

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
March 15, 2023**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Cathy Funk – Isle of Wight County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Connie Henderson – Isle of Wight County
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Michelle Manfred – Isle of Wight County
Jessica Moore – Sussex County
William Scott – City of Franklin
Bill Worsham – Southampton County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
Denise Tynes – Isle of Wight County
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County

Chair, Connie Henderson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:02 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

Ms. Manfred moved, and Ms. Funk seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes

Ms. Moore moved, and Ms. Hedgepeth seconded the minutes be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

Mr. Neal relayed a message from Ms. Claggett whom was not able to attend this month's meeting due to a family matter.

Library Director's Report

Central/System-wide Updates

There is Senior Library Assistant vacancy in Windsor, effective April 1; interviews are scheduled in late March.

Winter Reading Program was a huge success – circulation of children's materials increased 28% over February 2022.

BRL staff completed 20 trainings in February. One BRL staff member attended ALA's Lib Learn X conference in January. Over 13,000 visits to library locations in January.

Mr. Neal gave a presentation on fine free libraries, including trends, statistics and supporting articles. Mr. Neal also answered Board questions on the subject.

Please let Mr. Neal or Ms. Henderson know of any ideas/issues for educational topics.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Mr. Worsham/Mr. Neal – The Sussex County budget workshop is scheduled for March 30, 2023. Mr. Neal will let relevant Trustees know of a time once announced. Mr. Neal attended the Franklin budget session; BRL is fully funded in the City Manager’s proposed budget. Please contact City of Franklin representatives to advocate for the library. Southampton County’s budget work session for county departments and community agencies is scheduled for April 12, 2023.

Scott Carr will make his annual presentation on the Rawls Trust at the April Board meeting. Please send any questions for Mr. Carr to Mr. Neal by April 1, 2023.

Personnel & Policy – Mr. Neal – Director annual evaluation packets have been distributed. Please return to Ms. Vaughan at the April Board meeting.

Accounts Payable

Ms. Moore moved, and Mr. Worsham seconded that the accounts payable be filed for the Annual Audit. The vote was unanimous.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Nominating Committee – Ms. Henderson appointed Ms. Vaughan, Ms. Lease and Ms. Briggs to the Nominating Committee. They will meet and return with a report in April. Please let them know of your willingness to serve.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Manfred – Carrollton (in partnership with the Master Gardeners) will host a plant sale May 6.

Ms. Funk – Windsor Friends will host book sales the 2nd Saturday in April, May and June from 10a-12p.

Ms. Moore - Spoke at Wakefield Town Council meeting requesting the Council continue to pay rent to the Wakefield Foundation on behalf of the library. Wakefield Friends will host a Capt. Bob’s dinner on March 22 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Waverly Friends will host a paint night fundraiser on April 17. Mr. Neal and Mr. Douglas are scheduled for a “paint-off.”

Ms. Henderson – Smithfield Friends are hosting an enormous book sale. Megan Wilson gave a presentation at the Carrollton Ruritan meeting and received a donation from the club. Mr. Neal will email information to Trustees regarding library advocacy regarding federal budget.

Dr. Scott – plans to host a series of lectures at the Franklin branch in the future.

Ms. Dawson – very happy to see the Little Free Pantry at the Surry branch. She will call a Long Range Plan committee meeting in mid-April.

Ms. Hedgepeth – RMA gallery floor has been done, kitchen work has started. Hopes to reopen soon.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees will be at 3:00 p.m. on April 19, 2023 at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

Ms. Briggs moved, and Ms. Manfred seconded the meeting be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Terri Hedgepeth, Secretary