



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

6/17/2026 | 7 pm

Glenwood Branch

Board members present were: Rob Mentz, Chair; Phillip Dodge, Vice Chair; Antonia Watts, Treasurer; Elizabeth Banach; Abby Glassberg; and Kelly Smith. Also present were staff members/citizens, including Tanvi Anand, Dorna Anderson, Angela Brade, Mary Brosenne, Kelly Clark, Vera Davies, Stacey Fields, Kim Johanson, Kathleen Klebba, Christie Lassen, Steve Lewicky, Tanya Malveaux, Ahana Roy, Stephanie Shane, and Henry Stover.

Rob called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

During Public Comment, Ahana Roy and Tanvi Anand requested funding support for menstrual products through the HCLS budget and provided in HCLS branches. Their transcript is appended to the end of the minutes.

Stephanie Shane provided an update on the Friends & Foundation of HCLS on behalf of Nana Owusu. She noted that the Friends Board adopted a budget that anticipates a 7% increase in total sponsorship of HCLS programming in FY 27 with the Adult Battle of the Books (BOB) and the Flower Basket fundraisers strengthening the Friends budget. The Adult BOB for FY 27 is off to a great start. Registration opened on June 15 with all slots filled in 8 minutes, and a waitlist of 44 interested parties. For FY 27 the Board Executive slate will change with John Dove stepping into the role of Chair, Tony Trenkle Sr. assuming the role of Vice Chair and Nathan Dove becoming Treasurer. Anne Santos will continue as Secretary.

The Board unanimously approved the Board meeting minutes for March 18, 2026.

I introduced Kim Johanson who gave a demonstration on accessibility devices produced on HCLS 3D printers at the Glenwood Branch and scaling up to include the East Columbia Branch and the Savage Branch. The penmouse makes independent writing and creating possible for people with dexterity issues. The slot readers help readers focus on one line of text at a time. Starting in mid-March, HCLS offered these devices for free. So far, 85 accessibility tools have been distributed.

Christie Lassen provided an update on the system-wide signage and wayfinding project. Aligned with HCLS' strategic plan, the project enhances community members' ability to independently navigate HCLS branches regardless of their primary language or literacy level. Hanging and mounted signage is color-coded by area and features the top 4 languages spoken in the county along with iconography and

braille. The final piece, shelving end caps, will be installed by the end of the month.

I provided a legislative wrap-up, noting the status of bills SB 378/HB 1592, SB 410/HB 660, and HB 586/SB535. For the first bill, ushered through by Senator Guzzone, we don't have the same level of support requested, but are grateful funding is not sunseting and public libraries across the state will see increased funding. Kelly asked how much we receive now in per capita funding. Tonya will follow up. With the second bill, this is good news as Pratt has been using some of their funding to support State Library Resource Center funding in previous years and can no longer continue doing that. In terms of the last bill, I noted that it is optional for each library system in Maryland to determine if they would like to have a student member of the Board. The language for each bill is contained in Board packets.

I provided a summary of the County Council approved FY 27 Operating and Capital budgets with the promise that we will send out a copy of the capital budget to Trustees for readability. I explained that the funding for the Southwest Branch has been pushed back to 2028, the funding path for the downtown branch has been approved, and funding for the ElkrIDGE Branch teen space expansion has been scheduled for 2028. The Board unanimously approved the FY 27 Operating and Capital budgets.

Angela Brade gave an update on capital projects, noting that design development for ElkrIDGE is slated for May 2027 with construction to begin in July 2028. Antonia asked a question about parking lot work at ElkrIDGE. Angela explained the County oversees this. Angela further related that we are waiting on the County to provide contractor reports for the Downtown Branch. I provided additional details on the downtown branch, noting that there is a budget of \$7.5 million in FY 27 in grant authority to support feasibility, concept plan, and land acquisition efforts. County funding is not set to hit until FY 29. I related that the \$38.5 million in grant funding mostly comes from the state. Philanthropic fundraising would likely be done through the Community Foundation of Howard County.

For parking at the Downtown Branch, the amended plan for approximately 514 spaces is more cost-effective and includes a parking deck for Whole Foods and separate HRD and County parking uses. The reduced library parcel size still calls for the branch to face the lakefront with a garage facing Little Patuxent Parkway. In terms of the current timeline, complete construction is slated for Fall 2031.

The Board approved edits to Supplement 3's Appendix: How We Choose with additional edits agreed upon to include adding a statement about the Freedom to Read Act. The Board also approved Supplement 4, which was proposed with no changes. The Board approved the FY 27 Slate of offices comprised of Phillip Dodge, Chair; Antonia Watts, Vice Chair; and Dawn Popp, Treasurer.

Rob adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM to convene in closed session.

Below is a summary of the closed session held on June 17, 2026.

1. Statement of the time, place and purpose of the closed session:
 - a. Time of closed session: 8:05 pm - 8:31 pm

- b. Place (location) of closed session: Glenwood Branch
 - c. Purpose of the closed session: to discuss personnel matters and collective bargaining
- 2. Record of the vote of each member as to closing the session:
 - a. Names of members voting aye: Elizabeth Banach, Phillip Dodge, Abby Glassberg, Rob Mentz, Kelly Smith, and Antonia Watts
 - b. Members opposed: none
 - c. Members abstaining: none
- 3. Statutory authority to close session: This meeting was closed under the following provisions of General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b)(1) & § 3-305(b) (9) (add others as needed)
- 4. Listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:
 - a. Topic description: To discuss personnel matters and collective bargaining
 - b. Persons present for discussion: Tonya Aikens, Dorna Anderson, Elizabeth Banach, Angela Brade, Phillip Dodge, Abby Glassberg, Stacey Fields, Christie Lassen, Steve Lewicky, Rob Mentz, Kelly Smith, and Antonia Watts.
 - c. Action Taken/Each Recorded: The Board discussed the Collective Bargaining Agreement, along with personnel matters.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on Wednesday, September 16 at the East Columbia Branch.

Respectfully submitted,



Tonya Aikens

President & CEO

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Isha: Hello Board of Trustees Members, My name is Isha Ande, my name is Ahana Roy and my name is Tanvi Anand and we are members of the MHHS period club.

Today, we want to reiterate a proposal very important to us—supplying the HCLS library system with menstrual products. For the past 10 months, our club has done our best to provide a supply of menstrual products to the bathrooms in our local libraries through fundraisers, and grants. We used the money to purchase pads and tampons, which we placed in baskets in women and family restrooms. However, our contributions may not last forever, which is why we would like to request that part of the budget is allocated to these essential resources in the future.

We started this project because we wanted to give people who menstruate access to products that can give them peace of mind, regardless of their economic status. These products make our libraries more accessible. But don't just take it from us:

We asked for community feedback on the initiative through QR codes placed next to the products:

Isha: "This is such a beautiful idea. Thank you dearly for doing what you do. I can express how many times I've been in a bathroom with the metal sanitary boxes empty despite putting a quarter in. Making it accessible to everyone is fantastic. I wish you well."

Tanvi: "Unexpectedly got my period at the library. These menstrual products were extremely helpful! Thank you for having them."

Isha: Additionally, one of the questions on our survey is "Can you easily access menstrual products every month?" and unfortunately, we saw that 30% of our respondents answered "no" making it clear that this issue is pressing.

However, the products that have proved essential to so many community members are being supplied through student fundraising, which is only a temporary solution. A temporary solution that our library branches have been asking to extend. Throughout this process, our library branches have been reaching out to us and asking for more products, showing how necessary this initiative is. For the benefits of this program to continue, it is imperative that the HCLS does its part to fund the supply.

Surprisingly, the main counterargument against implementing this policy—the cost—is relatively low. HCPSS's distributor, which is where we purchased the products, gave us 250 pads for \$56 and 500 tampons for \$95. Since an initial order of tampons and two orders of pads for each branch lasted around 3 months, We spent 82 dollars per branch per month. Calculating the cost for the whole year, supplying all 6 branches with menstrual products for the full fiscal year would cost \$5,900.

Tanvi: HCLS Board of Trustees, we implore you to consider funding menstrual products in bathrooms. We already have the data on how often products need to be replaced and how

much those products will cost. We've already seen positive impacts and appreciation for menstrual products. Now, we need your help to ensure that our community can continue to benefit from access to menstrual products.