



HCLS Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2019 ♦ 7 pm
HCLS Central Branch

Board members present were: Robert Mentz, Vice Chair; Andy Dalal, Treasurer; Phillip Dodge; Tom Munns; Bruce Rothschild; and Antonia Watts. Also present were staff members/citizens Steve Lewicky, Counsel to the Board, Ash Baker, Lew Belfont, Angela Brade, Susan Clemens, Stacey Fields, Christie Lassen, Suki Lee, Phil Lord, Tanya Malveaux, Lauren McCloskey, Emma Ostendorp, Stephanie Shane, Cherise Tasker, and Carolina Wilcox.

Mr. Mentz called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The Board unanimously approved the September 25, 2019 Board meeting general and executive session minutes. The Board revisited discussion of proposed updates to Supplement 1 regarding the number of Board candidates to forward on to the County Executive, then approved the recommended changes to Supplement 1, followed by Supplement 2, which was proposed with no changes.

I presented the latest thinking behind a proposed FY 21 Operating Budget that would include allocations for staff merit and COLA increases, as well as one additional position focused on early learning in line with Kirwan Commission recommendations that are to play a factor in state budgeting. This 4.7% increase reflects consideration of the current tight budget climate in light of school system needs, Ellicott City “Safe and Sound” requirements, as well as per capita funding from the state which will have incremental increases before going flat in 2022 and years thereafter. While we don’t yet know what the county plans for its own COLA, we are tracking funds to determine whether we can cover some of it from Object 1 funds. I further noted that our staff under Lew Belfont’s direction are mapping our current curriculum to pre-K readiness in line with our early learning initiatives and as a response to the Kirwan Commission findings. I pointed to the preliminary numbers for health care, explaining that our benefits are part of the County’s benefit pool. I shared that as the County is no longer providing the opt-out waiver option to its employees, this benefit has been removed from HCLS as well, reflecting a savings of \$40K.

Ms. Brade summarized the Facilities Master Plan which was disseminated in Board packets. The printed document will be given to the state library and distributed to developers and others involved in future HCLS capital projects. An electronic version will be posted to the website. Regarding the status of capital projects underway, Ms. Brade explained that work on Glenwood renovations will begin in January, and that the additional \$550K in the proposed capital budget to cover FF&E was recommended by the Department of Public Works. I explained that we anticipate a request from the County to prioritize our capital funding requests in light of the fiscal forecast. There will be a meeting with the County the first week of December where we will gain more insight. A developer team has been selected for the project led by the Housing Commission that incorporates a new downtown Columbia Branch, replacing the current Central Branch. A press release announcing the winning team is forthcoming, followed by a developer schedule. We are looking to hold a community forum in January to share information on the project and to engage the community in the process forward.

I referred to a copy of the FY 2019 audit in Board members’ packets which showed that HCLS received a clean bill of health and thanked the team for their continued good work.

Board members Dalal, Dodge, Mentz, Munns, and Watts volunteered to serve on the nominating committee to fill the upcoming At-Large vacancy when Bruce Rothschild’s term ends in June.

Christie Lassen announced the swashbuckling theme for Evening in the Stacks, scheduled for February 29, 2020 at the East Columbia Branch. She then mentioned the Teen Takeover podcast on HiJinx, which is funded through a staff innovation grant. I flagged the rest of the HCLS Happenings document for the Board to review on their own, plus related that we are on pace with spending for our current fiscal year as reflected on the Financial Report. I explained that we are revamping the process by which we record and present statistics to account for possible effects like weather and budget, as well as reflect not just attendance but learning outcomes. This process will also take into account which statistics become part of the County's HoCoDash effort. Tom Munns congratulated myself and Mr. Belfont for our presentation as part of the County's launch of HoCo Dash. I announced that we will be launching a 20 in 2020 campaign to promote HCLS resources. In line with this effort, Alli Jessing will be forming teams of Research Instructors to network with businesses and non-profits to alert them of relevant HCLS offerings. Additional items reviewed an updated FY 20 Calendar of Events, new Public Library laws, and *HCLS in the News*.

Mr. Mentz thanked everyone for attending, adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm, which was unanimously approved to reconvene in Executive Session pursuant to §10-508 of the State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, in order to discuss personnel matters.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on **Wed., January 15, 2020** (*snow date, January 22*) at the Savage Branch.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tonya Aikens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tonya Aikens
President & CEO