



**BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES  
Board of Directors Meeting  
August 16, 2023 7:00PM  
Hybrid Meeting  
MINUTES**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of Berks County Public Libraries was held using a hybrid format, in person and via the Microsoft Teams platform, on Wednesday, August 16, 2023.

**Board Members Present:** Ginny Hand - President , Helen Flynn - Vice President; Dr. Debbie Noel - Secretary/Treasurer; Mary Ellen Wells, Jason Brudereck, Arleny Pimentel (virtual)

**Board Members Absent:** Xiomara Toledo

**System staff present:** Stephanie Williams, Interim Library System Administrator; Jeff Smilko, Technology Coordinator

**District staff present:** Becky Wanamaker, District Consultant

**Advisory Committee members present in person:**

Mike Najarian, Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library  
Linda Roebuck, Muhlenberg Community Library  
Laura Yazemboski, Robesonia Community Library

**Advisory Committee members present online via Teams:**

Jason E. Wenrich, Bernville Area Community Library	Stephanie Schreiber, Schuylkill Valley Community Library
Noemie Eardley, Boone Area Library	Lisa Hoopes, Spring Township
Christine Mittura, Boone Area Library	Laurel Quigley, Spring Township/West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library
Nicole Sapna, Boone Area Library	Ben Robitzer, Sinking Spring Library
Rob Kistler, Boyertown Community Library	Ann Bohara, Village Library
Karen Winegardner, Brandywine Community Library	Maria Gerasklis-Long, Wernersville Public Library
D Michael Bennethum, Exeter Community Library	Deborah Scull, Wernersville Public Library
Chelsea Williams, Hamburg Public Library	Sarah Sechrist, Womelsdorf Community Library
Geraldine Hynes, Kutztown Community Library	
Jennie Rodriguez-Priest, Mifflin Community Library	

**Call to Order:** Ginny Hand called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Ginny Hand led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment:**

**In-person:** Laura Yazemboski read Robeson Community Library's letter in response to the library being out of compliance in 2022 due to lack of a certified library director. The letter referenced the efforts the library made to meet the compliance requirements. Laura noted a new Director has now been hired, and on Monday she began her role as Robeson Community Library Director. Laura requested the \$500 fine for non-compliance be revoked based on the efforts made to fill the position, including the offer to multiple candidates, and the hiring of two who then were removed or resigned. That request will be considered by BCPL administration. Ginny Hand asked about the director's certification and Laura said she needs to take some classes. Stephanie Williams noted the library should submit a plan to the Advisory Board as soon as possible and connect with Becky Wanamaker, District Consultant about the state's certification process.

**Online:** One comment came from Karen Winegardner, Brandywine Community Library. Karen was unable to find a document included in the packet. The issue was rectified by BCPL administration prior to the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** Debbie Noel made a motion to accept the minutes of May 17, 2023. Helen Flynn seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Debbie Noel reported that the library system County Budget, County Coordination Aid, and State Aid have had no major unexpected costs and continue to be spent down at a normal rate.

Debbie Noel moved that the report be accepted as presented. Mary Ellen Wells seconded. The report was unanimously accepted.

**Correspondence:** One letter of correspondence arrived from Chrissy Mittura, Board Chair of Boone Area Library, related to the library being out of compliance in 2022 due to the Director, Ashley Cole, not having her Director Certification. This issue has now been corrected.

**Administrator's Report:** Stephanie Williams, Interim Library System Administrator, shared her report with the Board and Advisory Committee members. She highlighted the following three items:

- System HQ experienced water damage on two occasions in July due to localized heavy rainfall. The Administrative Assistant's floor was damaged and her operations had to be moved into the small conference room for several weeks. No equipment or collections were damaged and we all are grateful for that!
- The agreement for the System's ILS migration from Polaris to Spark/Evergreen was signed in June. Leslie Gaines will be leading the ILS migration until the "go live" date of February 8, 2024.

- We revealed our new Storywalk at Berks Nature on August 1, featuring *The Last Tree*, by Maria Quintana Silva and illustrated by Silvia Alverrez. This project is made possible by Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

**Board Comments on the report:**

Ginny Hand thanked Mary Ellen Wells for her attendance at the Storywalk Ribbon Cutting at the Berks Nature.

Jason Brudereck commented that the Storywalk Programs in Berks are amazing. There are many benefits for the children that visit. Jason Brudereck also commented on the recent Berks First magazine. The article on the Berks County Public Library System was informative and well done.

**Committee Reports:**

*Advocacy Committee:* No report this month.

*Finance Committee:* Debbie Noel reported that the Finance Committee held meetings at the Systems Headquarters on Monday, June 5, 2023, at 11 AM and June 21, 2023 at 12:00 PM to review the 2024 allocation of funds and the instruction sheet that our member libraries received. The committee also proposed changes to the 2026 funding formula as written below:

- Increase funding for distance support allocation from 3% of non-municipal support areas of the County funds allocation to 5%. The funds to increase the distance support allocation will be subtracted from the circulation funds. The circulation funds will decrease to be 60% of the non-municipal support areas of the County funds allocation.
- Increase funding for municipal support > \$2.50 per capita from \$75,000 to \$100,000. The funds to increase this will be subtracted from the non-municipal support areas of the County funds allocation.

Two motions relative to funding were made:

Debbie Noel moved to approve the distribution of funds for the 2024 year, based on the funding formula instructions that were previously approved. Mary Ellen Wells seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Debbie Noel then moved to accept the funding formula changes for 2026 as proposed by the Finance Committee. Mary Ellen Wells seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

*Nominating Committee:* No report this month.

**Old Business:** The final Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities for System Member Evaluation was presented for approval. Jason Brudereck moved to accept the final draft of the proposed document. Mary Ellen Wells seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Membership Agreement Amendment was presented for approval. Mary Ellen Wells moved that the amendment be accepted as written. Jason Brudereck seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**New Business:** Two documents were presented, in draft form, for members of the BCPL Board to review. These included: the Automation Agreement and the Patron Privacy Policy. Votes for acceptance of these policies will be held in November.

Stephanie Williams asked that all members review the documents and contact her with questions or concerns at [stephanie.williams@berks.lib.pa.us](mailto:stephanie.williams@berks.lib.pa.us).

**District Consultant Reports:**

*Becky Wanamaker, District Consultant read the following report:*

Thank you for the opportunity to share about activities of the district, and for your continued partnership and support in them. The past couple of months, and current days, have been filled with summer reading support and a few summer initiatives for Marissa Guidara, Youth Services Consultant. Things to highlight that have been filling my schedule include...

- A plethora of library director transitions and openings once again. I've been supporting directors with decisions about other opportunities (many within the district), offering resources and involvement for libraries going through a new director search, and am currently putting plans in place for a new round of the New Director Cohort and Mentorship program, designed to encourage and support brand new library directors, which will be starting again in September.
- Providing guidance for the SALSA (State Aid Library Subsidy Application). This is a whole new form and process and requirement from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries - State Aid Office. It is being used to verify compliance with state codes and municipal service areas, and to determine eligibility for state aid funding. Despite frustration over a new and additional application process, libraries are getting these completed effectively, and the final due date for all of our district libraries is Friday September 1.

**Announcements:** Linda Roebuck, Muhlenberg Community Library, shared that their library just received a \$200,000 grant through Representative Mark Rozzi's office. The grant was from the Department of Education. About half of the funds will be used for much needed facility upgrades and safety/security needs.

**Adjournment:** Helen Flynn moved for adjournment. Debbie Noel seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Noel, Secretary, BCPL Board

***Upcoming Meeting Date:***  
***November 15, 2023 7:00 PM at System Headquarters: 1040 Berks Road, Leesport PA 19533***