

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Somerset County Library System promotes learning by providing materials, services, and access to information that enrich our community and excite the imagination.*

*Explore · Learn · Dream · Become*

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## **BOARD OF SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

### **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 4:00pm**

**Princess Anne Library & Zoom**

Present: Ann Smith, President; Beth Holmes-Mayson, Vice President; Tim Spillane, Treasurer; Board Members: Lynn Lang, Karen Riggin, Janet Smith, Jennifer Timmons; Ed Goyda, Library Director; Jaime Bradshaw, Assistant Director; Danielle Craige, Princess Anne Library Services Manager; Caprice Harris, Crisfield Library Services Manager; Karen Earp, Children's Services Coordinator; Nora Hoffman, Bookkeeper/Admin. Assistant

### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

President Ann Smith called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Approve minutes from the regular meeting of December 13, 2023  
Approve financial reports for the period from July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023  
Approve financial reports for the period from July 1, 2023 – January 31, 2024

President Smith asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Motion was made by Tim Spillane, seconded by Karen Riggin, and unanimously approved.

### **BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS**

**Crisfield:** Presented by Caprice Harris, Library Services Manager

During the month of December, staff members were excited about the upcoming holiday season. We participated in the annual Crisfield Christmas Parade. Despite the on and off rain throughout the day, we were able to construct our float and enjoy the parade. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, staff spent their time decorating the library for the holiday season. We also participated in Staff Spirit Week where we spread holiday cheer with our Christmas hats and sweaters and cozy pajamas. This was photographed daily and placed on the Library's Facebook page. In January, staff displayed information on scam prevention to bring awareness to patrons. We also started the annual weeding process. Various decorations and in-house displays for Christmas, Winter Vibes, New Year's Day, and MLK Day were placed in the Adult, Teen, and Children's sections.

Staff Development: In December & January, staff participated in various training courses on topics such as Customer Behavior, Mental Health, and Leadership Training.

Community Partnerships: In December, we partnered with the City of Crisfield as a distribution center to give out 200 laptops to eligible households living in Crisfield on a first-come, first-served basis. This was also featured on WBOC and WMDT. We still have a Navigator provided by the Lower Shore Health Alliance Program coming weekly to provide the public with insurance assistance. The Somerset County Health Department continues to provide free COVID-19 test kits for the community.

**Princess Anne:** Presented by Danielle Craige, Library Services Manager

In December, staff enjoyed participating in Spirit Week, which was extended this year so that all staff could join in on the fun. Our CD collection was deleted and added to our free shelf, adding plenty of shelving space for our DVD collection. Staff moved non-fiction DVDs and non-fiction audiobooks to the shelves that were vacant, allowing our DVD collection to be shifted. Gabe and Michele had begun the annual weeding process in January. DVDs would not be included this year due to the space we gained from removing CDs from our collection. Only the Children's collections were left to weed. Staff continued to do well in their daily shelf-reading assignments as well as keeping up with daily and weekly tasks.

**Community Partnerships:** The Health Department continued to stock the branch with COVID tests on a weekly basis. We recently received a large donation of food for the Food Pantry from the Health Department as well.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Presented by: Ed Goyda, Director; Jaime Bradshaw, Assistant Director; Karen Earp, Children's Services Coordinator

### **Core Services**

**Bed Bugs:** The Crisfield branch detected live bed bugs on returned materials multiple times in late December / early January. Returned items were heat treated, and the branch was bug bombed prior to the Christmas holiday.

In an abundance of caution, Bennett inspected both branches and had alerts in some areas. Items were bagged and treated and surfaces were cleaned.

We contracted Bennett to conduct on-going biannual inspections.

**DVDs:** DVD circulation dropped precipitously through the fall. While we had some very high month-to-month comparisons over the summer, three out of four of the main collections were more than 25% below their prior year comparison for the past four months, and the remaining one slipped onto the negative side of the line in November.

**Programs:** Adult program attendance rapidly increased across both branches each month.

- December 2021 & January 2022: 229 attendees
- December 2022 & January 2023: 323 attendees
- December 2023 & January 2024: 456 attendees

### **Community Outreach**

**Manokin Manor:** We reconvened our visits with Manokin Manor in December after a few months break due to their COVID cases. We continued our visits to the Developmental Center, Manokin Manor, and Tawes Nursing Home, each monthly.

**Outreach Events:** A list of community outreach events was provided.

### **Community Partnership**

**Adult Library Learners:** Due to increasing program attendance by groups such as the Developmental Center and two new groups from Salisbury, we introduced Adult Library Learners (ALL) Visits to the Crisfield Library beginning in March. We invited these groups to visit the library for different activities each month, focused on adults of all abilities.

**Laptop Grants:** We received a third batch of laptops that was distributed the week before Christmas. We also received the \$3,000 from the City as the administrative fee on the first two rounds.

The third distribution event received coverage from WBOC and WMDT.

**Lower Shore Autism Community Listening Sessions:** We hosted listening sessions for the Lower Shore Autism Community on February 10 and 17.

**Lower Shore Health Insurance Alliance Program:** We partnered with the Lower Shore Health Insurance Alliance Program (LSHIAP) by advertising their open enrollment events, which were hosted at the Crisfield & Princess Anne Libraries. The Princess Anne event was very popular with 29 attendees.

**Princess Anne Art Gallery:** We worked with the Arts Council to schedule rotating, monthly exhibits in the Princess Anne meeting room.

**Resource Fair:** We discussed hosting a Spring Fling Resource Fair with LSHIAP & other local partners. We were in the very early stages of planning but were hoping to establish a date in May, with a central location to both branches.

## **Internal Development**

**E-rate:** Starlink had now filed to be a recognized service provider, allowing us to submit an E-rate request to be reimbursed for 70% of the Ewell Library's Internet service.

**Maryland Library Association Conference:** Registration information for the MLA conference, May 8 - 10, was (mostly) out. Most staff would attend.

Caprice, Dani, and Jaime would present "Unlocking the Secrets of Customer Service Basics" at this year's virtual conference in April. At the in-person conference, Karen would present "All Systems Go with Sphero," and Lorna, with Thomas Voss from Garrett, would present "Zine-ovation! Empowering Voices through DIY Publishing of Zines."

**New PCs:** Nora's desktop and Jaime's laptop were replaced. We were waiting on ESRL to take new PCs over to Ewell.

**People Counters:** People counters in Crisfield and Princess Anne were replaced, with the new counters having app functionality to store and retrieve data.

**Server Maintenance:** The new hardware in the Princess Anne server crashed on February 2 and was replaced after being down for most of the day.

**Translation:** We acquired one Pocketalk translation device for testing.

**Website:** ESRL was in the process of upgrading the software on the webserver. We would have to scrub through our website code to make sure everything was compatible.

**Professional Development:** A list of professional development was provided.

## **Youth Services**

**Programs:** The Mother Goose on the Loose partner program with the Judy Center continued every Wednesday in Crisfield, with regular attendance and new attendees continuing to join. Storytime continued with two sessions each week in Princess Anne and one in Crisfield, with regular but low attendance.

Homeschool STEM had steady participation at both branches. Recent and upcoming themes were Science Month (February), Robot Month (March), and Messy Month (April).

Creation Station (after school) had regular participation in Princess Anne and none in Crisfield.

**Outreach:** Karen continued to go to Crisfield Head Start and Kidz in His Hands, and she was scheduling Head Start field trips in March.

Karen also attended the county-wide Community Baby Shower on March 22, with a selection of giveaway books and information about the library's early literacy programs, and the School Readiness Fair on April 12 at the Intermediate School, with a puppet craft and teaching parents ways to encourage their children to act out stories.

**Partnerships & Training:** Karen wrote the ALSC Children and Technology blog post for March: "Creating and Implementing STEAM for Homeschoolers." Her time with the Diverse Book Finder Community of Practice ended in December, although she was still involved with cleaning up records created during her tenure.

SELAC (Somerset Early Learning Advocacy Council) received an early literacy grant. As part of the grant, we redesigned the early learning bins that the Judy Center circulated to childcare providers.

## **Governance**

### **Executive Session**

President Smith asked for a motion to enter executive session at 4:30pm. The motion was made by Karen Riffin, seconded by Janet Smith, and roll call was taken.

**Advisory - Sandy Howard, Library Assistant:** Sandy had requested to stop working regular hours but remain on as an emergency on-call staff person. We could reassign her regular hours without hiring and had done so. Given that Rose and Sandy had both suggested this and we had no formal policy, changes would be recommended for the Employee Handbook below.

President Smith asked for a motion to accept the change to Sandy Howard's status from active to substitute. The motion was made by Janet Smith, seconded by Beth Holmes-Mayson, and unanimously approved.

President Smith asked for a motion to exit executive session at 4:33pm. The motion was made by Karen Riffin, seconded by Ann Smith, and roll call was taken.

**Advisory - Fisher Estate:** Fisher Estate funds had been deposited with the Community Foundation.

**Advisory - Legislative:** Ed was in Annapolis for Library Legislative Day on February 13. The legislature was moving on funding for the State Library Resource Center (SLRC), a Collective Bargaining bill, Freedom to Read bill, and two administrative bills (fixing language in the Fine-free and Regional Libraries laws.)

We filed a letter of support in favor of SLRC's funding, as well as an Open Captioning Movie Bill, at the request of a deaf patron.

**Confirmation of Vote - Alcohol in Meeting Room:** We had needed a confirmation of the email vote on February 1 allowing alcohol in the meeting room for a bridal shower.

President Smith asked for a motion to confirm the email vote. The motion was made by Tim Spillane, seconded by Jennifer Timmons, and unanimously approved.

**Employee Handbook:** We had gone through the Employee Handbook comprehensively in a comparison to the County's Employee Handbook because places where we were out of step with the County continued to occasionally creep up. Leaving some word-smithing aside, proposed changes to the Handbook, and whether they reflected the County or updates to reflect current operations were:

**2.3 Chain of Command (Update):** Added Assistant Director to Chain of Command.

**2.6 Harassment/Sexual Harassment (Update):** Added that complaints about the Director should go to the Board.

**2.7 Hostile Work Environment (County):** Incorporated the County's entire section on Hostile Work Environments.

**2.8 Pregnancy Discrimination (County):** Incorporated the County's entire section on Maryland law on pregnancy discrimination.

**2.9 Employee Medical Information (County):** Incorporated the section of the County's "Communicable Diseases Policy" dealing with supervisors not disclosing employee medical information.

**2.12 Emergency Closings (Update):** Clarified that administrative leave granted as part of an emergency closing supersedes vacation or sick leave.

**3.1 Definitions of Employment Status (Update):** Created designated substitute class of non-regularly scheduled employees. Added 4% wage premium in lieu of accumulating vacation or sick leave for someone who has no regular schedule to apply it against.

**3.2 Hours of Work (Update):** The existing text allowed the Library to assign full-time staff to the other mainland branch once per week and part-time staff once per month. There had been no part-time cross-branch shifts since before COVID, and some full-timers had been exceeding the once per week threshold, either for programming or the employee's convenience (e.g., flipping a Fruitland resident / Crisfield staff member and a Westover resident / Princess Anne staff member).

**3.4 Probation Period (County):** Changed probationary period from six months to one year. Added six-month review.

**3.4 Probation Period (Update):** Documented that employees are given keys and access codes to the buildings at the (now midway) six-month point.

**3.8 Performance Evaluation (County):** Added the six-month and one-year probationary reviews.

**3.8 Performance Evaluation (Update):** Documented that Director reviews performance appraisals before discussion with employees.

**3.15 Staff Development (Update):** Removed the floating holiday from Staff Day / Columbus Day.

**4.3 Staff Meetings (Update):** Changed bi-monthly staff meetings to six staff meetings per year. (The May MLA Conference counts; the December Christmas party does not.)

**4.5 Internet Use (County):** Personal mail and email use remained in 4.5. The Internet Use section had been broadened to computers in general and moved in its entirety to 7.4 Library Equipment.

**5.4 Compensatory Time (County):** Changed from expiring at the end of the fiscal year to expiring after 90 days.

**6.3 Light Duty (County):** Added as an alternative to Worker's Compensation.

**6.4 Holidays (Update):** Struck Columbus Day and the related floating holiday.

**6.6 Vacation Leave (County):** Changed threshold to a flat 500 hours rather than being dependent on years of service.

**6.7 Sick Leave (County):** Incorporated the section of the County's "Communicable Diseases Policy" dealing with supervisors being able to exclude employees with communicable diseases from the workplace.

**6.8 Family and Medical Leave (County):** Incorporated the County's appendix on FMLA leave.

**6.9 Parenthood Leave (County)\*:** Our policy was one-month paid leave; the County's was one-month unpaid leave. However, the section was going to be made irrelevant when the benefits from the State's mandated Family and Medical Leave Insurance took effect in January 2026 and was left unchanged.

**6.13 Bereavement Leave (County):** Separated immediate and non-immediate family.

**6.15 Military Leave (County):** Clarified that public agencies are responsible for 15 days of paid leave for National Guard or Reserves duty.

**6.18 Mileage Reimbursement (Update):** Struck to move the entire Travel Policy from the Policy Manual to the Employee Handbook as Section 8.

**6.19 Travel Reimbursement (Update):** Struck to move the entire Travel Policy from the Policy Manual to the Employee Handbook as Section 8.

**7.3 Smoking (County):** Added other forms of tobacco.

**7.4 Library Equipment (County):** Expanded list of prohibited types of activities.

**7.4 Library Equipment (Update):** Clarified that staff laptops are Library property. Granted standing permission to keep laptops in personal possession.

**7.8 Children in the Workplace (County):** Incorporated the County's entire section on (employees') children in the workplace.

**8 Travel (Update):** Moved entire Travel Policy from Policy Manual, incorporating Vehicle Use Policy from Policy Manual and struck that as a standalone policy.

**8.2 Approved Travel (Update):** Same as 3.2 regarding cross-branch shifts.

**9.2 Progressive Corrective Action (County):** Added counseling stage before verbal warning.

**9.2 Progressive Corrective Action (Update):** Changed verbal and written “warnings” to “corrections.”

**10.1 Grievance Procedures (County):** Added or modified timeframes in each step to match the County. (Including discarding that grievances must be filed immediately - a similar issue to what we saw when revising the Complaints Resolution policy.) Changed onus for final step (taking the issue to the Board) from the Director to the grievant.

**10.1 Grievance Procedures (Update):** Added that grievances regarding the Director go directly to the Board.

President Smith asked for a motion to accept the employee handbook updates/changes. The motion was made by Karen Riffin, seconded by Beth Holmes-Mayson, and unanimously approved.

**Holiday Schedule - Amendment:** Per the Employee Handbook (both ours and the County’s), Election Day was a holiday during the year of a Presidential election, and it had been omitted from the calendar created in October. We needed to amend.

President Smith asked for a motion to accept the holiday schedule change. The motion was made by Janet Smith, seconded by Lynn Lang, and unanimously approved.

**Strategic Planning:** Revisions to vision, mission, core values, and situational analyses were presented. The finalized version would be completed by April.

President Smith made a motion to accept the strategic planning revisions, seconded by Lynn Lang, and unanimously approved.

## **Adjournment**

President Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tim Spillane and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 5:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nora Hoffman  
Somerset County Library  
Bookkeeper/Admin. Assistant