

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Special Board Meeting Minutes of: July 11th, 2025

Call to Order

Present:

Rachel Durso, President; **Melissa Walters**, Vice President; **John Murphy**, Treasurer; **Erin Counihan**, Secretary; **Bruce Riedel**, Trustee; **Robert Bell**, Executive Director; **Chris Walmsley**, Director of Office Administration; **Tobi Brown**, Executive Secretary

Ms. Durso called the meeting to order at 9:59am. Ms. Durso noted that there were two absent trustees. With a quorum present, business could move forward.

Old Business

Security Updates

Mr. Bell noted that Chief Dixon, a member of staff, and himself met with a patron to discuss the end of their trespass. Mr. Bell stated that due to ongoing concerns surrounding this patron, the trespass was extended by an additional 6 months. Mr. Bell added that after the end of this extension, the library will reevaluate their decision but are considering a permanent ban. Ms. Durso asked if the library has a rule that will expedite the permanent ban if appropriate. Mr. Bell answered yes and explained that if the patron purposefully violates the trespass, it will lead to an expedited permanent ban. Mr. Bell reviewed the events that led to the patron's ban.

Master Gardener Request to use Meeting Room for Fundraiser

Mr. Bell recalled the Trustee's previous discussion about the Master Gardener's request to host a fundraiser at the library. Mr. Bell explained that they requested to use the patio of the Chestertown branch on a Saturday during operating hours. Mr. Bell added that the Master Gardners intended to perform monetary transactions during the event.

Ms. Durso noted that allowing this event to take place would contradict similar rules put in place by the Meeting Room policy. Ms. Counihan noted that the patio was not referenced in the Meeting Room policy and is not currently addressed in other policies. Mr. Walmsley stated that, to his recollection, the patio has not been used by another organization in this manner and likely resulted in its exclusion from the policy. Mr. Murphy recommended adding the Chestertown patio as a library space in the Meeting Room Policy. Mr. Bell added that he felt the Chestertown Library, Inc. Building should be added as well.

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The trustees discussed how to address the Master Gardeners' request and revise the current policies to address future requests.

Ms. Durso moved to refuse the Master Gardeners' request to host a fundraiser on library property. Ms. Counihan seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Ms. Counihan proposed the revision of the Meeting Room Policy to include additional library spaces. The trustees agreed with this suggestion.

New Business

Changes to Charges for ILL / OCLC Checkouts

Ms. Durso explained that currently KCPL uses the OCLC system to order library items from out-of-state. Ms. Durso noted that the library only orders from OCLC if the item is not available through KCPL's system or Inter Library Loan. Ms. Durso added that OCLC requests accrue costs that the library has to budget for.

Mr. Walmsley noted that KCPL saw a substantial spike in OCLC requests at the beginning of FY2025, causing the total cost to exceed the budgeted funds for OCLC expenses. Mr. Walmsley continued that in response to this uptick, KCPL implemented a policy that charges a \$5.00 fee to the patron for OCLC requests after the total number of patron requests has exceeded 100. Mr. Walmsley proposed the removal of these 100 free requests to more adequately cover the increased cost of OCLC's. Ms. Durso stated the current policy felt arbitrary, noting that patrons have no way of knowing how many requests were placed before theirs.

Ms. Counihan asked if patrons are notified that their OCLC request costs them a fee. Mr. Walmsley answered yes and stated that in order to make an OCLC request, patrons are required to sign a request form acknowledging this account charge. Mr. Walmsley noted that the fee is only applied if the request is filled. The Trustees went on to discuss details about the OCLC request process.

Ms. Walters moved to revise the Materials and Service Fees Policy to apply a \$5.00 fee to *all* OCLC requests that are successfully filled. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

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Old Business (Continued)

KCPL FY2026 Budget Update

Mr. Bell stated that the allocation proposed by the County for FY2026 had not taken into account the increase in staffing costs caused by the filling of vacant positions in FY2025. Mr. Bell noted that the library only filled existing positions in FY2025 and did not create any new positions. Mr. Walmsley added that the initial allocation from the County was based off outdated information from the FY2025 budget. Mr. Bell stated that with the approved allocation, the library was looking at roughly a \$46,000 shortfall for FY2026.

Mr. Murphy recounted discussions about the KCPL FY2026 from a recent County Commissioners Meeting. Mr. Murphy stated that the County urged the library to tighten the budget for FY2026 and for subsequent years due to funding concerns. Ms. Durso asked if the library is required to file paperwork with the county when hiring a new employee. Mr. Walmsley answered no and stated that hiring information has not been requested by the County. The Trustees went on to discuss recent communications with the County and how to approach communications in the future.

Ms. Durso asked the trustees how they wished to address the shortfall in the FY2026 budget and listed several options. The Trustees discussed the shortfall in the FY2026 budget and possible solutions.

Closed Session

Ms. Durso moved to close the meeting. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting went into closed session at 10:40pm.

Adjournment

The closed session ended at 11:10am. No further business was brought before the trustees.

Ms. Durso moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:11am.

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

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. **Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: 7/11/25; Time: 1040; Location: WESTTOWN BRANCH MEETING ROOM;
Motion to close meeting made by: RACHEL DUNSO Seconded by PAUCE REIDEL;
Members in favor: ERIC LOUWISIAN, MELISSA WATERS, PAUCE REIDEL, JOHN MURPHY, RACHEL DUNSO; Opposed: NONE;
Abstaining: NONE; Absent: CLARA PARKIN, DEBOIR WESTBROOK.

2. **Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(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 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 . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	Discussion of compensation in FY 26	Compensation under various scenarios for different employees
§3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	Specific compensation levels for specific employees	We discussed specific individual's hourly/yearly wages
§3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		
§3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		
§3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. This statement is made by RACHEL M. DUNN, Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

- For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:

Time of closed session: DATE 10:40

Place: Meeting Room (Chesham Library)

Purpose(s): Discuss compensation levels for library staff in FY 26

Members who voted to meet in closed session: John Murphy, Rachel Dunn, Bruce Riedel, Melissa Walker

Persons attending closed session: All of above Chris Walmsley & Robert Ball for part of the closed session

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: 1 & 2

Topics actually discussed: Compensation levels & how they will be funded

Actions taken: Board voted to approve 5% raise for all staff excluding the Executive Director

Each recorded vote: All voted in favor

- For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104): Time: _____

Place: _____

Persons present: _____

Subjects discussed: _____