

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Board Meeting Minutes of: February 23rd, 2026

Call to Order

Present:

Rachel Durso, President; **Clara Rankin**, Vice President; **John Murphy**, Treasurer; **Deborah Westerland**, Secretary; **Bruce Riedel**, Trustee; **Miles Campbell**, Trustee; **Andrea Boothby Rice**, Trustee; **Natalie Hagan**, Executive Director; **Annie Woodall**, Chief Public Officer; **Chris Walmsley**, Chief Operations Officer; **Tobi Brown**, Executive Secretary

Mr. Murphy called the meeting into order at 4:34pm. Mr. Murphy noted that there were two absent trustees at the start of the meeting. However, with a quorum present business could move forward. Ms. Durso joined the meeting at 4:43pm. Ms. Rankin joined the meeting at 5:00pm.

Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Mr. Murphy moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Westerland seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Review of Agenda

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

Public Comment

Mr. Murphy noted that there were no members of the public present.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Mr. Murphy reviewed the bank balances and noted there was \$106,890 in the PNC Checking account and \$167,157 in the Truist Money Market account.

Mr. Murphy noted that there was a drop in the interest rate on the Truist Money Market account in December. Mr. Murphy stated that he is pursuing an alternative account with a higher interest rate.

Secretary

There were no updates from the Secretary.

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Librarian's Report

Facilities: Chestertown Inc. Building Renovation

Ms. Hagan stated that the library submitted a letter of intent to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) grant. Ms. Hagan reiterated that the grant would fund a historical display in and around the Chestertown Library Inc. building and involve several local organizations to complete the project.

Facilities: Chestertown Branch Roof Grant Update

Ms. Hagan noted that Mr. Murphy and herself attended Library Legislative Day. Ms. Hagan noted that she had the opportunity to speak with several individuals at the event that provided insight into the struggles to secure funding for the roof. Ms. Hagan stated that she will be presenting the information gathered at the next County Commissioners meeting.

Ms. Hagan elaborated on the discussion that took place between herself and the delegates at Legislation Day.

Facilities: Miscellaneous

Ms. Hagan reviewed the success of the recent update provided to the Commissioners at their 2/4/26 meeting.

Ms. Hagan provided an overview of a recent incident reported at the Chestertown Branch.

Collections

Ms. Hagan stated that the library is looking to expand the Library of Things to include a borrowing collection that is exclusive to organizations. Ms. Hagan provided an overview of the procedural changes the library is planning to make to create this service.

Ms. Hagan recounted a recent update from ESRL regarding KCPL's digital library offerings.

Programming: Recent Programming

Ms. Hagan provided an overview of the successes achieved in this month's programs.

Ms. Hagan noted that KCPL hosted a Love Your Library Month initiative for February that aimed to showcase local authors and encourage them to connect with the library. Ms. Hagan stated that the initiative saw great success, with several local authors reaching out to donate copies of their books and participate in programs in the future.

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Ms. Hagan stated that she connected with Ms. Rachel Hopkins to discuss school registrations and library card sign-ups within the local schools.

Programming: Summer Reading Program

Ms. Hagan noted that Summer Reading Program planning is well underway. Ms. Hagan noted that this year PNC has offered \$10,000 for their Grow Up Great grant this year, as opposed to the \$6,500 the library applied for. Ms. Hagan stated that this extra funding will likely be spent on performers and programs that the library would not usually be able to fund. Ms. Hagan noted that the library will be applying for additional grants with the goal of funding additional programs for the summer.

Ms. Hagan noted that the new sponsorship page is up on the website. Ms. Hagan noted that a sponsorship handout has been created for the Summer Reading Program and noted that they were ready to be sent out and shared.

Ms. Hagan noted that a sponsorship partnership with the Garfield Center for the Arts is currently underway. Ms. Hagan explained that KCPL worked with the Garfield to host a year-long ad in the theater playbill; patrons that come into the library and mention seeing the ad received a commemorative bookmark from the library.

Staff – Strategic Planning Sessions

Ms. Hagan stated that the KCPL Senior Staff were hosting sessions to draft the Strategic Plan. Ms. Hagan stated that she aims to have the Trustees review a draft of the Strategic Plan at the March Board meeting.

Ms. Hagan reviewed other recent developments regarding staff.

Old Business

The Trustees did not discuss any old business.

New Business

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Draft

Ms. Hagan provided an overview of the provided FY27 Budget narrative, review, and draft. Ms. Hagan noted that the library will be asking for approximately 7.5% more from the

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county this year to assist with the cost of operations. Mr. Walmsley noted that the budget draft was relatively conservative and did not include unexpected funding requests.

The Trustees discussed the details of the FY27 Budget draft.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget draft as submitted. Ms. Durso seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Open Meetings Act Training

Mr. Murphy presented the Open Meetings Act training to the Trustees.

Policy Revisions Regarding the Meeting Room

Ms. Hagan noted that she would like to propose revisions to the Meeting Room policy and related policies at an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Hagan proposed waiving the meeting room use fee for nonprofit organizations to increase accessibility. Ms. Woodall explained that currently the Material and Service Fees policy charges \$25 for the first 4 hours of use and an additional \$10 for every hour after. Mr. Murphy asked if the cost to use the space was the same for nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Ms. Hagan answered yes. Ms. Woodall noted that the library did not charge nonprofits to use the meeting room spaces in years past. The Trustees reviewed the policy and discussed possible changes. Ms. Hagan stated that she will create a revision of the policy to be reviewed at a future meeting.

Adjournment

Ms. Durso moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm.