



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

**Minutes**

**Thursday, March 21, 2024, 4:00 p.m.  
Linthicum Library  
400 Shipley Road, Linthicum, MD 21090**

Mr. Chris Nelson, presiding.

Trustees Attending:

Mr. Dylan Behler

Mr. Noah Comet

Ms. Laura Ellis

Ms. Ishani Gandhi

Mr. Tim Lemke

Ms. Simmona Simmons

Ms. JanElaine Smith

Ms. Sandra Solomon

Mr. Gerald Starr

Ms. Faith Steele

Ms. Lonni Summers

Mr. Jeremy York

Trustees Attending Virtually: Ms. Cathy Belcher and Ms. Damita McDonald.

Trustees Unable to Attend: Ms. Linda Gayle, Mr. James Estep, and Dr. Robert Sapp.

Support Staff Attending:

Mr. Skip Auld, Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Kate Boeree-Kline, Branch Manager, Linthicum Library

Ms. Donna Denny, Executive Assistant

Ms. Christine Feldmann, Director of Marketing and Communications

Mr. Cedric Grant, Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Rachael Myers, Branch Manager, Discoveries: The Library at the Mall

Mr. Rudy Rodela, Chief of Technology

Mr. Koven Roundtree, Chief of Human Resources

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

Support Staff Attending Virtually: Ms. Cathleen Sparrow, Executive Director, AACPL Foundation)

Meeting Guests: Staff Association Representatives: Ms. Sarah Bates and Ms. Laura Kellman.

Call to Order

Mr. Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

### Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Nelson asked for any additions or corrections to the meeting agenda. No additions or corrections were offered, and the agenda was adopted.

### Welcome to the Linthicum Library

Mr. Nelson and Mr. Auld welcomed the meeting participants.

Mr. Auld introduced two staff members representing the AACPL Staff Association: Ms. Sarah Bates from the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library; and Ms. Laura Kellman from the Severna Park Library.

Mr. Auld also introduced Ms. Kate Boeree-Kline, Branch Manager of the Linthicum Library. Ms. Boeree-Kline said she has been with AACPL for twelve years and in her current position for over two years. The branch serves many young families and staff enjoy providing kindergarten readiness services to them, as well as outreach services in the community. This year, they expect changes to the branch layout, so it may look different when the Trustees next visit. She invited everyone to explore the branch after the meeting.

### Donations to the Community Pantry at Discoveries

Mr. Nelson introduced Ms. Rachel Myers, Branch Manager at *Discoveries: The Library at the Mall*, to provide an update on the status of the Community Pantry housed at Discoveries.

Ms. Myers reported the *Community Pantry* is open the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Currently, donations of the following items are needed: diapers and pull-ups, wipes and diaper cream, unopened and unexpired baby formula, children's shampoo/soap and lotion, toothbrushes and toothpaste, pads and tampons, incontinence supplies, and nursing pads. The Pantry maintains wish lists on both Amazon and Target stores. Both sites allow the scheduling of recurring donations and links may be found on the AACPL website.

Ms. Myers added that last year they distributed over 85,000 diapers to 2,201 families, 60% of which are Spanish speakers. It is a great outreach to a population that we would like to see in the library in order to introduce them to our resources. The past three months have seen the largest distribution yet, with 1,591 packages of diapers (about 32,000 diapers) to recipients from thirty-five different zip codes so we are serving all of Anne Arundel County and surrounding counties as well. Last year, the pantry also gave out 1,634 packs of pads, tampons, and incontinence supplies, so it serves adult needs as well.

Ms. Myers noted that the pantry is donation-supported, and since funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds have ended, they depend on many organizations to help keep the

shelves stocked. The AACPL Foundation facilitates monetary donations on their website and collects supplies at some of their events, and all library locations have a drop box for donations. Support for the program is also provided by the Junior League, Chick Fil-A, Annapolis Westfield Mall, and area churches. Other community partners participate during pantry days to share their resource information including the Maryland Food Bank, Anne Arundel County Schools, and other helpful contacts for resources every month.

Ms. Myers said an important part of this library service, in addition to easing economic burdens, is our focus on getting children ready for school. On pantry distribution days, staff members can help parents sign their children up for kindergarten.

Ms. Myers added that AACPL will soon negotiate a new lease of additional space for programming and other enhancements at *Discoveries* this year. Ms. Myers thanked the Trustees for the opportunity to share an update on the *Community Pantry* and for their ongoing support.

#### Approval of Minutes

Mr. Nelson asked for additions or corrections to the minutes of the January 18, 2024, Board of Trustees meeting. There were no additions or corrections, and the minutes were approved.

#### Public Comment

There were no public comments.

#### Consent Agenda

Mr. Nelson asked if any of the consent agenda items, previously provided with approvals by board committees, needed to be removed from the consent agenda for additional discussion.

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between AACPL Foundation Board of Directors and AACPL Board of Trustees
- Hourly Staff Weather-Related Leave
- Fine-Free Staff Library Cards

Mr. Auld said he wished to clarify that the MOU between the AACPL Board of Trustees and the AACPL Foundation Board of Directors will be discussed again in April by both the Finance and Audit Committee and the Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee. They will consider substituting a multi-year review for an annual one and their decisions will be brought to the Board of Trustees meeting on May 16, 2024. The Foundation Board of Directors will also discuss the MOU's review schedule at their meeting on May 29, 2024.

Mr. Nelson asked for a vote on the consent agenda. A vote was taken, and the item on the consent agenda were approved.

Reports of Officers and Liaisons

*The Chair* - Mr. Nelson said he is energized by visiting different library branches for board meetings and appreciates seeing libraries in action. Although he has not yet been to every branch, he looks forward to completing the full circuit. He noted that the annual board meeting on May 16, 2024, will be among the first opportunities to experience the new Riviera Beach Library.

Mr. Nelson reported that he joined Mr. Auld and Mr. Grant for the AACPL FY 2025 Budget Request presentation to the County Executive. They discussed the importance of fully funding market rate salary adjustments for staff and reviewed items on the Supplemental Budget Request.

Mr. Nelson noted that the *Library Workers Empowerment Act* has moved from the Maryland House to the Senate and will likely pass. However, it will not pass without some concern from the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA), because amendments to portions of the bill were not included as they had hoped.

*The Treasurer* - Ms. Belcher reported that on March 14, the Executive Leadership team met with the County Executive and his budget team to review our operating and supplemental requests for FY25. We highlighted the importance of implementing market rate adjustments for our staff and adding two collections positions to assist in managing the expanding library of books and materials. The County Executive is scheduled to present the budget to the County Council on May 1, 2024.

Ms. Belcher also reported that for the February 2023 Financial Report, we are expected to receive and spend approximately 67% of our budgeted revenues and expenditures, respectively. To date, we have received 67% of total revenues with no major variances noted. Also, we have spent 64% of the budgeted expenditures for fiscal year 2024. The total expenditure projections are expected to be slightly below budget at year end due to the Personnel Services line item. No other major variances are noted.

There were no questions for Ms. Belcher and Mr. Nelson thanked her for her report.

*The Chief Executive Officer & Executive Leadership Team* - Mr. Auld reported that AACPL worked in partnership with the AACO Department of Health for *Health on the Go*, a program which has installed six vending machines in areas of greatest need, as evidenced by drug overdose rates in the county. Items in the vending machines are free, and they dispense Naloxone, COVID-19 tests, KN95 masks, and fentanyl test strips. The machines were obtained by a grant received by the Department of Health, which chose the locations for placement. They may be found at Brooklyn Park and the Deale Libraries, the Jennifer Road Detention Center, Severn Center, and the Ordnance Road Correctional Center.

*Library Workers Empowerment Act* - Mr. Auld confirmed that requested amendments to *the Library Workers Empowerment Act* advocated for by the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA) were not included in the final bill. Mr. Auld added that it is likely AACPL will have a union sometime in the summer and he looks forward to finding positive ways to work with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

*Freedom to Read Act* - Mr. Auld reported that Anne Arundel County Delegate Dana Jones sponsored the *Freedom to Read Act*. This historic legislation has passed both houses and looks likely to be signed into law.

The purpose of the legislation is stated as follows: *establishing a State policy that local school systems operate their school library media programs consistent with certain standards; requiring each local school system to develop a policy and procedures to review objections to materials in a school library media program; prohibiting a county board of education from dismissing, demoting, suspending, disciplining, reassigning, transferring, or otherwise retaliating against certain school library media program personnel for performing their job duties consistent with certain standards.*

The *Freedom to Read Act* also requires the State Librarian to set standards to do what most library systems are already doing, including: have a collection development policy; a process for challenging books; and a system for review of those challenges.

Mr. Auld noted that there have always been challenges to the ideals found in the new legislation. He noted that Carroll County's school system had fifty-eight books challenged and pulled from school libraries in August 2023 by Moms for Liberty.

Mr. Auld pointed out that page two of the meeting agenda listed notable dates, including *National Library Worker's Day* on April 9, 2024.

Mr. Auld confirmed that for the presentation of our FY 2025 Budget Request to the County Executive, we highlighted the importance of fully implementing market rate salary adjustments for AACPL staff. The FY 2025 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is unknown, but it will add to the total of \$1.4 million needed for this purpose. Among the items on our supplemental budget request, we have requested eleven new positions, including two positions in Materials Management to assist with our expanding volume of materials. On May 1, 2024, the County Executive presents the FY 2025 Budget to the County Council.

Mr. Grant added that the budget process is lengthy, and we are still in the preliminary stages, but we currently have approximately 76% of what is needed to implement the market rate salary adjustments. Mr. Auld made our priorities clear at our presentation. The Budget Office continues their deliberations and Mr. Grant continues to work closely with our budget analyst. Mr. Grant noted that we will also have an opportunity to request additional funds from the County Council, which last year provided an additional \$500,000 toward the market rate adjustments.

*Liaisons to the Foundation Board* - Ms. McDonald reported that at their meeting on March 19, 2024, the Foundation Board of Directors unanimously approved the following:

*Updated Investment Policy* - Additional funding, up to \$18,000, for the Busch Annapolis Library Children's area for musical instruments and benches. This brings the total of special project funding to \$96,000 for items not covered in the library budget. They also approved funding to send Foundation Board Members to the International Public Library Fundraising Conference to be held in Washington, DC in June.

*Fundraising Event - Bay Breezes & Books* to celebrate the grand opening of Riviera Beach, Sunday, April 28, 2024, 3-5 p.m. This celebration will feature great food, drinks, tastes of the Bay, and the Oyster Boys band! Tickets go on sale Friday, March 22, 2024, and are \$75. We hope that all Trustees will attend this celebration and bring their friends! Tickets are available on the Foundation's website.

*Library Giving Week* - April 1-5 is an annual fundraising campaign that celebrates libraries across the country. Over the last three years the Foundation has received over \$100,000 in community donations to support Summer @ Your Library and other literacy programs. In 2023, our community donated over \$30,000 in just one day! This year we have expanded the day to entire week to give everyone the opportunity to support the library. Donation details are available on the Foundation's website.

Ms. Sparrow encouraged all to share information about Library Giving Week with those they know.

Mr. Nelson thanked all who advocated for AACPL's FY 2025 funding at recent Budget Town Hall Meetings.

Mr. Rodela reported that the new library management system migration process will be complete on Monday April 8, 2024. All branch libraries will be closed that weekend, April 6 & 7, and our catalog will be offline. There is no other way to accomplish this change. Once the change is complete, customers will see minor changes, but on the staff side of the screen, things will look new, and staff are pleased with the changes.

Ms. Feldmann announced that the Trustees should have already received an invitation to the ribbon cutting for the Grand Opening of the Riviera Beach Library on Thursday, April 25 at 11:00 a.m. There will also be a reception starting at 10:30 a.m., so please RSVP so we know how many people to expect. Also, there will be giveaways for the community on Friday and Saturday.

Ms. Feldman displayed a limited-edition Italian silk scarf created by a local artist and featuring the names of banned books. The scarf is available through our [Bonfire shop](#) along with regular AACPL logo gear in a variety of apparel types. For *Library Giving Week*, we have special *Literacy and Justice for All* shirts, bags, and coffee mugs in a variety of colors. Proceeds benefit the library.

Mr. Auld thanked staff and leadership volunteers for their advocacy at the recent Budget Town Hall meetings or communicating with their elected officials. Our advocates were out in force this year and quite valuable to our ongoing support.

### Reports from Standing Committees

*Finance and Audit Committee Report* - Ms. Belcher reported that the main thing they discussed at their last meeting on February 15, 2024, was the name for the new library to be built in Millersville and agreed on the *Millersville Veterans Memorial Library*. They referred this name suggestion on to the Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee.

*Governance, Strategy, and Organization Committee* - Mr. Lemke reported that at their committee meeting on February 15, 2024, they discussed and approved cancelling the “Staff Library Card Policy.” This is because AACPL no longer charges fines, making the purpose of the card moot. Staff have requested cancelling this policy so that the staff library card type can be removed from the library management software in preparation for its migration to the new platform.

Mr. Lemke said the committee also reviewed the procedure for appointing the next student board member. He added that interviews for a new student board member will take place over the next few weeks, and the board will elect a new student Trustee at the annual meeting on May 18, 2024. Ms. Feldmann added that there are eleven applicants.

*Human Resources and Diversity Committee* - Ms. Solomon reported that the committee reviewed the *Hourly Staff Weather-Related Leave Policy* in detail and moved to approve the change. At the time, weather-related leave for hourly employees was credited only when they began a shift and were not able to work their full shift due to a weather closure. Hourly employees who were scheduled to work, but who could not work any part of their shift due to a weather closure, did not receive weather-related leave. With the updated policy, weather-related leave will be credited to all staff who are not able to work their scheduled shifts due to weather closures. Mr. Roundtree added that the policy has no budgetary impact on the library and will allow Part-time Hires and Pages to be paid for time they were scheduled to work.

### Adjournment

Mr. Nelson said there was no further business on the agenda and asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.