

ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Wednesday, December 14, 2022
6:15 PM –Central Library/ Hybrid

Trustees in Attendance	Trustees not in Attendance		Staff in Attendance
Ms. Adams Ms. DeKuyper Ms. Dorman Ms. Farmer, Chair Mr. Jensen Ms. Jones-Rodwell Mr. Koff Ms. Lasher Ms. Moser Mr. Reid Mr. Rosenberg Mr. Scherr	Mr. Brown Ms. Espenshade Mr. Kaufman Mr. Miller		Ms. Daniel Ms. Bangura Mr. Fried Ms. Graham Mr. Jenkins Mr. Krabbe Mr. Lewis Ms. Mange Ms. McCorkell Ms. Monahan Mr. Payne Ms. Purchase Ms. Raabe Ms. Scheuerman

- I. **Chair, Dr. Mychelle Farmer called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM**

- II. **Approval of Minutes of the Wednesday, September 21, 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting**
*****ACTION: The Board of Trustees approved the minutes from the Wednesday, September 21, 2022 meeting.*****

- III. **Ratification of the Actions of the Board of Directors**
*****ACTION: The Board of Trustees ratified the actions of the Board of Directors at the Wednesday, September 21, 2022 meeting.*****

- IV. **Chair’s Remarks**

Dr. Farmer began her remarks by thanking the Board for the hard work they put into their committees. Dr. Farmer especially wanted to thank the committee chairs and co-chairs because they spend extra time preparing for the committee activities. Through their great efforts, the Board can ensure that the Pratt Library system is one of Baltimore’s best institutions.

Dr. Farmer informed the Board that during the first half of this fiscal year, the Pratt Library Board and staff leaders have initiated its preparation for the strategic planning review and revision. This work will continue throughout the coming calendar year. Dr. Farmer recognized the following board members who have been part of the working group that initiated this process: Ms. Nancy Hackerman, Mr. Jeff Scherr, Mr. Jacob Hodes, Ms. Mary Ann Scully, and Mr. Mark Caplan. The Pratt Library leadership was represented by Mike Fried, CIO and Heidi Daniel, CEO. All committee chairs also participated in the strategic planning review in a special meeting that took place on November 14. This strategic planning process will continue during 2023, supported by a small working group that will include both Board members and staff. All Board members will be consulted at key points, and library staff will also have opportunities to give feedback. Initial discussions favor the inclusion of both short-term and long-term goals (5 years), such as those outlined by the master facility plan, should be considered as the Board formulates a new strategic plan.

Dr. Farmer also recognized the hard work of Mr. Bob Nye as he guides the Board in the development of Board engagement activities. The Board is organizing small groups that focus on priority topics including health, technology and innovation, as well as facilities development and support. These groups will be very active in 2023, and Dr. Farmer will share updates in future meetings.

Dr. Farmer is aware that many members of the Board are concerned about censorship and banning of books in schools and in some libraries throughout the nation. So far, Maryland libraries have not been directly affected by such approaches, but the Board should remain aware of the impact that book banning is having in other states. A survey by the American Library Association documented that 71% of the respondents oppose censoring public libraries. Nevertheless, some school districts have considered this issue. Dr. Farmer reminded the Board to note that ALA's review of banned books in schools indicated that 41% of those books include main characters of color. Racism was the main topic in 22%, and 33% of banned books address LGBTQ issues. Thus, there is diversity in the topics among banned books. The ALA organized a Banned Books Week in September of this year, with the theme "Books Unite Us. Censorship Divides Us." Dr. Farmer encouraged the Board to come together to support access to all books that will inform and bring together people and to keep libraries a safe space to learn.

Dr. Farmer concluded her remarks by wishing everyone a wonderful holiday. 2023 will bring new opportunities to come to the Pratt Library and to expand its horizons.

V. Report on City and State Operating Budgets

The City and State Operating Budgets report was included in the Board Book and stands as is.

VI. Public Comment

Mr. Mark Hart expressed gratitude for the hybrid option especially when COVID numbers spike. Mr. Hart thanked CEO, Ms. Heidi Daniel for her exceptional leadership and wished the library staff and leadership a happy holiday season.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business; the meeting was adjourned by Chair, Dr. Mychelle Farmer at 6:32 PM. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 6:15 pm.