

**CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**DATE:** May 24, 2023

**PLACE:** Mount Airy Branch

**TIME:** 7:00 pm

Present:

Leza Griffith	Virginia Harrison	Kendra Hart	Joyce Muller
Dave O'Callaghan	Marcus Robinson		

Staff present:

Suzanne Arcuri	Andrea Berstler	Elizabeth Bruner	Jillian Dittrich
Karen Gonsman	Ghis Hockensmith	Bob Kuntz	Greta McNally
Lisa Picker	Patty Sundberg	Sara Szymanski	Joe Thompson

**1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum**

Dr. Hart called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and declared there was a quorum.

**2. Battle of the Books**

Ghislaine Hockensmith, Children's Services Supervisor at the Westminster branch, gave a report on the 2023 Battle of the Books (BOB) competition. Battle of the Books is a book-based competition. Students compete in teams to answer questions relating to the content of different books. The game format creates interest and excitement in reading, while cultivating teamwork, and encouraging good sportsmanship.

Battle of the Books grew out of the Learning Advantage Partnership between Carroll County Public Library and Carroll County Public Schools. Initially including grades 4 and 5 with several middle schools competing as well, it has since grown to include local private school and homeschool groups.

Ms. Hockensmith was the chair of the BOB committee for the past two years. Ms. Hockensmith shared that 1138 total students participated in this year's competitions at different schools around the county. 1013 public school students participated, and 125 private school students participated. In total, 4648 spectators were in attendance. For the elementary school battles, 21 public school participated. There were 125 public school teams for elementary and 9 private school teams. For the middle school battles, 5 public schools participated. There were 31 public school teams and 9 private school teams. Ms. Hockensmith shared that a lot goes into the coordination and preparation of the event.

There were over 250 total staff and volunteers, 45 question writers, and 12 event coordinators. The 2023 BOB committee/event coordinators were Kari Kelly, Stephanie Johnson, M Fitz, Sara Arnold, Elizabeth Bruner, Rebecca Garrahy, Belinda Bauman, Lynn Beard, Linda Renick, Kayla King, Renee Brown and Ghis Hockensmith.

CCPL welcomed author Ira Marcks on March 13<sup>th</sup> for a successful author event and kickoff to BOB. Ira Marcks is the writer of *Shark Summer*, which was included on both the middle and elementary school battle book lists. Over 350 people attended this author event.

The books given to students are provided by many generous sponsors, including the Friends of the Library and the Kiwanis club. The Board thanked the 2023 BOB committee for all their hard work.

### **3. Staff Reports**

#### **a. Mt. Airy Branch Report**

Patty Sundberg, Branch Manager, gave a report on the Mount Airy branch of the library. Ms. Sundberg presented different pictures, organized by category, representing different themes of programming and activities offered at the branch. Categories included science learning/STEM, fitness, teens, adults, crafts, community engagement and having fun! Ms. Sundberg shared that there is something for everyone at the Mount Airy branch.

### **4. Staff Association Report**

Suzanne Arcuri, Circulation Clerk, represented the Staff Association (SA). She shared that the SA has chosen the charity that they will support this year. The selected charity is Bridging Life of Carroll County, and each of the branches will hold a fundraiser to support the cause.

### **5. Minutes of April 26, 2023**

Ms. Muller gave two suggestions for revising the April Minutes. In the revised Minutes, it will be specified that the *adult* Battle of the Books will be moving to October, not the general Battles. A definition of what Paycom is will also be added to the April Minutes for additional clarity.

***Mr. O'Callaghan moved to accept the April Minutes. Ms. Griffith seconded. The Minutes were approved pending the two changes.***

### **6. Financial Statement**

Ms. Berstler presented on the Financial Statement. There is two months left in the fiscal year, and CCPL's interest income up to date is around \$18,000. More than half of that money is from the MLGIP investment. She reported that although the furniture budget appears to be overspent, it's just because of the timing of when invoicing occurs vs. when the orders are placed. Ms. Muller commented on revenue from passports being up. This is due to travel increasing now that the COVID-19 Pandemic has continued to wind down.

### **7. Correspondence & Announcements**

Dr. Hart shared a report on behalf of the Friends of the Library. The Friends' Board is considering an increase to the membership dues - this is being explored, will be discussed at the next Friends' Board meeting, and brought forward for a vote at the annual Friends meeting in December. The Friends' Board is looking to encourage more friends to volunteer at various CCPL events and is working to create a short training sheet and video. The Friends' Board decided to set aside a portion of the budget to cover (or

offset) the cost of Light of Carroll nominees (so that the nominees wouldn't have to pay for their ticket). To financially sustain this going forward, the Friends' Board is considering a separate fundraising event.

Jay Meashey, Economic Development Director for the City of Taneytown, wrote to Ms. Berstler commending the Taneytown branch of the library. Jillian Dittrich, Branch Manager, assisted Mr. Meashey with brainstorming and executing two Entrepreneur Support Sessions held at the branch. Mr. Meashey says he and the city consider it a big success.

#### **8. Citizen's Time**

No citizens were present at this meeting.

#### **9. Proposed FY24 Budget**

Ms. Berstler presented on the proposed FY24 budget. She provided the board with a draft proposal budget. The Commissioners have approved their budget. The last information CCPL received had an increase of 3% plus an additional \$614,000. CCPL has rolled out a four-year step down for use of substitutes in the library. This plan will reduce dependence on subs, which are increasingly difficult to hire and maintain, and encourage staff in each location to work with one another to ensure desk coverage. Executive leadership anticipates this plan will allow CCPL to reallocate a total of approx. \$200,000 by year four.

Mr. O'Callaghan said it would be helpful to have projected expenditures included on the draft budget. The board plans to vote to approve the budget at the June meeting after receiving additional information from Jill Edelen, Director of Finance.

#### **10. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Berstler gave her Executive Director's report. Ms. Gonsman is in the process of finalizing the new Staff Handbook. CCPL worked with an outside legal consultant to revise the handbook. Ms. Berstler hopes to have the final version to the board for approval by the June meeting.

Communications has confirmed that CCPL will host James Patterson on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. Due scheduling conflicts with author events, the September and October board meetings will be combined and held on October 11 at the North Carroll branch of the library. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Battle of the Books After Hours will be moved to October. The Carroll Reads initiative has chosen their book for 2023. The book title is *All My Rage* by Sabaa Tahir.

Ms. Berstler and Kati Townsley have begun work with the Goodwill of Monocacy Valley on a symposium to discuss the affects of poverty on rural families and what local government and non-profits can do to improve the situation. The day's activities will include a keynote by Maryland Dept of House Secretary Jake Day and a poverty simulator exercise for participants. More details will be forthcoming. This event is planned for Friday, December 8, 2023.

CCPL will continue working with CCPS to bring a Mock Trial workshop to Carroll County. June 17-18 has been earmarked for this event.

Ms. Berstler was contacted by Max Duchaine, Communications Director for Scenic America. Mr. Duchaine recently heard of the passing of Cornelius "Neil" Ridgely, a longtime supporter of both Scenic America and CCPL. Due to Mr. Ridgely's profound impact on the community, Mr. Duchaine proposed renaming the Finksburg branch of the library after him. The board had an informal conversation about this proposal, with board members agreeing that CCPL branches should be named after the communities they reside in. Ms. Griffith pointed out that in the past, CCPL has named meeting rooms after individuals. She suggested continuing to operate under that precedent.

Mr. O'Callaghan suggested CCPL should have a consistent policy on naming rights. Ms. Berstler will respond to Mr. Duchaine and let him know that the board is aware of and considering how to move forward with his request.

Ms. Berstler shared that Ms. McNally, Executive Assistant, will be resigning from her position effective June 1, 2023.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Ms. Griffith moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. O'Callaghan seconded. Approval was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

**\*\*A portion of this meeting may be closed pursuant to the General Provisions Article Annotated Code of Maryland, §3-305(b). The CCPL Board's next planned meeting is on June 28, 2023 at the Eldersburg Branch Library starting at 7 p.m.**

*Kendra Hart /s/*