



HCLS Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2022 ♦ 7 pm
Virtual

Board members present were: Antonia Watts, Chair; Phillip Dodge, Vice Chair; Kelly Smith, Treasurer; Elizabeth Banach; Rob Mentz; Julie Parham; and Sabina Taj. Also present were leadership team staff members/citizens including Ruba Abukhdeir, Dorna Anderson, Lew Belfont, Angela Brade, Mary Brosenne, Lori Buchman, Chris Conkling, Stacey Fields, Cari Gast, Craig Glendenning, Rohini Gupta, Rita Hamlet, Chris Heady, Kelsey Hughes, Allison Jessing, Dan Kenney, Simone Kolnik, Nina Krzysko, Suki Lee, Steve Lewicky, Diane Li, Tanya Malveaux, Kim Montenyohl, Emma Ostendorp, Nana Owusu, Larry Richardson, Ben Sfanos, Stephanie Shane, Sheng Wu, Tracy Yamamoto, and Geneka Young.

Antonia called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Tonya introduced Craig Glendenning, Howard County's Auditor who spoke about the performance audit his team comprised of Lori Buchman and Brenda Cachuela are performing on HCLS for FY 2022, running from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Lori shared the objectives of the audit as outlined in the Audit Engagement Memo and where the team is at this stage. They hope to have a draft document by the end of the year.

The discussion turned to the external audit performed by Cohn Reznick. Dan Kenney presented the major points of the audit, pointing out differences from last year while stating that the scope didn't change. Overall, the audit shows that there are no material weaknesses and no instances of non-compliance. The final audit document will be sent to the Trustees as well as the County.

The Board unanimously approved the June 15, 2022, Board meeting minutes.

The Operations Update followed, starting with the Community Impact Award which HCLS received from the Howard County Chamber of Commerce. I then spoke about the release of our local equity report, *Inequities Within: Issues of Inequity Across Communities*, an analysis of local systems and social determinants of health, which was commissioned with grant funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Maryland State Library Agency and is being shared with elected officials and community leaders. We will be engaging with the report author for presentations and facilitated discussions for staff and the community.

Simone Kolnik addressed signature initiatives to include the Longest Table which drew 200 attendees; Evening in the Stacks, whose theme is Evening in the Stacks Goes Pop and is scheduled for February 25 at the East Columbia Branch; the Spelling Bee, scheduled for Saturday, March 18 at Reservoir High School; and Battle of the Books slated for Friday, April 28 at Merriweather Post Pavilion.

Tonya presented an update on the web site redesign project, explaining how all departments are involved with the project. Sabina commended the DIY Center. Ben related that we are in the wireframe stage and any staff training on website maintenance would come later in the process. In response to questions on customer training for the use of the new website, Tonya explained that we intend for the new site to be intuitive so that training is not necessary.

Tonya then addressed the wayfinding/signage project that looks to create universal signage across all HCLS branches. We are in the community engagement stage. Antonia recommended sending the community engagement survey to Board members.

Allison Jessing showcased the One Maryland, One Book 2022 where HCLS was the only public library on the book tour of *What's Mine is Yours* by Naima Coster. Despite a short turnaround time and inclement weather, the event drew the tour's largest crowd.

Geneka Young spoke to a "Back 2 School Bash" held on September 20 at the East Columbia Branch which featured a Beauty in STEAM initiative. The event included a "Hair 101 Workshop" for girls and a "Barbers Mentor Circle" for boys. Wellness kits were distributed that contained beauty and health products plus affirmation cards.

Chris Heady recounted the first few months of the STEAM Machine which comprised of meet and greets to introduce the vehicle and its capabilities to the community. The team is looking at the HiTech curriculum to see what can fit into the STEAM Machine visits to the Jacaranda Center and CA's Youth and Teen Center scheduled for the first and third Thursdays of each month.

Angela related activity on capital projects, noting that new sliding doors will be put in at the Glenwood Branch, hopefully by January in response to customer requests. With regards to the Downtown Columbia Branch, we are still having conversations about potential options and scenarios to move funding out of contingency.

Tonya presented the financial report for the first quarter and where the organization is to-date. Tonya then highlighted the Operating Budget and Curriculum Focus for FY 24. At this preliminary stage, we seek to again prioritize COLA and merit increases plus minimum wage increases in Object 1; no increase in Object 2; increases to cover customer demand for materials and publisher increases, plus the purchase of STEAM supplies in Object 3; and no increases in Objects 4 and 5. The total proposed increase comes to under \$2 Million.

Angela addressed the FY 24 Capital Budget, explaining that with the Downtown Branch not being funded in FY23, funding for the Southwest Branch has been moved to FY 2027 with the hope to request the release of contingency funds for the Downtown Branch in January. The Board approved the proposed FY 24 capital budget. Tonya closed by relating the major points of the Budget Process timeline which was also contained in the Board packet.

Nana Owusu, Chair of the Friends & Foundation of HCLS, summarized recent Friends activities. The Friends has so far raised 10% of its yearly goal in donations. The annual campaign comprised of 9,000 letters, highlighting the STEAM Machine and Pop-up Library vehicle were mailed out. Additional activities of the annual campaign include emailing customers, putting a banner on HCLS' web site, plus a social media initiative. Nana related that a \$5K grant went to the Back to School Bash and closed by stating that the Friends fundraising is on target compared to last year.

The Board reviewed the proposed changes to the Policies, Supplement 1 and Supplement 3 of the Board of Trustees Policies and approved them all.

Antonia welcomed Julie and Liz to the Board before adjourning the meeting at 8:41 pm.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on **Wed., November 16, 2022**, and will be virtual unless otherwise noticed.

Respectfully submitted,



Tonya Aikens
President & CEO