



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF ANNAPOLIS  
AND ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, INC.**

**Thursday, January 18, 2024, 4:00 pm  
Maryland City at Russett Library  
3501 Russett Common, Laurel, MD 20724**

**Open Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Chris Nelson, presiding.

Trustees Attending:

Mr. Noah Comet

Ms. Laura Ellis

Ms. Ishani Gandhi

Ms. Linda Gayle

Mr. Tim Lemke

Ms. Damita McDonald

Ms. JanElaine Smith

Ms. Sandra Solomon

Ms. Faith Steele

Ms. Lonni Summers

Mr. Jeremy York

Trustees Attending Virtually: Mr. Dylan Behler, Ms. Cathy Belcher, Ms. Simmona Simmons, Dr. Robert Sapp, and Mr. Gerald Starr.

Trustees Unable to Attend: Mr. James Estep

Support Staff Attending:

Mr. Skip Auld, Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Donna Denny, Executive Assistant

Ms. Christine Feldmann, Director of Marketing and Communications

Mr. Cedric Grant, Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Catherine Hollerbach, Chief Operations Officer

Ms. Darnice Jasper, Branch Manager, Maryland City at Russett Library

Mr. Rudy Rodela, Chief of Technology

Mr. Koven Roundtree, Chief of Human Resources

Mr. Joey Scalise, Technology and Video Coordinator, Digital Experience

Ms. Cathleen Sparrow, Executive Director, AACPL Foundation

Meeting Guests: Mr. Jay Creech, AACPL Counsel; and Staff Association Representatives: Ms. Maya Glassman and Ms. Georgeanne Montanari.

Call to Order

Mr. Nelson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. He noted the meeting would be conducted under the new *Rules of Order*, adopted by the Board of Trustees on September 21, 2023. He asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. There were no corrections, and the agenda was adopted.

### Welcome to the Maryland City at Russett Branch

Ms. Darnice Jasper, Branch Manager, welcomed everyone to Maryland City at Russett Library, the westernmost branch of AACPL. The branch is in Laurel, a city incorporated into four counties: Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's. It is also the only AACPL branch located in a residential community. Anne Arundel County provided the land in 1998, and the branch was moved from a shopping center close to Maryland City. The branch still has attachments to Maryland City residents, which is why it is called the Maryland City at Russett Library. Its demographics include a large senior customer base, young families, and computer users. It is a destination branch, without many walk-in customers, and provides outreach to nearby schools.

Ms. Jasper encouraged the Trustees to tour the branch after the meeting to see its new carpet and privacy pod obtained through a grant by the Laurel Racetrack Impact Fund Committee. She noted that the privacy pod gets steady use by customers for telehealth visits, Zoom communications, and background security investigations for customers applying for jobs with local government agencies. Ms. Jasper added that the branch conducted AACPL's second Chromebook Giveaway on the previous evening, distributing seventy-five computers. She noted that the Digital Experience Team did a fantastic job with their customers, and she shared some of the feedback provided by Chromebook recipients.

Ms. Jasper said she began her AACPL career fifteen years ago at the Annapolis Library and has been in her current position for eight years. She is pleased to currently Chair the *Library Equity Diversity and Inclusion Team* (LEDIT) and she thanked the Board of Trustees for making AACPL more equitable and welcoming to staff and customers. Ms. Jasper answered questions about the branch.

### Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Nelson asked if there were corrections for the meeting agenda. There were no corrections, and the agenda was approved.

### Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any corrections for the minutes of the November 16, 2023, meeting. There were no corrections, and the minutes were approved.

### Public Comment

Mr. Nelson asked if any members of the public had signed up to make comments at the meeting. There were no requests to speak.

### Consent Agenda

Mr. Nelson noted that the trustees had been provided with three policies and their summaries, previously approved by committee:

- *Program Selection Policy*
- *Lost and Damaged Items Policy*
- *Workplace Electronic Systems Use Policy*

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any objections to approving all three policies on the consent agenda or if any should be removed for discussion. There were no requests to remove a policy from the consent agenda and Mr. Nelson called for a vote. All were in favor and the consent agenda was approved.

Mr. Nelson welcomed the Trustees who were attending the meeting virtually.

### Reports of Officers and Liaisons

#### *Chair*

Mr. Nelson was pleased to report that the County Council took action to approve Mr. Dylan Behler's nomination to the AACPL Board of Trustees, and he is now its newest member.

Mr. Nelson expressed best wishes to Mr. Jeremy York in his campaign to run for election to the District 7 seat of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education.

#### *Treasurer*

Ms. Belcher reported that the budget season has begun and AACPL's Operational and Supplemental Budget Request will be submitted on January 24, 2024. We are presently scheduled to meet with the County Executive and his staff to present our budget request on March 14, 2024.

Ms. Belcher noted that for the December 2023 financial report, we are expected to receive and spend approximately 50% of our budgeted revenues and expenditures, respectively. To date, we have received 51% of total revenues with no major variances noted. In addition, we have spent 46% of the budgeted expenditures for fiscal year 2024. Membership spending under Business and Travel is over budget presently but will be absorbed in total within the final budget. No other major variances are noted. There were no questions for Ms. Belcher.

#### *Chief Executive Officer*

Mr. Nelson invited Mr. Auld to provide his report. Mr. Nelson also asked the Trustees to please hold their questions for Mr. Auld about the status of enabling legislation for the union organizing effort until the closed portion of the meeting, when the board will seek advice of counsel.

Mr. Auld said the new Millersville Library project is included in the county's Capital Improvement Plan and will begin receiving funding in Fiscal Year 2028. Its construction will begin after the completion of the new Glen Burnie Library.

Mr. Auld noted that over the past year, the board has been interested in recognizing veterans and military families. As a result, the board began considering the idea of naming it the *Millersville Veterans Memorial Library*, as it will be located close to the Crownsville Veterans Cemetery. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Auld will ask the board's Finance and Audit Committee, since it is a capital project, to consider this at their next meeting. Once considered and approved by the full board, AACPL will seek approval for the library's name by the county as required. Mr. Auld answered questions about the county's building-naming rules.

Mr. Auld reported that at the November 21, 2023, board meeting, we expected to have a statewide enabling legislation bill worked out between the unions and the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA). MAPLA has not heard anything from the unions. Delegate Jared Solomon of Montgomery County is sponsoring a statewide bill and the members of the Anne Arundel Delegation expect it to move forward.

Mr. Auld noted that MAPLA works with Hannah Garagiola, Esq. of Compass Advocacy and she has been in touch with Delegate Solomon on a regular basis. As of yesterday, even Delegate Solomon had not yet seen a draft bill.

Mr. Auld invited questions from the board and asked if any of the Executive Leadership Team wished to provide a report. There were no questions or additional reports.

### Reports from Standing Committees

#### *Finance and Audit Committee*

Ms. Belcher said she was pleased to welcome the newest member of the Board of Trustees, Dylan Behler, to serve on the board's Finance and Audit Committee.

#### *MOTION to Approve the Operating and Supplemental Budget Request for FY25*

Ms. Belcher asked for approval of the Operating and Supplemental Budget Request for FY25. Mr. Nelson confirmed that this motion was from the Finance and Audit Committee.

Mr. Auld said there were seventeen items in our supplemental budget request. Several AACPL Trustees and staff members will attend this year's series of Budget Town Hall Meetings to advocate for our request. The number one request is funding for staff salary market adjustments. This was also our number one request last year and we asked for \$2.9M for this purpose. Last year, staff received 5% merit increases, 3% cost-of-living (COLA) increases, plus \$1.0M for staff salary market adjustments. Last fall, we asked the firm PRM to let us know where staff salaries now stand in market rate comparisons. It was determined that \$1.43M in FY 2025 would

bring compensation up to market rates. Mr. Auld provided information on the factors PRM considers in making its calculations, including years of experience, and compensation provided by peer libraries in Central Maryland as well as similar library systems around the country. For non-library positions, government salaries in similar positions were examined.

Mr. Auld introduced AACPL Staff Association Representatives Ms. Maya Glassman and Ms. Georgeanne Montanari. He encouraged staff members, Foundation Directors, and Library Trustees to testify at the various Budget Town Hall meetings. Ms. Feldmann noted she was aware of twenty-three people have indicated they plan to speak. Last night was the first Budget Town Hall and five people spoke for AACPL. Mr. Auld will speak at the District 3 meeting in Pasadena to provide updates on the Mountain Road and Riviera Beach libraries. He noted that an additional eight hundred users per month are visiting the new Mountain Road Library.

Mr. Auld invited Mr. Rodela to offer an update on the new Riviera Beach Library.

Mr. Rodela reported the general contractor has made enough progress that we have confidence we will have a certificate of occupancy around March 1. A walkthrough is scheduled for next Tuesday, January 23, to document the few remaining construction details. These are mostly touch-ups to finishes and minor corrections on fixtures. Library staff are using this interim period to stock the shelves with books and other library materials. This activity is permitted to prepare the library for occupancy. Once the occupancy certificate is issued, staff will be working full-time in the library to prepare it for its grand opening, which is currently being planned.

Mr. Auld asked Mr. Rodela to provide an update on architect selection for the new Glen Burnie Library. Mr. Rodela said the team met with the project manager from the Department of Public Works (DPW) to review proposals submitted by architects. Four proposals were considered and three were competitive. We will find out next week if our own recommendation was approved, however any of them would be good. Once the consultant selection committee makes its decision, it will take about a month to sign the contracts and the notice to proceed will be issued about a week after that. It will likely be three to four months before AACPL staff are able to begin detailed planning.

Mr. Comet said he planned to speak at a Budget Town Hall meeting and wanted to clarify how the salary market rate adjustment figure in our supplemental budget request was determined. Mr. Auld explained that AACPL has requested a market rate adjustment for staff salaries for each of the past three years. To arrive at the budget request figure, we begin with our base budget and Mr. Grant works with the Budget Office to adjust salaries based on what will be needed in the next fiscal year. Total compensation for all staff at the end of our fiscal year on June 30 is the starting point. Any merit and cost-of-living increases provided to non-represented Anne Arundel County staff are added to this figure. Mr. Auld noted that AACPL has a long history of working with PRM to evaluate our staff salaries against peer library systems.

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any additional questions and there were none. The board voted unanimously to approve the Operating and Supplemental Budget Request for FY25.

*Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee*

Mr. Lemke reported for Mr. Estep that the Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee discussed and approved the consent agenda items brought to the full board today. The committee also discussed full board meetings agendas, particularly the current public comment placement and procedure. They agreed to continue the public comment placement and procedures for future meeting agendas.

*Human Resources and Diversity Committee*

Ms. Solomon reported that Mr. Auld met with the Human Resources and Diversity Committee at their January 18, 2024, meeting to provide information and answer questions from the committee about the collective bargaining legislative effort.

Foundation Board Report

Ms. McDonald reported that at their January meeting, the Foundation Board of Directors unanimously approved the Foundation Funding Vision, which will provide guiding principles on funding library grants. They also approved the Foundation's FY 2023 audit, and IRS 990 submission.

Through December 31, 2024, the community has donated \$396,259, bringing the Foundation Revenue budget 73% to its goal. Many thanks to all the Trustees who donated.

Ms. Eloise Patton has been named the new Chair of the *For the Love of the Library Committee*. Ms. Patton has served on the committee for the past two years, and this year will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event. Please mark your calendars to attend the event on Friday, September 27, 2024, at the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library.

Closed Session

Mr. Nelson asked that there be a motion for a closed session. He cited the statutory authority to close the open session from the Maryland General Provisions Article § 3-305(b) in order to: discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals; and to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Ms. Summers moved to close the meeting. Mr. Comet seconded the motion. Mr. Nelson called for a vote. All were in favor, and none were opposed. The meeting was closed at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Nelson adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m. when the closed session ended.