

**CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
North East Branch Library
Monday, September 15, 2025, at 5:00PM
MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE: Shirley McCrary-Simmons, Jennifer Borro, Ravi Gupta, Joanne Morton

STAFF: Rachel Wright, Executive Director; Adele Cruise, Operations Director;
Frazier Walker, Communications & Development Manager

GUESTS: Danny DeMarinis, Jim Sweigard

ABSENT: Erin Dymowski

CALL TO ORDER at 5:19 PM

Shirley McCrary-Simmons, Chair

APPROVAL OF MINUTES There were no additions or corrections to the minutes from June 16, 2025. They were unanimously approved as submitted. Chair McCrary-Simmons introduced guests, Danny DeMarinis and Jim Sweigard, both of whom are Board candidates whose names have been submitted by the Board of Trustees to the County for appointment.

CITIZEN COMMENT – None.

REVIEW of AGENDA – Due to the holding of a Closed Session at the previous Board meeting, a Closed Session Summary must be added to the agenda. A motion to amend the agenda as proposed was made by Trustee Morton and seconded by Treasurer Borro. Motion passed.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY - Chair McCrary-Simmons provided the summary: During the June 16, 2025 meeting of the Board of Library Trustees, the Trustees met in a Closed Session as provided in the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, and Section 3-305, for discussion of a Personnel matter. The Trustees entered the closed session at 6:46PM. The following Trustees were in attendance: Joanne Morton, Shirley McCrary-Simmons, Ravi Gupta, Jennifer Borro, Erin Dymowski, Alix Gilbert, and Jonathan Stauffer, as was Executive Director Wright. Discussion included the Executive Director's annual contract and goals for the upcoming fiscal year. No board action was taken. A motion to close the Closed session was made by Trustee Dymowski at 8:16PM and seconded by Trustee Borro.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Adele Cruise, Operations Director

The first draft of the Library's audit will be reviewed next week and due to the County and State by September 30. The auditor will present their report for 2025

at the October meeting. Operations Director Cruise will provide the first quarter financials in October.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Executive Committee Shirley McCrary-Simmons, Chair
Chair McCrary-Simmons met with Executive Director Wright, as well as with Vice-Chair Gupta and Treasurer Borro, to develop a more efficient board meeting structure, including a goal to set a 90-minute meeting to be immediately followed by 30 minutes of education, committee work, etc. Planning is set to begin for a Board retreat. The retreat would continue to educate board members with the goal of providing support to the Executive Director. New Trustees orientation will take place over 3 sessions: General Overview (Sept.); Finance (Oct.); Board Operations (Nov.) Trustees are welcome to attend. Executive Director Wright updated the Board of Trustees manual.
2. Finance Committee Jennifer Borro, Treasurer
The committee did not meet this month but will meet Wednesday, October 15 prior to their October 20th Board meeting.
3. Governance Committee
No report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rachel Wright, Library Director

1. Library Updates – A written report from the Executive Director was provided to the Board of Trustees in advance of the meeting to allow time for review in preparation for the Board meeting. Highlights shared by the Executive Director include the following:

Fiscal Year 2025: Attendance: 306,464 visits; Circulation: 833,358 items. The Perryville Branch Library saw the largest increase in attendance due in part to their closure in FY24 and reopening in FY25. The Elkton Branch Library also shows healthy branch and program attendance.

NEW installations include a Story Trail in Cecilton and sidewalk improvements at the Rising Sun Branch Library, which will improve ease of access for seniors living in housing next door.

NEW Staff have been hired for the South County and Elkton Branches, with more new hires anticipated. Director Wright celebrated and congratulated CCPL staff for earning MLS degrees and/or for recent promotions.

Director Wright reminded the Board of upcoming programs, including the Michael Bignell exhibit, Taste of Japan, and MD 250 related events.

CCPL has received grants for the following: VLT Community Grant for the development of Ready, Set, Read Backpacks – to launch later this Fall; Health Department for the provision of Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid – sessions open for registration now; and PNC's Grow Up Great for My Special Book.

Executive Director Wright attended MACO – Maryland Association of Counties Conference, attending sessions on Blueprint, Housing, and Budgeting and also represented MD Libraries in the vendor hall.

- a. Summer Reading Success – An infographic outlining impactful metrics for Summer 2025 was shared with the Board and community. Highlights included:
 - i. Youth participation increased 6% increase over last year, with a 16% increase for Read to Me (age birth-5).
 - ii. CCPL served more than 1200 lunches in Elkton and North East, a 7.5% increase over Summer, 2024.
2. Strategic Planning FY26 Update: Services
 - a. CCPL is in year 3 of its Strategic Plan 2024-2026. Director Wright presented a review and update on the first Focus area: Services and will discuss Spaces in November, Staff in December, and Support in January. Highlights of the update included: the launching of the Job Tech Tower in Perryville; the funding of an adult services programming position; the addition of a new Outreach and Mobile Outreach Supervisor.
 - b. Other items of note: CCPL has offer 5 Youth Mental Health First Aid sessions resulting in 28 staff and 31 partner/community members trained by certified Library staff. Overall, 90 staff and 60% staff are trained in either Adult or Youth Mental Health First Aid.
 - c. Last year, 40 Explorer Backpacks were added to the collections. They have circulated 523 times – averaging 13 checkouts per kit per year.
 - d. In support of the strategic planning goal to boldly address the reading crisis, Reading Buddies has reached 130 students since spring 2024 (84 unique students); 83 adult volunteers; and 15 schools. CCPL is now planning ways to engage the community around the Reading Crisis, for example promoting the importance of reading aloud to children of all ages.

3. Friends Foundation of CCPL – Friends Foundation is now underwriting the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program – booklets, shirts, totes and certificates. The 12th annual Crab Crawl was a great success. A record number of tickets were sold and sponsorships secured – all told the event raised more than \$20,000 in support of CCPL's literacy programs.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Board Assessment – Once the governance committee is appointed, work will begin on responding to the Board Assessment.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Committee Appointments – As per the bylaws, the Chair appoints committee members following the election of officers. Chair McCrary-Simmons proposed the following appointments: Governance – Erin Dymowski and Jim Sweigard; Special Committee: Policy – Joanne Morton and Danny DeMarinis. CCPL may assign a staff member to the policy committee. Privacy and Confidentiality policy was last reviewed in 2018, and the special committee will establish a schedule for policy review.
 - a. A motion to appoint Erin Dymowski to Chair of Governance Committee with Jim Sweigard as a member was made by Vice-Chair Gupta, seconded by Treasurer Borro. Motion passed.
 - b. A motion to create a special Policy Review committee for one year and to appoint Joanne Morton as Chair and Danny DeMarinis as member was made by Vice-Chair Gupta, seconded by Treasurer Borro. Motion passed.
2. FY26 Board Calendar – Current meeting start at 5PM is a challenge to maintain public access due to the Library closing at 6PM. The Board proposed changing the start of the meeting back to 4PM to ensure public access.
3. Appointment of Paul Applegate to the Friends Foundation-Executive Director Wright introduced a letter from the Friends Foundation to nominate Paul Applegate to their Board of Directors. Treasurer Borro made a motion to approve the nomination, which was seconded by Trustee Morton. The motion was approved.

CALENDAR

1. Taste of Japan; Sat., Sept 20th at 10AM; Elkton Branch Library

Board of Library Trustees – Minutes

APPROVED

September 15, 2025

2. Citizens for MD Libraries Annual Meeting; Sat, Oct 11th at 9:30AM; Michael E. Busch Library
3. CCPL's Annual Staff Day; Mon, Oct 13th at 8:30AM; Elkton Branch Library
4. NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet; Sat, Nov 1st at 12PM; Upper Chesapeake Ballroom
5. CCPL's Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast; Mon., Nov 10th at 9AM; North East Branch Library

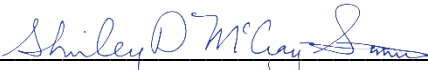
ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Chair McCrary-Simmons, seconded by Treasurer Borro.
Meeting adjourned at 7:02pm.

The next Board of Library Trustees meeting is on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 4pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Frazier Walker, Communications and Development Manager

Approved by the Board of Trustees on October 20, 2025.



Shirley McCrary-Simmons, Chair