

Kent County Public Library Board of Trustees

Board Meeting Minutes of: November 17th, 2025

Call to Order

Present:

Rachel Durso, President; **John Murphy**, Treasurer; **Erin Counihan**, Secretary; **Clara Rankin**, Trustee; **Bruce Riedel**, Trustee; **Deborah Westerland**, Trustee; **Annie Woodall**, Acting Co-Director; **Natalie Hagan**, Acting Co-Director; **Tobi Brown**, Executive Secretary

Ms. Durso called the meeting into order at 4:30pm. Ms. Durso noted that all trustees were present.

Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meetings were reviewed. Mr. Murphy moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Riedel 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

Mr. Murphy reviewed the bank balances and noted there was \$53,688 in the PNC Checking account, \$3 in the PNC Money Market account, and \$196,358 in the Truist Money Market account.

Mr. Murphy stated that due to an unexpected delay in the transfer of funds between library accounts, the library recently had a check bounce. Mr. Murphy stated that adjustments in money transfer methods will be made to avoid this issue in the future. Mr. Murphy assured the Trustees that the situation has been addressed, with any accrued fees being paid and the owed check amount being delivered to Rosin Creek Collaborative.

Mr. Murphy noted that the amount delivered to Rosin Creek will be reimbursed by a grant, however, it will take time before the library sees that reimbursement. Ms. Durso stated that it can take up to 60 days for the reimbursement to be provided.

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Secretary

Ms. Counihan recalled that she will be departing from the KCPL Board of Trustees at the end of the year, leaving the Board Secretary chair vacant. Mr. Murphy advised identifying the new Secretary ahead of time to provide a transition period. Mr. Murphy stated that he felt this would create a smoother transition, as both Secretaries will have time to discuss relevant duties and documents.

Friends of the Kent County Public Library

Ms. Rankin noted that the Friends' Fall Book Sale concluded on November 16th. Ms. Rankin stated that the Friends expressed satisfaction with the turnout of the sale.

Foundation for the Kent County Public Library

Ms. Westerland stated that there was currently collaboration between the County, KCPL and the KCPL Foundation County to put together a grant proposal to assist the funding of the roof replacement for the Chestertown Branch. Ms. Hagan explained that the County Grant writer recently expressed her interest in expanding her reach and assisting the library with projects moving forward.

Ms. Hagan stated that to meet the requirements of the Maryland State Library Association (MSLA) grant, MSLA will have to receive a letter of certification from the County by June. Ms. Hagan explained that this means any additional grant information from the County will have to be secured and submitted by that due date (more information under "Librarian's Report").

Reports of Committees

New Board Member Scouting

Mr. Murphy stated that the KCPL Board Member candidates have completed their interviews and will both receive a recommendation for acceptance. Ms. Durso noted that with the acceptance of the two candidates, the KCPL Board will return to full capacity.

Librarian's Report

Compiled and submitted by Ms. Hagan, Mr. Walmsley, and Ms. Woodall.

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Facilities: Chestertown Library Inc. Building

Ms. Hagan provided updates on the Chestertown Library Inc. Building renovation project. Ms. Hagan noted that Rosin Creek Collaborative is anticipating their portion of the renovation to be completed by the end of November. Ms. Hagan noted that the flooring and interior work is nearing completion. Ms. Hagan noted that there was a recent meeting with Chestertown Library Inc. representatives to receive their input for the renovation of the kitchen. Ms. Hagan stated that there was also discussion about the name of the building and noted that it was currently not a point of negotiation for them. Ms. Hagan added that they were, however, open to the idea of having additional signage on the outside of the building acknowledging its historical significance.

Facilities: Chestertown Branch Roof Replacement

Ms. Hagan stated that the County Grant Writer was very receptive to the idea of assisting the Library with the MSLA grant for the roof replacement, as well as other grants related to the Library's Capital Need Assessment. Ms. Hagan reiterated the need for a certification letter from the County by June. Mr. Murphy noted that the County provided a letter of certification last fiscal year but did not follow up with the required funds for the grant. Ms. Hagan explained that the certification letter was a requirement for the MSLA grant application process.

Ms. Durso stated the library has communicated to the County that MSLA is unwilling to alter the outlines of the grant to accommodate a shingle roof, as was done in the previous roof replacement. Ms. Durso asked if there was an alternative way to lower the commitment amount from the County. Ms. Durso asked if the library had multiple estimates for the roof replacement. Ms. Hagan stated that the library obtained an additional lower estimate for the project but that the funding amount was not altered from its original total upon submission to MSLA.

Facilities: Miscellaneous

Ms. Hagan noted that the library reached out to the Rock Hall Branch landlord to gain clarity regarding the details of the lease, however, there has been no response received.

Ms. Hagan noted that the 5-year Capital Needs Assessment for FY25 was completed and submitted on November 15th.

Ms. Hagan noted that the Maryland Department of Information Technology (MDoIT) was in the process of conducting a Cyber Security Assessment for the library. Ms. Hagan

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explained that the process would review KCPL's policies and staff procedures to assess risks and liabilities. Mr. Murphy noted that one of the Board Member Candidates is a cyber security professional and may be able to provide additional insight during the process.

Ms. Hagan noted that S3W has been successfully contacted and migrated the database to a new computer on November 13th.

Ms. Hagan noted that the Board of Elections completed their signal test successfully.

Ms. Hagan stated that ESRL will be allowing KCPL to purchase an MEEC license through their membership to comply with the PDF accessibility requirements (ADA Title II) that are going into effect in April of 2026. Mr. Walmsley will be attending a webinar from MD Lib Tech for more details and expectations surrounding this development. Ms. Hagan noted that most of our current PDF's seemed to be compliant, but that some of the older documents are not.

Collections

Ms. Hagan stated that KCPL is still awaiting ESRL's proposal to address the ending of the consortium's contract with Hoopla and where the funding will be shifted to.

Ms. Hagan noted that the initial batch of Ingram orders is starting to be received and the process is starting off smoothly. Ms. Hagan stated that KCPL has also set up an institutional account with Barnes and Noble, which will be utilized for purchases using grant funding. Ms. Hagan noted that the Midwest account used to purchase DVDs has been renewed with no increase in cost.

Programming

Ms. Woodall provided an overview of the recent developments around the LSTA Grant funded program: Connecting with Incarcerated Loved Ones. Ms. Woodall noted that the library is proactively reaching out to the community to spark interest. Ms. Woodall noted that the November 7th instance of the program did not receive any attendees, but that the library will be exploring alternative tactics to generate interest.

Ms. Woodall provided an overview of the upcoming programs and events for November and December. Ms. Woodall also reviewed upcoming partnerships and initiatives that the library will be participating in.

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Staff

Ms. Woodall provided an overview of the agenda for the upcoming staff training day on December 18th. Ms. Woodall presented a proposal to fund KCPL branded apparel for all staff. Ms. Woodall noted that an identical staff apparel project was approved in the previous fiscal year, but due to complications, it did not come to fruition. The Trustees reviewed the proposal. Mr. Murphy moved to approve the allocation of funds for the ordering of library branded goods for staff. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Ms. Woodall reviewed the upcoming staff training days in FY2026. Ms. Woodall noted that in recent years, the Trustees have approved 2 full-day and 2 half-day staff training days for the fiscal year. Ms. Woodall requested that the Trustees approve 4 full-day training days for staff to allow for more comprehensive training days during the year. Ms. Counihan stated that she supported the ideas as long as the dates were strategically chosen. Mr. Murphy moved to approve 4 all-day staff training days for FY2026. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Old Business

The Trustees did not discuss any old business.

New Business

December Board of Trustees Meeting

Ms. Durso proposed scheduling a December Board of Trustees meeting on Monday, December 15th. Ms. Durso stated that with recent developments still in a transitional period, she felt it beneficial to schedule another Board Meeting before the end of the calendar year. The Trustees discussed and agreed with the proposed meeting date.

Organizational Meeting Date (January)

Ms. Durso noted that KCPL usually holds an Organizational Meeting in early January to elect any remaining officers and create the regular Board Meeting schedule for the year. The Trustees discussed different times to host the meeting. The Trustees agreed to host the Organizational Meeting on Wednesday, January 7th at 5pm.

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November 2025 Finance Report

The Trustees reviewed the November Finance Report. No additional comments were made.

Capital Needs Assessment

The Trustees reviewed the 5-year Capital Needs Assessment for FY25. The Trustees discussed the following Chestertown Branch projects included within the assessment:

- Updating and remodeling the Meeting Room space for increased functionality.
- Fixing damage on the walls and ceiling on the library public floor.
- Replacing the sliding glass doors at the Calvert entrance; due to safety concerns.
- Adding additional lighting to the parking lot and alleyway.
- Upgrading the camera system around the perimeter.
- Upgrading the locks on the staff entrances.
- Repainting the parking lot; many of the spaces are indistinguishable.
- Updating the patio space with outdoor furniture.
- Redesigning the High Street entrance for increased accessibility and visibility.

Ms. Durso recommended reaching out to the Foundation for possible funding assistance with some of the safety-related projects from the assessment.

Closed Session

Mr. Riedel moved to close the meeting. Mr. Muphy seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting went into closed session at 5:18pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52pm.

**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: 11/17/25; Time: 5:18-5:52; Location: Chestertown Branch, KCPL ;
Motion to close meeting made by: Ms. Durso Seconded by Mr. Murphy ;
Members in favor: all ; Opposed: none ;
Abstaining: none ; Absent: none .

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"/>	personnel & Trustees	discussion of staff, approval of new Trustees
§3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		
§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 Durso, 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: _____

Place: _____

Purpose(s): _____

Members who voted to meet in closed session: all

Persons attending closed session: Clara Rankin, John Murphy, Bruce Reidel, Erin Counihan, Rachel Durso, Debbie Westerland, Natalie Lane, Annie Woodall

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: _____

Topics actually discussed: _____

Actions taken: _____

Each recorded vote: voted to approve new Trustees as recommended by committee

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

Place: _____

Persons present: _____

Subjects discussed: _____