

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the November 25, 2024 Meeting

Present: Jay Silcox, President; John Murphy, Vice President; Amy Sine, Treasurer; Erin Counihan, Secretary; Melissa Walters, Trustee; Robert Bell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Executive Secretary; Anya McCaig, Staff Member

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed. No changes were made.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Ms. Counihan moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Sine seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Ms. Sine reported that the balance of the Peoples Bank account was \$219,109.14, and the PNC Money Market was \$31,244.69, and the PNC Checking account was \$83,122.22.

Secretary

Ms. Counihan informed the trustees that a thank you note had been sent to the Friends of the Kent County Public Library for their support.

Friends of the Kent County Public Library

Mr. Bell reported that he, Mr. Silcox, and Ms. Durso had attended the Friends of the Kent County Public Library annual meeting, and that the library had been given an additional \$5,000 from the Friends.

Finance Committee

Ms. Sine reported that the Finance Committee had reviewed potential new service hours and an increase for the proposed Information Services Clerk from part-time to full-time. Mr. Bell presented a proposal for increased service hours, which would not lead to increased costs for wages or salaries. Mr. Bell stated that the Chestertown location would open at 9:30 am instead of 10:00 am, and remain open until 7:00 pm on Wednesdays, and 5:00 pm on Fridays. Mr. Bell noted that the schedules for the branches would remain unchanged, but that Rock Hall had requested more days open during the week.

Mr. Bell shared that the arrangement of the Rock Hall branch was going to be reviewed to see if there was a better arrangement for the existing furniture.

Ms. Sine noted that the current branch hours prevented working adults from being able to use their services.

Mr. Silcox asked Mr. Bell for clarification of the increase in service hours and not having an increase in wage expenses. Mr. Bell stated that there should not be an increase in the amount of time that staff are working to cover the increase in hours.

Senior Team Hours Reduction

Mr. Bell noted that the previous director had increased the hours for senior team from 37.5 per week to 40, and that he would like to reduce the hours of senior team back to 37.5 to bring them in line with all other staff. Mr. Bell noted that this change, if implemented on January 1, would lead to a savings of \$12,000 for the remainder of the fiscal year. Mr. Bell stated that senior team members were in agreement with the change, but that Mr. Walmsley had requested to remain at his current compensation. Mr. Silcox stated that this would be discussed further in closed session.

Mr. Bell stated that the Information Services Clerk position could be increased to full-time from part-time and that salaries and wages would be underspent for fiscal year 2025 by \$28,000. Mr. Walmsley stated that with the two changes, salaries and wages would be underspent by \$40,000 total. The trustees discussed salaries and wages.

Mr. Silcox moved to approve the change in service hours as presented by Mr. Bell. Ms. Counihan seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Mr. Bell stated that he was planning to implement the change to service hours in January.

Rock Hall Facility Committee

Mr. Silcox commented that he was unsure how much longer this committee would be needed. The trustees discussed the Rock Hall facility and long term planning.

Mr. Murphy arrived at 4:54 pm.

Safety Committee

Mr. Silcox stated that there was a discussion at a previous meeting where the intent was shared to hand off the items discussed to library staff and the executive director. Mr. Bell noted that there had been a request from staff to have representation from the library staff on the safety committee. The trustees discussed the scope of responsibility of the committee and how library staff could take over the items the committee had identified.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Bell shared that the Rock Hall Lions Club had expressed interest in contributing towards the Rock Hall library facility, and that one of the identified items was a bike rack, but that permission would be required from the landlord to install the bike rack. The trustees discussed the contribution and possible factors around it.

Mr. Bell informed the trustees that he had been certified as a librarian by the State of Maryland.

Mr. Bell brought up Maryland Library Association (MLA) memberships, noting that they had been discussed at a previous meeting. Mr. Bell stated that the organizational membership to MLA did not make financial sense, and that two staff members had expressed interest in joining MLA at this time. The trustees discussed individual memberships. Ms. Counihan stated support for professional organization memberships being paid by the library.

Mr. Bell stated that December 12 would be a staff training half day and that the branches and main library would be closing at 1:00 pm. Mr. Bell shared that the Chestertown Police Department would be presenting, and that lunch would be provided for staff.

Mr. Bell informed the trustees that the service numbers for the partial service days (Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day, Veterans Day, and Presidents' Day) had been reviewed. Mr. Bell noted that library visits on Presidents' Day were significantly less than the other two, and proposed that the library should be closed on Presidents' Day, open on Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day, and a determination on Veterans Day made at a later time. The trustees discussed the proposal, including compensation for staff, current holiday closures, and other impacts on staff. After further discussion, the item was tabled until a more thorough proposal could be presented.

Mr. Bell presented a volunteer policy and form. Ms. Counihan noted that there was a question on the application form about being over or under 18, and asked for clarification if people under 18 were eligible to volunteer. Mr. Bell stated that they were. Ms. Counihan noted that some students might need documentation for their service learning requirement and asked if the library would be able to provide that. Mr. Bell stated that the library could. Ms. Counihan noted that there was not a note about length of commitment on the form.

The trustees discussed the vetting of policies by the county attorney.

Ms. Counihan asked if there had been discussion of how applicants would be vetted. Mr. Bell answered that there had been, but not a thorough discussion yet.

Mr. Bell stated that the discussion of the executive secretary position would be deferred to the closed session.

Mr. Bell updated the trustees on the hiring process noting that there had been a number of applicants for the Director of Branch Services position, a search committee had been determined, and that applicants would be reviewed after the holiday.

Old Business

Chestertown Library, Inc. Building

Mr. Silcox noted that the county had not provided comments on the contract, and that the architect was warning that the project was at risk of being significantly behind. Mr. Silcox stated that community partners would need to be included later in the process.

New Business

No new business was brought before the trustees.

Closed Session

Mr. Silcox moved to enter closed session. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

The Board of Trustees entered closed session at 5:45 pm.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)
with Instructions**

Instructions to presiding officer: To meet in a closed session under the Act, the public body must first meet in open session, after providing proper notice. Make sure that the open session is attended by a member designated to receive open meetings training. If a designated member cannot attend, complete the Compliance Checklist.¹ If the public body has never designated a member for training, it must do so **before closing the session**.

Before closing the session, take two steps: (1) conduct a recorded vote on a motion to close; and (2) make a written "closing" statement. If the public body might return to open session afterwards, be sure to tell the public that. During the closed session, keep the discussion topics within the confines of the closing statement. After the closed session, the events of the closed session must be disclosed in the next open-session minutes.

The top part of this form is a model closing statement. **It has two sides. Before closing the open session, complete items 1 through 4 on this form or in any writing with the same information.** If someone pre-prepared the form for you, make sure it reflects the public body's own intended topics and reasons for closing the meeting. A member of the public may inspect the closing statement at the time of the closing and may object to the decision to close the meeting. Once the meeting is closed, the closing statement sets the agenda and may not be changed.

The bottom part of the form is a worksheet that provides a checklist of the disclosures that must be made in the next open-session minutes. The worksheet is not part of the closing statement.

1. Recorded vote to close the meeting: Date: 11/25/24 ; Time: 5:45 ; Location: 408 High St., Chestertown ;
Motion to close meeting made by: Jay Silcox ; Seconded by John Murphy ;
Members in favor: Erin Counihan, Amy Sine, Melissa Walters ; Opposed: None ;
Abstaining: None ; Absent: Rachel Durso, Peggy McKee

2. Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply):

This meeting will only be closed under the provision or provisions checked below, all from General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b):

- (1) "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2) "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3) "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4) "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5) "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6) "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7) "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8) "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9) "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10) "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11) "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying

¹ http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/OpenGov%20Documents/Openmeetings/COMPLIANCE_CHECKLIST%20.pdf

examination"; (12) "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13) "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14) "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process"; (15) "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to" (i) "security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology"; (ii) "network security information," such as information that is related to passwords, personal ID numbers, access codes, encryption, security devices, or vulnerability assessments or that a governmental entity collects or maintains to prevent, detect, or investigate criminal activity; or (iii) "deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

3. For each provision checked above, the corresponding topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session, in as much detail as possible without disclosing the information that may be discussed behind closed doors:

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic We expect to discuss these matters:	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic - We are closing the meeting to discuss this topic because:
§ 3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	STAFF COMPENSATION	DISCUSSION OF STAFF PERSONAL SALARY
§ 3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	STAFF HIRING	DISCUSSION OF STAFF HIRING
§ 3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TRUSTEE APPT.	DISCUSSION OF TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT RECOMENDATION TO COMMISSIONERS
§ 3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. This statement is made by , Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION THAT MUST BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN SESSION (§ 3-306)(c)(2) or § 3-104

For meetings closed under an exception, as disclosed above:

Time of closed session: _____ Place: _____

Purpose(s): _____

Members who voted to meet in closed session: _____

Persons attending closed session: _____

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session (see chart above): _____

Topics actually discussed: _____

Each action Taken: _____