



**BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES  
Board of Directors Meeting  
February 21, 2024 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, February 21, 2024.

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

**Board Members Absent:** none

**System staff present:** Stephanie Williams, Library System Administrator; Jeff Smilko, Technology Coordinator; Karin Rezendes, Deputy Administrator/Outreach Services Coordinator

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

**Advisory Committee members present in person:**

Charles Brown, Robesonia Community Library  
Don Stripling, Robesonia Community Library

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

Jason Wenrich, Bernville Area Community Library	Gerry Hynes, Kutztown Community Library
Mike Najarian, Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library	Veronica Martin, Mifflin Community Library
Chrissy Mittura, Boone Area Library	Linda Roebuck, Muhlenberg Community Library
Nicole Sapna, Boone Area Library	Julia Becker, Reading Public Library
Rob Kistler, Boyertown Community Library	Chris Thomas, Schuylkill Valley Community Library
D. Mike Bennethum, Exeter Community Library	Lisa Hoopes, Spring Township/West Lawn Wyomissing Hills Library
Dave Crissman, Fleetwood Area Public Library	Ben Robitzer, Sinking Spring Library
Chelsea Williams, Hamburg Public Library	Ann Bohara, Village Library
Dorothy Brobst, Hamburg Public Library	Wendy Marshall, Womelsdorf Community Library

**Members of the public present in person:** Roger Broome, Susan Broome, Jeffrey Carson

**Members of the public present online via Teams:** Julian Marshall

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

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

**Appointment of Officers:** Jason Brudereck reported the Nominating Committee reached out to Board members to establish the officers for 2024. Jason then made a motion for these officers:

Ginny Hand- President Helen Sheimo Flynn- Vice President Debbie Noel- Secretary/Treasurer

And Mary Ellen Wells seconded the motion. The assignments were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment:** We had two in-person comments:

Roger Broome, of Exeter, commented on HR issues at the Exeter Library. His concern was related specifically to his daughter and two additional employees that were fired after expressing, in what they thought was confidence, concerns about a hostile workplace environment. He requested an investigation by the Board.

Jeffrey Carson, of Exeter, also spoke on the same situation. His wife was one of the three employees fired from Exeter Library. He feels the response to the three employees was retaliation for expressing concerns about the work environment.

One person, Nancy Russo of Exeter Community Library, submitted a request to make a public comment online. However, she did not ultimately make a submission.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mary Ellen Wells made a motion to accept the minutes of November 15, 2023. Jason Brudereck seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Debbie Noel brought to everyone's attention the 2023 End of Year Budget Report related to the County budget. The chart indicates 98% of the 2023 budget was spent, but also shows an unrealized spending of \$60,744.02. To be clear, the 98% is accurate. There was a reporting error from the county office and the County Controller is working on a resolution to the 2023 reporting. Additionally, we have begun working off our 2024 budget, and will be discussing, later in this meeting, updates to the 2024 funding formula to clarify the distribution to member libraries.

Debbie Noel moved that the report be accepted as presented. Helen Flynn seconded. The report was unanimously accepted.

**Correspondence:** The Library System administration received two pieces of correspondence:  
- Susan Banks, Deputy Secretary & State Librarian, announced on December 21, 2023 the budget language was authorized to enable the distribution of the Public Library Subsidy funds for FY 2023-2024. She noted districts would receive payments around mid-January. Other categories of state aid would be processed in late January to early February. The System received state aid and county coordination aid funds earlier this month, and this will be discussed in new business later in this meeting.

- The Advisory Board was contacted last week by a concerned individual about Exeter Community Library's compliance with the Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities. Stephanie Williams communicated with the Exeter Community Library Director, Lizabeth Stavenski-Bell, and the issues have been resolved except for one item that needs to be approved by the Exeter Community Library Board of Trustees. The library needs to approve its 2024 budget.

**Administrator's Report:** Stephanie Williams, Library System Administrator, shared both her 2023 end of year report and her February 2024 report with the Advisory Board and Advisory Committee members. She highlighted the following items:

- We stepped into 2023 with a prominent, equitable change to countywide library service in the elimination of overdue fines for traditional materials
- We deployed a new mobile print service called "Princh" in 2023. This allows patrons to print from their mobile phones, laptops and tablets at all system member libraries.
- Several new StoryWalks® were unveiled throughout the County during the previous year.
- She thanked these individuals for their work on the Spark migration team:
  - Sami Jo Trout, Assistant Director at Boyertown Community Library
  - Jess Royer, Technical Services Supervisor at Reading Public Library
  - Troy Bowers, Circulation Supervisor at Reading Public Library
  - Dave Pennypacker, Librarian at Reading Area Community Library
  - Jeff Smilko, Technology Coordinator at System HQ
  - Leslie Gaines, Bibliographic Services Manager at System HQ
  - Christine Reichert, Cataloging & Acquisitions Librarian at System HQ
  - Emily Orischak, Community Relations Coordinator at System HQ

**Committee Reports:**

*New Committees Reorganization:*

Jason Brudereck reported the Nominating Committee reached out to Board members to establish committee assignments for 2024. Jason then made a motion for these committees and

Chairs to be accepted:

*Nominating Committee*

Jason Brudereck, Chair  
Helen Flynn, member  
Mary Ellen Wells, member

*Advocacy Committee*

Arleny Pimentel, Chair  
Ginny Hand, member  
Xiomara Toledo, member

*Finance Committee*

Debbie Noel, Chair  
Ginny Hand, member  
Mary Ellen Wells, member

Mary Ellen Wells seconded the motion. The assignments were unanimously approved.

**Old Business:**

The final draft of the Conflict of Interest Policy was presented for approval. Mary Ellen Wells moved to accept the final draft of the proposed document. Jason Brudereck seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Charles Brown, Robesonia Library Board Chair, provided an update on the Robesonia Community Library compliance's with director certification. He reported the new Library Director, Madison Mayhew, has been working hard to complete her mandatory training to meet the requirements required for her position. She completed her first course and is currently enrolled in her

second course. Her third, and final course, will be completed by August 2024. The Robesonia Board of Trustees is pleased with her job performance.

### **New Business:**

2024 Funding formula updates on distribution due to state aid increase:

There was an unexpected increase in State Aid provided to the Library System. As a result, the base allocation and per capita allocations for member libraries were updated to reflect the additional funds. These funds will be distributed to member libraries.

Two documents were presented for members of the BCPL Board to approve:

The Berks County Public Library System Borrowing Policy was approved by library directors in January. Stephanie Williams reviewed the changes that were made. Helen Flynn moved to accept the updated Berks County Library System Borrowing Policy. Arleny Pimentel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Changes were made in the language in the Berks County Public Library System Cataloging Policy because we have moved to a new circulation system, Spark/Evergreen. Mary Ellen Wells moved to accept the updated policy. Ginny Hand seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **District Consultant Reports:** *Becky Wanamaker, District Consultant provided the following report:*

Highlights:

- Updates to Libby/Overdrive. Marissa, the District Youth Services Consultant, and Becky are now the managers for the District's shared collection of e-resources. They're working through a number of changes to structure, ordering processes, and promotion of the service; and are looking forward to sharing and implementing them in the coming months.

- Annual State Reports. The final push is on for completing the reports by the March 15 deadline, and we've been providing lots of support and instructions from the District. Library directors are especially working hard at accomplishing this, and all patience and understanding is appreciated!

One reminder:

- Trustee Orientation. The District and System are partnering to offer orientation sessions for all new trustees. Participation is required for new board members as part of the BCPL Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities, and Continuing Education credit is offered to all who attend. Dates are available in late March and early April, and registration closes March 15. Check the Trustee Talk newsletter, or connect with your library director, to access the signup form.

### **Announcements:**

The BCPL Awards Celebration will take place at the Berks County Agriculture Center Auditorium on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 6:30 PM. *Snow date - Thursday, March 7 at 6:30.*

The Finance Committee will meet in-person on May 1, 2024 at 6:30 PM at System Headquarters.

Stephanie Williams congratulated the Hamburg Public Library for receiving a Keystone Grant to renovate and expand the library's building.

**Adjournment:** Helen Flynn moved for adjournment. Mary Ellen Wells seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Noel  
Secretary, BCPL Board

***Upcoming Meeting Dates:  
May 15, 2024 7:00 PM  
System Headquarters: 1040 Berks Road, Leesport PA 19533***