

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Board Meeting Minutes of: March 30th, 2026

Call to Order

Present:

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

Ms. Durso called the meeting to order at 4:31pm. Ms. Durso noted that there were three absent trustees at the start of the meeting. However, with a quorum present, business could move forward. Ms. Boothby Rice arrived to the meeting at 4:45pm. Mr. Riedel departed the meeting at 5:30pm.

Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Ms. Rankin proposed a grammatical correction to the minutes. The Trustees did not propose any further changes. Ms. Durso moved to approve the minutes with the proposed changes. Ms. Rankin 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

Ms. Durso noted that there were no members of the public present.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

The Treasurer (Mr. Murphy) was not present to provide an officer report. Ms. Durso informed the Trustees that Mr. Murphy was working with the Finance Committee to pursue alternative account options with higher interest rates.

Secretary

Ms. Westerland noted that the Executive Director Evaluation Committee was in the beginning stages of the evaluation process.

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Friends of the Kent County Public Library

Ms. Rankin noted that the Friends were preparing for the Spring Book sale. Ms. Durso asked when the sale date was. Ms. Woodall answered, May 15th – May 17th.

Reports of Committees

Executive Director Evaluation Committee

Ms. Durso noted that Ms. Hagan provided a revised format for the Executive Director Evaluation. Ms. Durso stated what once she reviews the draft, she will send it to the rest of the Committee for feedback.

Librarian's Report

Facilities: Chestertown Inc. Building Renovation

Ms. Hagan noted that the library submitted an application for the MHAA Grant and the Preservation Maryland Grant. Ms. Hagan informed the Trustees that the library will be hosting a relaunch event for the Chestertown Inc. Building on April 22nd. Ms. Hagan explained the details of the event, including the library's efforts to honor the history of the building and the family that owned it.

Facilities: Chestertown Branch Roof Grant Update

Ms. Hagan noted that she spoke with the Commissioners regarding the roof on March 3rd. Ms. Hagan stated that the Director of Public Works was also in attendance of the meeting and spoke to the MSLA's requirements for a metal roof. Ms. Hagan stated that Commissioners Ronald Fithian and John Price visited the library on March 20th to view the damage caused by the roof's disrepair. Ms. Hagan reviewed some of the discussions and developments that resulted from that visit.

Ms. Durso asked if there was an approximate timeframe for roof replacement at this point. Mr. Walmsley stated that there were several factors being considered that would impact the timing of the grant submission and scheduled work.

Facilities: Miscellaneous

Ms. Hagan noted that the County provided guidance on what replacement locks to purchase for the Chestertown Branch and stated that they will coordinate installation.

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Facilities: Policy Revisions

Ms. Hagan proposed revisions to the Meeting Room Policy, the Study Pod Policy, and the Fines & Fees Policy. Ms. Woodall provided an overview of the Policy Revision Report.

Ms. Woodall reviewed the revised draft of the Meeting Room Policy. Ms. Woodall explained that the changes focused on adapting the policy to accommodate the Chestertown Inc. Building as an additional meeting space and provide clarification around pre-existing parameters in the policy. Ms. Rankin proposed the addition of an indemnification clause to protect the library from liability caused by events hosted by outside organizations.

Ms. Woodall reviewed the revised draft of the Study Pod Policy. Ms. Woodall explained that the revision extended the maximum number of hours a patron may use the pod in a day from 2 hours to 4 hours. Ms. Woodall explained that this change was made based on usage trends and patron feedback.

Ms. Woodall reviewed the revised draft of the Materials & Services Fees Policy. Ms. Woodall explained that the revisions streamlined the cost structure of the fee system. Ms. Woodall noted that the fee for Meeting Room use will be a flat \$25 rate, with an exception for non-profit, governmental, and educational organizations, which will not be charged. Ms. Rankin proposed changing the word “unusable” to “unloanable” within the policy and indicate that these statuses should be determined at the library’s sole discretion.

The Trustees discussed the proposed revisions and the addition of protective language within the policies.

Ms. Durso moved to approve revisions to the Meeting Room, Study Pod, and Materials & Services Fees policies with the recommended amendments. Ms. Rankin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Collections

Ms. Hagan informed the Trustees that the library received approximately \$22,000 from the Foundation to contribute to collection development and item shelving. Ms. Hagan stated that the library is currently developing a plan to reorganize sections within the library in the near future.

Programming

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

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Ms. Hagan noted that the annual Seed Swap program saw a total attendance of 197 participants across all three branches. Ms. Hagan reviewed the recent developments around the planning of the Summer Reading Program.

Staff: Fiscal Year 2027 Holidays & Staff Training Days

Ms. Hagan reviewed the proposed days for the FY27 Staff Training days and Holidays. The Trustees discussed the closure dates for the FY27 holidays and observances.

Ms. Durso moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Staff Training days and Holidays as submitted. Ms. Rankin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Staff: Strategic Plan Draft

Ms. Hagan provided an overview of the current Strategic Plan draft. Ms. Durso asked if there was any plan to invite library partners and constituents to weigh in on the plan. Ms. Hagan stated she plans to invite insight on action items in the plan from stakeholders once the framework is complete.

The Trustees agreed to review the Strategic Plan and provide feedback at the next meeting.

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Presentation

Ms. Hagan noted that she was working extensively on the FY27 Budget presentation and aimed to present it at the April 14th County Commissioners Meeting. Ms. Hagan explained that she's been working with Ms. Woodall and Mr. Walmsley to create a comprehensive presentation to more accurately portray the happenings within the library.

Ms. Hagan noted that the library has applied for approximately \$83,000 in grants since the start of the calendar year. Ms. Hagan provided an overview of what grants the library has applied for and what their current statuses. Ms. Hagan noted that the grants applied for covered a variety of funding needs, including general programming, collection development, and the Summer Reading program. Ms. Durso asked how this number compares to the grants applied for in previous years. Mr. Walmsley stated that the amount tends to fluctuate from year to year and is heavily influenced by what, if any, capital projects were applied for at that time.

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Old Business

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Revisions

Ms. Hagan noted that the Finance Committee made revisions to the FY27 Budget draft and provided an overview of the adjustments. Mr. Walmsley stated that the totals of the revised budget draft didn't see significant change from the draft presented in February. Mr. Walmsley noted that the revisions to the budget were as follows:

- The removal of expected funding from the towns
- Increase in Fund Balance Usage
- Removal of the Health Surplus
- Increase in the Staff Benefits expenses
- Removal of Book Funding line from the General Fund

The Trustees reviewed the revisions to the FY27 Budget and discussed the reasoning for the adjustments.

New Business

The Trustees did not discuss any new business.

Adjournment

Ms. Durso moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Westerland seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:59pm.