edington updated the Board on staff programming efforts. Numerous virtual programs are been made available to BCPL’s customers. These include live as well as pre-recorded content. Staff are working in partnership with other agencies to provide additional services, including distribution of food and COVID-19 safety kits with Baltimore County and Art Kits with the Walters Art Museum.

Ms. Walsh David commented on how wonderful it was to hear of the service provided by BCPL staff to the community.

Ms. Gamertsfelder, Planning and Projects Coordinator, reported on usage of virtual resources, circulation, and programming.

Mr. Netzer asked if it was possible to tell how many WiFi users were in BCPL’s parking lots . Ms. Gamertsfelder replied that it is, unfortunately, not possible to specifically break those sessions out. Ms. Walsh David asked about the Bookmobiles. They are still providing WiFi service to communities. At this time Ms. Gamertsfelder is compiling the statistics from this service, but it works on a different platform than the WiFi provided in the buildings.

Ms. Walsh David thanked Ms. Gamertsfelder for the thoughtful way she approached providing the statistical information to the Board.

Director Miller reported that BCPL is working with partners to determine the best way to support children and parents during the school year.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***Policies***

#### ***Fee Revision – Credit Card Processing Fee (Edington)***

It is recommended that the Board eliminate the \$0.25 online payment convenience fee that is currently charged to customers for each online transaction for extended loans and damaged, lost, or missing items. Eliminating this fee would remove a barrier that discourages payment. This change also provides greater consistency with other online payments to BCPL that do not add a convenience fee. Implementation would begin as soon as possible. Communication will go out to staff and customers, and the impact on revenue should not be significant.

The Board approved the elimination of the Credit Card Processing Fee **(Cheikh/Slater)**.

#### ***Policy Revision – Computer Use Policy (Edington)***

There is currently a block to using the public computers when fines or fees balances are \$25.00 or more. Removal of this fee would overcome a barrier to computer use which is critical during these challenging economic times, and especially when many customers are using public computers to seek employment. This block also disproportionately impacts lower income households. Customers would still be blocked and required to pay to borrow materials. Implementation will coincide with Phase 3 of BCPL's Reopening Plan when branches open. While it is impossible to guarantee no impact on revenue, it is unlikely to have a significant impact.

The Board approved the elimination of the block on computer use due to unpaid fines and fees for materials **(Eickhoff/Cheikh)**.

#### ***Policy Revision – Chromebook Agreement (Edington)***

BCPL currently requires customers to sign an Electronic Device Borrowing Policy and Agreement prior to borrowing a Chromebook. This is the only loanable item that requires a separate, signed agreement. Discontinuation of this form eliminates barriers that discourage borrowing. The signed form has had little impact on devices being lost, stolen or damaged, but all current fees for loss and damage would remain in place. There is some informational content in the agreement that is helpful for customers to know, which can be added to the instruction document that is already included with the Chromebook. With approval, the change will be implemented as soon as possible.

The Board approved the elimination of the Electronic Device Borrowing Policy signed agreement **(Cheikh/Eickhoff)**.

***FY 2020 Grant Summary (Miller)***

Director Miller provided the Board with a summary of grants approved by the Board in FY 2020. The staff is diligent in looking for alternative funding and Director Miller thanked Ms. Frederick and the Marketing and Development Dept. in particular for their work.

The Board accepted the FY 2020 Grant Summary (**West/Eickhoff**).

***Towson Mural Update (Cooke)***

Mr. Cooke updated the Board on the Towson mural project, an endeavor of the Towson Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber received funding for a public art project. A portion of the funds will be spent on a mural on the York Road side of the Towson Library building. The Chamber received 30 proposals from artists around the country and is in the final stages of selection. There will be a formal announcement of the winner from the Chamber once a contract has been signed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 am (**West/Eickhoff**).

Submitted by

Anne West

Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees