

Carroll County Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Exploration Commons @ 50 East  
February 23, 2022  
Minutes

## 1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Ms. Griffith called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and declared there was quorum.

### Present:

Garima Chaturvedi	Leza Griffith	Virginia Harrison	Kendra Hart
Joyce Muller	David O'Callaghan	David Peloquin	

### Staff Present:

Belinda Bauman	Andrea Berstler	Jen Bishop	Kristen Bodvin
Tony Eckard	Karen Gonsman	Joelle Jarvis	Bob Kuntz
Tina Mawhinney	Lisa Picker	Terri Simmons	Erin Snell
Stephanie Szymanski	Joe Thompson		

## 2. Staff Reports

### a. Outreach Services

Kristen Bodvin, Programming Specialist III introduced Belinda Bauman, Joelle Jarvis, and Erin Snell. Ms. Bodvin noted that Outreach programs include virtual programs, puppet shows; Storytime Express which is available for licensed home care day centers, public schools pre-k; the Mobile Services Van goes to senior independent and dependent care centers, and the Detention Center library is located in the basement of the Detention Center. Board members visited the Storytime Express that was parked nearby. Joelle Jarvis is the Detention Center Library Associate who has been working remotely since late December but is hoping that next month she can return to the Detention Center library. The Detention Center has a new warden: Colonel Dennis A. Strine; it has 185 beds with 150 work release inmates, the maximum stay is 18 months. The Library is an allied partnership between CCPL and the Sheriff's office. The library serves 12 units, some units are not allowed to borrow circulating books, but they can get withdrawn items. The library is very small, has over 2,000 books and magazines along with furnishings and equipment. The collection has only books (mainly adult non-fiction), magazines, a few children's items and there is a law library with the MD law encyclopedia and other law reference materials. It was noted that the access to books has a positive effect and inmates say that the library gives them access to something normal. The officers offer a GED program. The Materials Department always purchases new items for the collection. Some titles requested by inmates are purchased. Ms. Jarvis is responsible for the law library and has attended several trainings although she is not a law librarian or a lawyer and does not respond to legal questions. Ms. Jarvis points the inmates to resources in the collection and contact information for the circuit court librarian. There was discussion about indemnification of the library staff. Mr. Thompson said that Ms. Jarvis did an excellent job of cleaning up after the closing. The Board thanked Ms. Jarvis for the report.

Outreach Library Associate, Belinda Bauman talked about Story Strolls. The basic process includes taking apart a book, laminating the pages, and placing them along a walkway. CCPL librarians created temporary storytrolls, Rec and Park also set up some last summer. Because of the popularity, staff decided to create a permanent one. Rec and Park said Deer Park would be a great place. Girl Scout Troop 10236 partnered to do the project. Lowe's of Westminster donated the building material. Lowe's employees loaded the building materials in the Storytime Express, the Scouts constructed the stands,

and the book pages were created by Keri Severino in Communications. Now Deer Park has 20 stations of the book *Bear Snores On* along the path that takes 20-30 minutes to walk. Engaging activities and teaching tips are included. Books will be changed quarterly. There are QR codes included in the pages in order to get feedback on the project. The grand opening was on February 6, two commissioners, Ms. Berstler, Scout members, Outreach staff, and Lisa Picker attended. Amy Schildwachter from the Taneytown Branch library is hoping to put in a story stroll in Taneytown. Erin Snell suggested putting one in the City of Westminster's trails at Wakefield Valley.

Erin Snell, Outreach Library Associate reported on the department's Child Development Class Presentations that are held in collaboration with the CCPS high schools. Workshops on storytimes and puppetry are presented for the students in the child development classes who will be working in preschool settings in their high schools. Each workshop is 75 -90 minutes long. Students are introduced to puppetry, how to supplement storytimes using puppets and props, and demonstrate how to adapt a puppet to themes and seasons, and how to develop personalities. Puppets are important because they help children explore imagination and creativity, and get kids excited about books and learning. The storytime programs teach the students about why reading aloud is important, best practices like how to hold a book, make stories interactive, and how to extend learning from the books into the classroom and home. How to choose books for ages, and stages of child development, are included. Early literacy skills are part of the curriculum. Prep for the workshops involves contacting the teachers at the high school, knowing MSDE benchmarks and updates, awareness of Carroll County school readiness stats, current early childhood research, and staying up to date with current curriculum. Staff have learned there will be curriculum changes in the 23-24 school year. The staff will be creating a new puppet show that they hope will be ready next year. Ms. Berstler said this year's delightful production of *The Frog Prince* is now being held in the branches. The Board thanked the Outreach staff for their report.

#### **b. Exploration Commons**

EC Manager Jen Bishop presented the Exploration Commons report. The space has been opened 2 months. Customers are impressed with the Makerspace equipment and software. Staff are seeing adults who come in and look like kids in a toy store. Teens and adults are engaging in AV VR and design software. Currently there are 62 individuals certified to use the equipment, some on multiple machines. A group of teens learned how to use game software Blender and Unity. A local police officer came in and used the 3D printer to make a hard case to carry their Narcan supply. The owner of JeannieBird's Bakery comes in and makes engraved cutting boards. There are many regulars who make lots of items that include specialized wooden tabletops, paper sculptures (one of the Eiffel Tower was gifted to EC), wooden boxes and ceramic tiles. The laser cutter is used to create designs on leather wallets and make rubber stamps and one person is working through Adobe Illustrator to learn how to create unique items. Kitchen programs and certification classes fill quickly. The classes have regulars who attend and bring friends and family. Partner organizations: the Boys and Girls Club and the Arc of Carroll County have also been in for classes. The kitchen classes get lively, and everyone enjoys meeting new people and building community with them. Positive customer comments were shared. The Board thanked Ms. Bishop for the report.

### **3. Minutes of January 26, 2022**

***Mr. Peloquin moved to accept the Minutes of January 26, 2022. Ms. Harrison seconded. Approval was unanimous.***

#### **4. Financial Statement**

Tony Eckard reviewed the financial report that ended on January 31, 2022. Cash balances were \$3,932,488, \$1,360,397 more than last year this time. Invoices for Exploration Commons (EC) construction are slowly being received and paid. Revenues are at budget. Salary savings are at \$294,097, these savings are due to an adjustment from the first payroll of the fiscal year that belonged to FY 21 and savings in hourly and substitute use along with turnover, mostly from retirements. It was noted that fortunately when we have openings, we get qualified applicants. There was discussion regarding the school system and county government's hiring issues. Ms. Berstler said that we plan to add two hourly positions to EC and we are asking the County for 3 additional full-time positions to help with the EC partner programs. In expenditures Tony noted that all CCPL locations have free parking for staff except Westminster. To alleviate that we have budgeted to cover parking for staff in this location, at this time budget is overspent but will catch up. Meals is overspent due to the Exploration Commons donor and grand opening events; those expenses will be transferred to the campaign. CCPL staff have been working with some libraries across the state on a compensation study, the RFP is listed on our website, bid openings are this Friday. There was discussion regarding the upcoming FY 23 operating budget. Staff have been in discussion with the County budget office regarding CCPL salaries and pay raises that could mirror the County's six-year operating budget plan. Mr. Eckard reminded everyone of the Community Foundation account that benefits the Mary Lou Dewey Park for continued maintenance and care. The Fundraising Report for Exploration Commons reflects that we have eclipsed \$1 million in funds raised; thanks to everyone's efforts.

#### **5. Correspondence and Announcements**

After years of not having a request to remove an item, one was received in February. After discussion with the staff, the individual chose to fill out the reconsideration form. When one of these forms is filled out by a customer, it goes to the Director of Public Services, Joe Thompson, who asked the Materials Department to research the title's recommendations and reviews and provide an explanation on why it was purchased. Sometimes materials may be moved into different sections of the collection. The letter to this customer said we would not be removing the title from the collection, that we encourage parents and guardians to help their children when choosing materials, and that our staff are available to help find appropriate materials. At this point, we have not heard back.

Currently, there is a nationwide movement to ban or remove books and there are reports about book burnings. There was discussion regarding requests to remove items from CCPS and work to remove titles in other states from collections in public schools. Public libraries are about having access and freedom to read. It was noted that if someone continued the ask for an item to be removed, the decision would ultimately be the Board's. Staff are very aware of the nationwide movement and the procedures are in place to help them respond to customer concerns. We have very good, highly trained Materials Management selectors who decide what we purchase, how many copies, and use professional reviews that help determine a good fit for our collection.

#### **6. Citizen's Time**

Tina Mawhinney, Circulation Clerk at the Westminster Branch Library was welcomed to the meeting representing the Staff Association. Ms. Mawhinney said there was nothing to report at this time and thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the meeting

## 7. Executive Director's Report

A copy of the strategic plan was included in the packet. Ms. Berstler also shared the workplan for the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), it includes major projects for ELT to accomplish over the next 3 to 4 years. There is a lot in the plan and staff may ask to extend the plan by one year. When we come out from the other side of this plan, CCPL will be well positioned for the future.

Ms. Berstler has been appointed to the Chapters Relations Committee for ALA.

The new Director of Human Resources, Karen Gonsman was introduced. Terri Simmons the Assistant Director of HR has taken Ms. Gonsman under her wing. She has been learning the ropes about what happens at the library. Ms. Gonsman said she is glad to be here.

In Legislative News, Mr. Thompson has moved onto the national stage as Chair of the ALA Committee on Legislation. Maryland SB 448 is the state funding bill for public libraries and regionals, it lays out the per capita support for the next 4 years through FY 27. It was approved favorably by the committee and every member of the committee signed on as a co-sponsor. Senator Nancy King been a wonderful advocate but is retiring. The bill that would allow Garrett Co library use the same capital grants formula as the one in place for Allegany will be heard next week. Neither of the two bills to support the Imagination Library program in Charles and Pratt have crossed over to the opposite house yet.

Upcoming events include the Board orientation on February 24 starting at 2 pm. The African-American Read-In will be held at the Arts Council on February 28, Brad Meltzer will be at the Arts Council on March 9. Board members photos will be taken at the March 30 meeting, bring your favorite book. Staff have reserved the library passenger van to take staff to the upcoming ALA event happening in June in Washington, DC. We will also look for a good day to take any Board members who would like to attend.

### 8a. Workplan Review

The Workplan Review was reviewed as part of the Executive Director's Report.

### 8b. How to Honor Former Board Members

Joyce Muller researched ways that other library systems honor board members who have left the board. Ms. Muller suggested that CCPL's Materials Management staff purchase titles on topics that board members suggest and add a commemorative bookplate to the item. A letter of appreciation will also be created for each board member. We will invite the most recent former board members to the March 30 meeting at the Finksburg branch to be honored.

## 9. Meeting Room Policy

Ms. Berstler asked the Board to approve the removal of this statement from the Meeting Room policy: *Reservations will not be accepted for dates more than two months in advance.* The reason for this request is so that the large meeting room in Exploration Commons only could be reserved more than two months in advance. The size of the room is attracting organizations that require more time to organize and advertise their events. Staff feel this will work since EC's meeting room is not used for programs like the branch meeting rooms.

***Mr. Peloquin moved to accept the change to the Meeting Room Policy as suggested by staff. Ms. Chaturvedi seconded. Approval was unanimous.***

**The next meeting of the Board will be held on March 30, 2022, at the Finksburg Branch Library.**

**10. Adjournment**

***Mr. O'Callaghan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Muller seconded. Approval was unanimous.***

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Leza Griffith  
Chair