

Board members in **Attendance** were Christian Mash, Fred Fox, Tina Buckel, Alison Rudy-Sweitzer, and Clint Bradley. Staff members present were Thomas Vose, Library Director and Nicole McCullough, Executive Assistant.

Christian Mash called the **Meeting to Order** at 4:02 pm.

The Trustees reviewed the **Meeting Minutes** from December 12th and the notes documenting the cancellation of the subsequent scheduled meeting. Nicole informed the Board of a spelling error in the December minutes, which will be rectified. Tina moved to approve the minutes with the noted amendment, seconded by Alison. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Trustees reviewed the **Financial Statements** for the period ending February 2025. Thomas reported that spending is on track for the fiscal year. Clint moved to accept the Financial Statements, seconded by Fred. The motion passed unanimously, and the statements were received and filed.

The Board welcomed new member Alison Rudy-Sweitzer. Thomas expressed the Board's pride in her appointment and their anticipation of working together. Alison expressed her enthusiasm for the opportunity to serve. Thomas also recognized Nancy Brady, another new member who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Christian added his welcome to Nancy, stating his confidence in her representation of the Kitzmiller community.

The **Director's Report** was reviewed by the group. Thomas reported his participation in several community outreach opportunities, including the Commissioners' Meeting, the GCHD Health Fair planning meeting, and the Kitzmiller Town Council meeting. He noted that the Kitzmiller Town Council, in response to water issues, delivered pallets of water to the community center gymnasium, resulting in damage to the floor tiles. The town will replace the floor, but the impact on scheduled programs remains uncertain. Thomas announced that the Friends are accepting applications for their inaugural scholarships. He also stated that the Library Academy staff are developing a spring schedule of classes on topics such as personal finance, ethics, automotive repair, business startup, and public speaking. Thomas reported that the Grantsville and Accident Branches have now been equipped with AEDs, thanks to a generous donation from the Grantsville Rotary. The Oakland/Mountain Lake Park Rotary will donate AEDs for the Oakland and Kitzmiller Branches. Tina announced that Woodmen Life of Grantsville and Friendsville will donate an AED machine to the Friendsville Library upon its completion. Additionally, Thomas noted that a bill in the current legislative session proposes requiring all public libraries to be equipped with AEDs, placing the organization ahead of anticipated requirements due to these generous donations. Thomas expressed interest in future discussions regarding the potential for a shared bookmobile between Garrett and Allegany Counties.

Old Business was discussed:

- *Planned Giving Committee*- As the Planned Giving Committee had not met recently, Christian invited Alison to join the committee, citing her relevant background. Alison accepted the position, and the committee now comprises Alison, Karen, Fred, and Thomas as an ex officio, non-voting member. Alison noted her extensive experience, including a finance background and 20 years of service on the Garrett College Foundation Board. The Trustees agreed that her knowledge, expertise, and dedication to foundation work would greatly benefit the library.
- *Friendsville Updates*- Thomas reported that the demolition of the old building is complete, and excavation has begun. He will attend a construction meeting tomorrow. Additionally, he received confirmation from Senator Van Hollen's office that the project remains a budget item for the Senate Appropriations Committee's congressional directed funding, indicating potential future federal funding. In addition, the remaining required funding has been included in the governor's capital budget. Thomas addressed the Sunset date provision,

confirming that, as the Notice of Grant Award was issued prior to June 30th, the project is compliant. He expressed gratitude to Delegate Hinebaugh for his assistance in clarifying the matter.

New Business was discussed:

- *FY 2026 Budget-* Thomas presented the projected FY 2026 budget to the Board. He announced that WMRL will provide an additional \$3,000 grant for the upcoming fiscal year to offset delivery costs. Thomas will request an additional \$61,086 from the county to compensate for lost state funding due to the Wealth Formula, a projected 5% increase in healthcare costs, and a 2% COLA increase for library staff. The budget reflects a zero-dollar line item for fines, consistent with the upcoming fine-free policy. He noted that WMRL grant funding was incorporated into the budget, as recommended by Karen. Thomas reported that auditor bids are currently being solicited with WMRL, but there are no updates at this time. Tina moved to approve the budget for submission to the County Commissioners, seconded by Clint. The motion passed unanimously.
- *Materials Testing Services-* Following the architect's recommendation to promptly select a vendor for materials testing on the Friendsville Project, the Board was provided with three bids via email. The Board had already approved the lowest bid, submitted by Triad Engineering, through electronic means, with the understanding that it would be ratified at the subsequent meeting. Thomas reiterated the three bid options to the Trustees. Clint made a formal motion to approve the low bid from Triad Engineering, which was seconded by Tina. The motion was carried unanimously. Alison then requested clarification regarding purchasing thresholds, and Nicole advised she would send her the procurement policy.
- *Policy #202: Use of Materials and #203: Fines and Fees-* In accordance with prior Board discussions regarding the transition to a fine-free system, Thomas presented proposed policy revisions, outlining a schedule based on fee and fine types. He recommended adding a fee of \$0.50 per 6-square-foot of material used with the Cricut machine to Policy #203, with an exemption for patrons providing their own materials, effective immediately. Thomas also proposed the following removals, effective July 1, 2025: from Policy #202: *'An excess of \$6.00 due in fines,' '..., though any late fees remain the patron's responsibility. The charges for lost materials include a \$6.00 processing fee. This processing fee will not be charged on materials checked out to a minor's card, however,' 'Overdue charges for items that had been assumed to be lost will be deducted from refunds of payments for these lost materials,' and 'A processing fee of \$6.00 will still be charged';* and from Policy #203: *'Video games, DVDs and Blu-Ray \$0.50/day \$6 max. All other materials \$0.20/day \$6 max. No late fees shall be charged on overdue materials checked out to cards belonging to minor patrons, though replacement fees will be charged for materials more than 30 days late. In the event of closure during emergency winter weather conditions or school closings fines to be incurred that day will be waived.'* Alison moved to approve the proposed policy changes. Clint seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- *Board Retreat-* Thomas invited the Board to WMRL's upcoming Board Retreat to be held at Bedford Springs Resort June 25th and 26th. He advised the board to reach out to him if they are interested in attending

Other Business was discussed:

- *Auto-renewals-* Thomas shared a positive update: beginning April 2nd, all WMRL branches will offer consistent auto-renewals for eligible items, simplifying the borrowing experience for patrons and staff.
- *ALA Annual Meeting-* Following the invitation to the Board retreat, Thomas extended an invitation to attend the Annual ALA Convention in Philadelphia in late June. He noted that LSTA staff development grant funds are available and encouraged interested members to attend.
- *Edward Jones-* A notice from Edward Jones informed the Board that the donated Apple shares include voting rights on proposals presented at the annual meeting. The Board determined that participation was not warranted, given the limited number of shares owned.

- *Bad Debt*- Thomas informed the Board that \$3,199.74 in accrued fines from inactive children's accounts, which are now classified as bad debt, needed to be written off. He requested Board approval for this action. The Board provided its approval for the write-off without requiring a formal motion. Nicole will ensure that the write-off is accurately documented and reported to the auditors.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, March 13th, 2025 at 4:00pm at the Accident Branch.

Tina made a motion to **Adjourn the Regular Meeting** at 5:06pm, seconded by Fred. The motion carried.

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Nicole McCullough.