



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

**4:00 p.m., Thursday, November 16, 2023
Severn Library, Severn Square Shopping Center
2624 Annapolis Road, Severn, MD 21144**

Open Meeting Minutes

Mr. Chris Nelson, presiding.

Trustees Attending:

Ms. Laura Ellis	Ms. JanElaine Smith
Mr. James Estep	Ms. Sandra Solomon
Ms. Ishani Gandhi	Mr. Gerald Starr
Ms. Linda Gayle	Ms. Faith Steele
Mr. Tim Lemke	Ms. Lonni Summers
Ms. Damita McDonald	Mr. Jeremy York
Ms. Simmona Simmons	

Trustees Attending Virtually: Ms. Cathy Belcher and Mr. Noah Comet.

Trustees Unable to Attend: Dr. Robert Sapp

Support Staff Attending:

Mr. Skip Auld, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Jay Creech, Counsel
Ms. Donna Denny, Executive Assistant
Ms. Christine Feldmann, Director of Marketing and Communications
Mr. Cedric Grant, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Cathy Hollerbach, Chief Operations Officer
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: Sabeela Ally, Marc Beard, Peter Bugenhagen, Cierra Carter, Carl Cason, Colin Chappel, Joe Dale, Michelle Davis, Betsy Denning, Joe Doyle, Kathleen Doyle, Nancy Fairbush, Lisa Felman, Faith Harless, Gwen Inman, Cindy Jacobs, Laura Kellman, Christopher Kim, Tracy Lee, Stan Mollohan, Georgeanne Montanari, Liliana Montes, Hansel Motiram, Ellie Mullen, Ellie Nelson, Stephanie Petruso, David Piper, Christy Potts, Sabrina Razvi, Sabrina Shade, Maurice Snowden, Bill Stieren, Rachael Troianos Habig, Becca Tucker, Craig Wallace, Madeline Yost, and Drew Young.

Call to Order

Mr. Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Nelson said copies of the recently revised meeting agenda were available. He asked if any additional changes were needed. No additional changes were requested, and the agenda was adopted.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Nelson asked if board members had any corrections before approval of the minutes of their September 21, 2023, full board open meeting. There were no corrections, and the minutes were approved.

Welcome to Severn Library

Ms. Ellie Mullen, Branch Manager, welcomed attendees to the Severn Library. She provided some of her professional background, noting she began her first job at AACPL after graduation from library school. She worked for Enoch Pratt Library and Baltimore County Public Library, before returning to AACPL two years ago. She said she is pleased to be back at AACPL because its values and mission are special. She noted that the branch was renovated with funds provided by their Local Development Council, due to the library's proximity to *MD Live!* Severn Development Council. The branch provides services for military families among its diverse community due to its proximity to Ft. Meade. The branch is also within walking distance of the local high school. The Severn Library also now boasts *Twig*, its new community outreach vehicle.

Welcome and Introduction of Guests

Mr. Nelson welcomed the many attendees. He noted that three AACPL staff members had indicated using the meeting sign-in sheet that they wished to address the board during the public comment portion of the agenda. Mr. Nelson read the attendees' names from the sign-in sheet and asked each to stand briefly for their introduction.

Chair's Report

Mr. Nelson said Trustees recently received an updated list of their Adopt-a-Library assignments. It includes the name of the branch manager, as well as that of their counterpart on the AACPL Foundation Board of Directors assigned to the branch. Visiting branches is an opportunity for Trustees to get to know libraries that are not as familiar to them as their local branch. Mr. Nelson recommended Trustees take a tour and get to know the branch manager. Trustees might also team up with their Foundation Director counterpart for shared visits and staff appreciation ideas.

Mr. Nelson reported he recently attended the annual meeting of Citizens for Maryland Libraries on October 21, 2023, at the Bowie Library in Prince George's County. He thanked the other trustees and directors who also attended. He added that the event's keynote speaker, Ellen Oh, Chief Executive Officer of We Need Diverse Books, spoke about the importance of diversity in children's book characters and made a convincing case against efforts to ban books.

Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Auld and the staff for welcoming him and other trustees and directors to the AACPL General Staff Meeting on October 25, 2023, at MD Live! It was great to see staff enjoying each other's company. Mr. Nelson enjoyed the upbeat event with over three hundred participants. He was pleased to express his appreciation to staff for continuing to bring wonderful innovations to library users. He enjoyed the presentation of the team achievement award won by the Severn Twig Team, as well as the rousing standing ovation for the individual achievement award presented to Ms. Abigail Williams. Mr. Nelson added that he especially enjoyed the excellent musical entertainment provided by the staff ensemble *Paperback Writers*. All told, it was great to enjoy the morning events with staff prior to their departure for a variety of planned afternoon activities.

Arrival and Introduction of Mr. Dylan Behler

Mr. Dylan Behler arrived, and Mr. Nelson took the opportunity to introduce him, noting that he was attending as part of the report presentation by the Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee. Mr. Behler has been nominated by County Executive Steuart Pittman to be the District 6 representative to our board, and his nomination will be brought to the board by the committee later in the meeting, subject to approval by the County Council in December. Mr. Behler will be invited to join in board activities at that time.

Foundation Report

Ms. McDonald noted the full Foundation Report was provided in BoardEffect and provided some of its highlights as follows:

- Through October 31, 2023, the Foundation has raised \$204,416.00 which is 38% of its budget.
- Over the last several months, the Foundation has approved \$290,000 of grants to the library, including the following sampling of what has been recently funded by community donations:
 - 6 SMARTBoards for Edgewater, Riviera Beach, Mountain Road, Mall, Severna Park, and Maryland City (\$4,200+)
 - Book easels and risers for most branches (\$9,000+)
 - Percussion Play and tables at Severna Park (\$19,000+)
 - Adult Section Chairs and table at Glen Burnie (\$4,900)
 - Teen Furniture at Annapolis and Brooklyn Park (\$9,000)
 - Movie licenses for all branches (\$5,700)
 - Refreshed Discover Dock at Odenton (\$4,000)
 - Presenter Fees for Summer Programs – all (\$47,000+)

- The annual *For the Love of the Library* fundraising event was held on September 22 with over 380 guests at the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library. It raised more than \$141,000 and the Foundation Events Committee did an incredible job. Be sure to mark your calendar as the 10th Anniversary event will be held on Friday, September 27, 2024.
- *Read Between the Wines* was held November 9 in honor of local veterans. Ninety library enthusiasts gathered at Great Frogs Winery, where we shared a fabulous night alongside 18 distinguished veterans.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Belcher reported that October 2023 financial report was in BoardEffect for review and provided the following summary:

- For the October 2023 report, we are expected to receive and expend approximately 33% of our budgeted revenues and expenditures, respectively. To date, we have received 33% of total revenues with no major variances noted.
- We have spent 31% of the budgeted expenditures for fiscal year 2024. The only major variance to date is for Membership and Dues, since we added a new MLA membership that covers all employees and trustees. However, we should be able to absorb cost this within the total budget at year end. No other major variances were noted.

CEO and Executive Leadership Team Reports

Presentation of Annual Report - Mr. Auld invited Ms. Feldman to review her PowerPoint presentation of the AACPL FY23 Annual Report. Ms. Feldmann presented the report, also called our [Community Impact Report](#) noting it does not cover everything AACPL offers, but highlights a few of the wonderful initiatives launched or expanded in FY23. The report will also be emailed to the trustees and shared on our website with customers, supporters, and elected officials.

Notification of Sole Source Procurement - Mr. Grant noted the recent sole source procurement notice in the meeting materials for the Comprise, Smart Access Management (SAM) renewal cost. He added this was a required notification, with no action required by the board.

ILS Conversion - Mr. Rodela reported AACPL will convert to its new Integrated Library System (ILS) on Monday, April 8, 2024. In preparation for the transition, the library will be closed April 6 and 7, 2024. The new system will be more economical and assist AACPL in providing better services.

Board Committee Reports

Finance and Audit Committee Report

Ms. Belcher reported the updated record and retention schedule was approved by the Finance and Audit Committee at its meeting on October 19, 2023. A record and retention schedule identifies and

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describes an organization's records and the lengths of time that each type of record must be retained. Retention schedules are developed in accordance with legal, regulatory, and business requirements. The schedule was also approved by the Maryland State Archivist on August 29, 2023.

MOTION to Approve Record Retention Schedule

Mr. Nelson asked the board to vote on the Record Retention Schedule previously approved by the Finance and Audit Committee. All were in favor, and the Record Retention Schedule was approved. Mr. Auld thanked Ms. Denny for her work on the schedule.

Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee Report

Mr. Estep noted that the minutes of the Governance, strategy, and Organization Committee were available on BoardEffect.

MOTION to Abolish Printing Policy

Mr. Estep asked Mr. Rodela to provide the background related to abolishing the printing policy. Mr. Rodela said printing fees charged to customers have become disproportionate to the actual costs involved. Print revenue has decreased to a nominal amount, and it would be logical and equitable to remove the policy. The Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee approved this motion at their October 19, 2023, meeting.

Mr. Nelson noted the motion to abolish the printing policy was now before the board and he asked for a vote. The board held a vote, all were in favor, and the printing policy was abolished.

MOTION to Elect Dylan Behler, Pending County Nomination

Mr. Estep introduced Mr. Dylan Behler as a future board member, unanimously approved by the Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee. Mr. Behler is also the County Executive's nominee to be AACPL's Council District 6 library board representative, subject to the approval of the County Council. Mr. Estep added that he expects the County Council to approve the nomination in December, enabling Mr. Behler to begin joining board activities.

Mr. Nelson reviewed the process for adding trustees to the board, noting that the County nominates and the AACPL Board of Trustees elects board members. The County Executive has nominated Mr. Behler for approval by the County Council, which still needs to act.

Mr. Estep said that in order to move things along in a timely manner, he moved to suspend the 30-day requirement of the bylaws and allow the board to vote to add Mr. Behler as a member. Ms. Solomon seconded the motion to suspend the bylaws provision of a 30-day notice requirement.

Mr. Nelson invited Mr. Behler to address the board. Mr. Behler thanked the Trustees for their consideration. He provided his background, noting he grew up in the Deale/Churchton area, where he learned the importance of libraries. He now lives in Annapolis and the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library is his local branch. He currently works at the Department of Natural Resources, and prior to this was Chief of Staff for Maryland Senator Sarah Elfreth. He participated in her championing of the *Lifelong Learners Act*, which raised the annual allotment of state capital funding for libraries. He believes libraries serve an important role as community connectors and looks forward to serving the community as a member of the AACPL Board of Trustees.

Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Behler and noted that the motion to approve him to be a member of the Board of Trustees came from the Governance, Strategy and Organization Committee. Mr. Nelson asked the board for its vote. All were in favor, and the motion carried unanimously to elect Mr. Behler.

Human Resources and Diversity Committee Report

MOTION to Approve one Additional Floating Personal Leave Day for Religious or Personal Observance

Ms. Solomon reported that at their meeting on October 19, 2023, the Human Resources and Diversity Committee approved the addition of one (1) floating personal day for employees to use for religious holiday observances or as a personal observance of their choice beginning with the next pay period. In addition, beginning January 1, 2024, eligible employees will be awarded a total of seven (7) personal leave days to be used during the calendar year. It will not be necessary for staff to designate a specific day of Personal Leave for this purpose.

Mr. Nelson asked the board to vote on the addition of a Personal Day for library employees to use for religious holiday observances or as a personal observance of individual choice. All were in favor, and the addition of a personal day for a total of seven (7) per calendar year was unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Mr. Nelson reviewed the meeting guest list and noted three staff members had signed up to speak. He asked if there were any others who wished to speak. There were no additional speakers and Mr. Nelson invited the three staff members introduce themselves, include their councilmanic district, and speak for three minutes each. The staff members were AACPL staff Mr. Craig Wallace, Ms. Rebecca Tucker, and Mr. Colin Chappel. Each speaker spoke for three minutes and asked the board to formally recognize AFSCME Council 3 as the union for Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL).

MOTION to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

Mr. Nelson thanked the speakers on behalf of the Board of Trustees. He added that before responding, the Board of Trustees would transition to a closed meeting in accordance with the *Maryland Open Meetings Act*, in order to seek the advice of its counsel, Mr. Creech, on a legal matter, and to approve

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the minutes of a previous closed board meeting. Mr. Nelson asked for a motion to close the meeting. Mr. Estep moved to close the meeting and Ms. Solomon seconded the motion. The meeting was closed at 4:57 p.m. Mr. Nelson asked all meeting attendees, with the exception of the Board of Trustees and the AACPL Executive Leadership Team, to leave the meeting room until the end of the closed session when they will be invited to return.

Return to Open Meeting

The meeting guests returned at 6:10 p.m. at the invitation of the board. Mr. Nelson made a statement conveying the board's gratitude to the three speakers for their professional and thoughtful presentations. He indicated that, after a thorough discussion and upon counsel's opinion, the board does not have the legal authority to accept the request without legislation being passed that would permit them to do so. His statement was as follows:

“At tonight’s Library Board of Trustees’ meeting, staff members requested the library recognize AFSCME Council 3 as the collective bargaining representative for employees of the Anne Arundel County Public Library system. While we deeply respect our people and the desire of some to organize, our legal counsel has advised the board that we do not have the authority to accept any petition recognizing a union until enabling legislation is passed at the state level. We intend to follow that advice and the procedures the law requires.”

Over the last few years, multiple bills have been introduced in sessions of the Maryland General Assembly that would grant library employees statewide the right to form a union if they so choose. Despite support from library directors including our own Skip Auld, none of these bills have yet passed. We intend to collaborate with the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators and other stakeholders on legislation for the 2024 session that would create a thoughtful process for union representation and collective bargaining that will respect the right of employees to decide for themselves whether they wish to be represented by a union. We respect those rights.”

Mr. Nelson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Estep moved to close the meeting and Ms. Solomon seconded the motion. The meeting closed at 6:20 p.m.