

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Finance Committee

Minutes of the August 19, 2025 Meeting

Present: John Murphy, Treasurer; Rachel Durso, Trustee; Melissa Walters, Trustee; Robert Bell, Executive Director; Chris Walmsley, Director of Office Administration

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.

The minutes of the previous meeting we reviewed. Ms. Durso moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Walters seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Maryland Blueprint Integration

Mr. Walmsley reviewed a presentation from Mr. Tom Porter, the Coordinator for Accountability and Career and Technical Education for Kent County Public Schools. Mr. Walmsley noted that the presentation had occurred around a year prior.

Mr. Murphy noted that libraries were listed as an official partner. The committee discussed coordination with the schools and representation in the planning of the implementation of the Blueprint. The committee identified areas of opportunity within the plan including career education, and pre-k school readiness.

Ms. Walters stated that she was unsure if there was funding for after students graduated and services related to career education.

Mr. Murphy asked if Ms. Walters would be willing to be a liaison for the trustees and the Library to the Blueprint planning committee. Ms. Walters agreed.

The committee discussed current resources that could be used to support the goals of the Blueprint such as the study pod, job resources, and creator kits.

Mr. Murphy noted that there would be potential tax increases related to the funding requirements of the Blueprint, which may impact the ability of the library to get increases in funding through the county.

Executive Secretary Stipend

Mr. Bell noted that the executive secretary duties had been discussed as a part of hiring a new information services clerk, but that the bylaws of the library trustees identified a stipend for the duties of the executive secretary.

Ms. Durso asked if the current executive secretary was working beyond their regularly scheduled hours to perform the duties of the executive secretary. Mr. Bell stated that they were not.

The committee discussed when the stipend was added to the bylaws and if it should be continued. Mr. Murphy noted that this would need to be discussed by the full board of trustees.

The committee agreed that the bylaws should be revised to remove the term limit and stipend for the executive secretary.

Mr. Walmsley noted that changes to the bylaws had to be presented four weeks before a vote could be made.

CollectionHQ Cost

Mr. Bell informed the committee that funding for CollectionHQ had been ended at the regional level. Mr. Bell noted that CollectionHQ had been used to identify areas that could be further developed or weaknesses in representation within the materials purchased. Mr. Bell stated that the quoted cost of CollectionHQ was \$12,000 annually. Mr. Bell said that he would revisit renewing CollectionHQ for the next fiscal year as alternatives were more expensive, and there were not any free options that provided a comparable service.

Library Staffing

Mr. Bell informed the committee that a letter of resignation had been received from the Director of Branch Services. Mr. Bell stated that he would like to fill the position, but wanted to discuss with the committee and trustees due to concerns about future funding.

Mr. Murphy said that it would be best not to rehire the position due to the recent interactions with the commissioners and concerns over future fiscal year funding. Mr. Murphy suggested that duties could be reassigned to provide full coverage.

Ms. Durso seconded Mr. Murphy's comments, noting that while the current Director of Branch Services had done great, the resignation would hopefully preserve some reserve funds within the current fiscal year and give some room in the budget for next fiscal year.

Mr. Murphy stated that the issue should be discussed with the whole board and that Mr. Bell should be prepared with an alternative plan related to restructuring duties.

Mr. Bell stated that he would discuss it with the senior team at the next senior team meeting to develop alternatives.

No further business was brought before the committee.

Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Durso seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.