

**FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 3, 2023**

The Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on May 3, 2023 at the C. Burr Artz Library.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT, J. D’Agostino, T. Lancaster, G. Mayfield, M. O’Leary, S. Sheppard, K. Spertzel, and S. White.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: J. Donald, County Liaison.

STAFF PRESENT: J. Kelly, Director, S. McDuff, Associate Director, C. Hall, Associate Director; B. McDermott, Finance Manager; J. El-Zeftawy, Development Manager; B. Hissong, Community Engagement Manager; M. Currens, Library Collections Manager; J. Marshall, Manager – Systems; C. Brohawn, Project Coordinator; K. Cambrel, Communications Manager; J. Diaz, Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; R. Frecker, Branch Administrator – Walkersville Library; B. Heltebridle, Branch Administrator – C. Burr Artz Library; A. Knight, Branch Administrator – Middletown Library; R. Cox-Steib, Branch Administrator – Myersville Library; A. Whitney, Branch Administrator – Thurmont Regional Library and Emmitsburg Library; S. Yates, Branch Administrator – Urbana Regional Library and Point of Rocks Library; R. Reeves, Assistant Branch Administrator – Brunswick Library; B. Hoover, Library Associate/Children’s Dept. – Walkersville Library; B. Watts, Library Associate/Children’s Dept – Emmitsburg Library; and L. Tibbs, Recording Secretary.

CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

CHAIRS REPORT: Ms. D’Agostino discussed flexibility. It is such a wonderful asset. She added that flexibility is something the library has every day. She thereafter thanked everyone for their support of FCPL’s budget.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: G. Mayfield made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 12, 2023; seconded by S. White. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

FCPL – Update: Mr. Kelly noted that although it has only been a few weeks since we last met, things have been busy in our libraries. As they do every month, our team has been hard at work expanding access, building bridges, and sparking excitement.

At Thurmont Regional Library, the team invited new customers to join the library by hosting Literacy Night at the branch in partnership with the elementary school. This event brought over 200 people into the library. The children's department staff created 12 fun literacy-supporting activity stations spread throughout the library. Families thanked them and teachers commented that they got ideas for things that they could do at school to promote literacy. The team saw many families that were library first-timers and issued new library cards all evening.

At the Myersville Library, the team partnered with Myersville Elementary school to host every kindergarten and first grade class. The students came for tours of the library, storytimes, and a scavenger hunt.

At the Walkersville Library branch, the team partnered with Frederick County Citizen Services Division's Family Partnership to host branch visits, library tours, and storytimes, bringing new faces into the building for the first time. Over 80 people attended most of whom were native Spanish speakers.

At the C. Burr Artz Library, the team hosted a group called Enhance Arts Project who provided an ASL Immersive Literacy and Arts program for 27 elementary-aged customers. The event, sponsored by the Deaf Culture Digital Library paired a book to an engineering project using recycled material.

These are all great examples of the ways that FCPL is expanding access and building bridges, serving as a space for community building, dialogue, and connection. Mr. Kelly noted that this work is not only about inviting people in, it's also about meeting people where they are beyond our bricks and mortar.

The Judy Center at Monocacy Elementary hosted a Diaper Giveaway on Saturday, March 4th at the Amber Meadows Playground with the goal to give away diapers to families in need with no questions asked. The library was invited to attend the event. FCPL provided an outreach table and we brought the Community Bookmobile. We spoke to residents and issued library cards. The community enjoyed getting on the bookmobile to have a look and check some books out.

The Middletown team worked with their middle school Media Specialist to host an event where students had an opportunity to sample different genres they were interested in exploring. FCPL's team brought over 100 books from FCPL's collection and, during the Middle School lunch periods, they offered reading recommendations, sparked conversations, and developed rapport with new and familiar faces. Most of the titles the team brought were quickly snapped up by students who put their Student Success cards to good use. The team interacted with over 70 students and staff.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly pivoted to statistics and programming. He noted examples of how FCPL is sparking excitement by producing programs that celebrate our diversity and inspire growth.

The C. Burr Artz team hosted a Black Children's Book Week party. Over 70 folks attended the program that was the result of a growing partnership with local black authors and Dr. Douge. Families had a wonderful time celebrating books, winning some cool prizes, and enjoying pop-

up storytimes from the authors themselves. The authors were so excited to see some of their books in our collection, too!

Mr. Kelly thereafter reviewed statistics. The Dashboard highlights FCPL March numbers which are very strong. You can see that March outperformed the previous six months in most categories including visits, circulation, Wifi use and Program attendance. Mr. Kelly stated, that as noted in the past, FCPL is offering fewer total programs than we were pre-pandemic but the programs that we are offering are, on average, better attended than in the past.

Another interesting fact is that we had more than 20 programs and these programs spanned every corner of the County. Folks are coming out for storytimes, for music events, and for literacy nights. People love their public libraries and the programming that our team works so hard to develop.

On the reverse side of the Dashboard, you'll see our year-to-date numbers. We continue to narrow the gap in total visits as we move through the year. The 1.6 million visits year-to-date are just 5% under where we were at this point in FY19.

Staying on year-to-date numbers, you can see that the trend of "lower than average" public computer use and skyrocketing Wi-fi and personal device use continues. These numbers reflect trends through the first three quarters of the fiscal year and we expect them to hold.

Finally, your packet includes a 3rd quarter update for our strategic plan, highlighting some of our grants and partnerships.

Budget/CIP Update: Mr. Kelly advised that B. McDermott will update the FCPL Board of Trustees on the current year's financials as we head into the final quarter of the fiscal year.

Mr. Kelly noted that as for the FY23 proposed operating budget, as you know, County Executive Fitzwater released her proposed budget which included all three of the library's budget appeals (Urbana Passport Position, Communications Bilingual Specialist position, and replacement vehicle) as well as design funding for West Frederick in the upcoming fiscal year. The budget is currently being considered by the County Council and Mr. Kelly advised that he has been invited to speak to them this Friday.

On the capital side of things, you will get a comprehensive update on the Middletown project from Sheila later this evening.

Mr. Kelly further advised that The Maryland Library Association's Annual Conference is next week – May 10th through 12th. Thanks to a generous staff development grant from the State Library, FCPL is able to send over 20 members of its team to the conference.

Thereafter, Mr. Kelly noted that the next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 7th. It is the Board's last meeting before their summer recess.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Report: Ms. McDermott reviewed the FY23 Financial Report for May, 2023. She noted that the data is tentative as of March 31, 2023. Revenues are at 72%, a 20 % increase from the previous board meeting primarily due to the timing of when the County posted the quarterly transfers to the general ledger. In March, there was a transfer to the County in-kind of \$548,000, County General Fund of \$3M and MD State Education of \$300,000. Passport revenue increased by \$10,000. There were over 300 passports processed in March and year-to-date over 1600 passport applications have been processed. Miscellaneous operating revenue increased by \$6,000 which includes book sales of \$1,300, tote bag sales of \$400 and copier/kiosk services of \$4,000. The Federal Grants were reimbursed \$29K for reimbursement related to the Equity and Engagement Grant and Staff Development grant expenses. Next month the financial report will reflect the first month of the fourth quarter in FY23. As FCPL moves closer to the end of the fiscal year, she noted that everyone should keep in mind that the County does not record our final quarterly transfer, fund balance or contributions and donations until the end of the year.

FCPL's expenditures are at 65%. There was a slight increase in each budget line for expenditures. The most significant percentage change was a 20% increase in office supplies and an 11% increase in other operating expenditures for the purchase of general office supplies, Ms. McDermott further noted that when comparing FY23 and FY22, there was a 2% difference in the total percentage spent which is primarily due to the timing of when transactions are posted to the general ledger.

FCPL is right on target with revenue and expenditures as we end the third quarter of FY23.

Grants Awarded are at \$1,064,095. Grants Submitted are at \$273,489. Ms. McDermott noted that since the last board meeting, there has been no change to the grants awarded or grants submitted.

Donations are at \$134,003, an increase of \$19,436 from the previous board meeting update.

Other endowment revenues are at \$177,561, an increase of \$40,000 from the previous month. There was an increase of \$40,000 from the C. Burr Artz Trust to support the sole benefit of the CBA Library Branch. The Nallin CD received interest in the amount of \$7.00.

This brings the total to \$1,375,659.

b. Brunswick Library Update: J. Diaz, Branch Administrator at Brunswick Library, provided an update on the Brunswick Library. She noted that Brunswick is a rapidly growing community with lots of new neighbors. Brunswick has had a population increase of 32% from 2010-2020. In comparison, Frederick County grew at 16%. Brunswick's population was 7,762 in 2020.

Ms. Diaz noted that the Brunswick Library staff work regularly with Frederick County Workforce Services which includes “on the road” programs at the Brunswick Branch Library. In addition, the Brunswick Library has teen volunteers and through the Teens Teach Tech Program, they offer a monthly session for adults to get hands-on help with new devices such as laptops, smartphones, Bluetooth headsets, etc. These programs expand access to technology and its applications and foster digital literacy. She added that on May 20, 2022, eleven new tablet and hotspot kits were made available in the Brunswick collection for a one-week checkout period. The devices are stored at Brunswick but holdable from any FCPL location. These kits are provided by a partnership between FCPL and Frederick County Workforce Services and were purchased with grant funds.

The Brunswick Library is building bridges by developing new partnerships and continuing with existing partnerships. In March, 2023 three staff members alternated to represent the library at the 2-day Recreation Economies for Rural Communities Workshop in Brunswick, presented by the Greater Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by the EPA. This is a national program that brings local leaders together with state and federal resources to create actionable plans aimed to develop the city’s unique outdoor recreation resources into a thriving economy.

In addition, Ms. Diaz noted that the Brunswick Library participated in a touch-a-truck event in April, 2023 at Othello Park. It was a 2-hour event with 14 vehicles and almost 600 participants. FCPL had their bookmobile and delivery truck at the event. She thereafter displayed several photos from the event.

The Brunswick Library certainly sparks excitement. In November, the Brunswick Library staff participated in the Brunswick City’s 90th Annual Veterans Day Parade which included staff riding the book bike for its parade debut. Brunswick Library was awarded the best civic/non-profit entry and received \$150 cash prize.

In addition, the Brunswick Library had 82 participants at its pajama storytime. Fifty-five stuffed animals spent the night and received a scrapbook of their adventures. Ms. Diaz gave kudos to staff member, Sarah, for hosting a parking lot filled pajama storytime by the fireplace. Staff took photos of the fun adventures to send home with each child. Staff have received numerous requests to do this program again.

M. O’Leary inquired whether patrons are utilizing the internet from the parking lot or going into the building. Ms. Diaz responded that patrons use the internet from the parking lot as well as actually come inside the library.

Thereafter there was a discussion about whether the Brunswick Library is out-growing its space. Ms. Diaz advised that it is not out-growing its space at this time but there are times when the library is very crowded.

c. Middletown Library Update: S. McDuff, Associate Director, provided an update on the construction of the Middletown Library. She noted that the update provides some perspective from images of the design that everyone has already seen to the progress on actual construction. She added that most of the photos were taken with the County's drone in early April, so more progress has been made. Ms. McDuff noted that this year the Governor included some supplemental funding for the capital grant fund program which gives supplemental funding for projects that were already funded so FCPL will be receiving an additional \$500,000 for this project. Thereafter Ms. McDuff displayed various elevation photos of the construction project that were taken on April 4, 2023 by the county's drone. She further displayed the current, anticipated timeline but noted that there have been delays so this could change. The groundbreaking for the Middletown Library was in August, 2022. Currently, construction is expected to be completed by November 9, 2023 (tentatively) but is subject to change. Thereafter, there will be a 4 – 6 week period for us to begin the move-in process and allow punch list items to be completed. The grand opening, at this time, is scheduled for December, 2023 but this may get pushed to early January, 2024.

Thereafter, discussions followed regarding staffing for the Middletown Library. It was noted that staffing for the Middletown Library will more than double.

d. By-Laws Update: G. Mayfield noted that at last month's meeting, two proposed changes were approved and the third change was tabled until this meeting. Mr. Mayfield read the current and proposed language of the change to Article III – Composition of the Board of Trustees (#7). Current: Trustee may be removed from the Board for cause at any time by a majority vote of the **other** Trustees (except for non-attendance, which is covered by the MD Code §23-404). Proposed: Trustee may be removed from the Board for cause at any time by a majority vote of the Trustees (except for non-attendance, which is covered by the MD Code §23-404). Mr. Mayfield noted that the only difference between the two is the word "other".

Thereafter, Mr. Mayfield explained his rationale for the proposed change. There is no cause required for bringing it up. The judgment of the Trustees, when they take a vote, is the very first notice of due process and the Trustee in question should have the right to vote along with the other Trustees.

G. Mayfield made a motion to approve the proposed change to the By-Laws; seconded by K. Spertzel. Discussion followed regarding "causes" for removal of a Trustee. Mr. Kelly noted that he will contact the County Attorney to see if "cause" is defined in any way. S. White suggested language be inserted in the proposed change that in order to vote on the removal of a Trustee from the Board, that the entire Board be present. Further discussion followed. Mr. Kelly suggested that a vote could be taken on a "cause" and, if that is approved, there would be a second vote for "removal" of a Trustee – making it a two-step process. It was decided that members of the Nominating Committee would review the language and put something together for the next meeting.

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: Ms. D’Agostino suggested that the FCPL Board of Trustees schedule a retreat over the summer break; possibly in August.

Mr. O’Leary noted that many of us have been hearing about ChatGPT and other comparable AI applications. This will be a very big deal and profoundly transformative and not always toward good outcomes. He inquired whether this is something that is on FCPL’s radar. Mr. Kelly advised that the Maryland State Library put together a Library Futures Conference a few weeks ago and this was one of the topics at the conference. As of right now, we are trying to learn about it and what the implications for libraries will be. G. Mayfield noted that the latest MIT Technology Review (May/June issue) is all about AI and education.

K. Spertzel stated that a lot of her friends are like her and love libraries and on Facebook there was a discussion about how noisy libraries have become. None of the libraries mentioned were in Frederick County. She inquired whether there have been complaints about our libraries being loud. Mr. Kelly stated that when we receive a complaint from a patron about the library being noisy, staff refer them to one of the quiet study areas. He added that he thinks it is exciting that we have people wanting to come to the library and use our spaces.

OTHER CITIZEN REMARKS: None.

The next FCPL Board of Trustees meeting will be held at the C. Burr Artz Library – Community Room at 7:00 p.m. on June 7, 2023.

S. White made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by S. Sheppard. No further discussion. VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.



Shemica Sheppard,
Vice-Chair, Frederick County Public Libraries Board of Trustees

