

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
May 17, 2023**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight 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
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Denise Tynes – Isle of Wight County

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
William Scott – City of Franklin
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
Bill Worsham – Southampton County

Chair, Connie Henderson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:01 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

Trustee Tynes requested to attend this meeting remotely. Mr. Neal read the Motion to Permit Board Member to Participate Remotely, filled in the required information, and conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, and Moore
Nays: none

Presentation by Scott Carr, Wells Fargo Advisor

Wells Fargo advisor Scott Carr gave a presentation on the status of the Rawls trust, which experienced a 16.6% loss in 2022, but is up 5.1% to date in 2023.

Agenda

Ms. Moore moved, and Ms. Briggs seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes
Nays: none

Minutes

Ms. Funk moved, and Ms. Hedgepeth seconded the minutes be approved as presented. Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes
Nays: none

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Central/System-wide Updates

BRL staff completed 25 trainings in April. Three staff members attended VLA's Professional Library Associates Forum in Newport News.

Nearly 16,000 library visits in April (+6% YOY)

Celebrated National Library Week, National Library Volunteers Day, and National Library Workers Day in April

New Partnership: 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten and Bronco Federal Credit Union – Upon completion of the program, participants will receive a voucher for a \$25 starter account in BFCU's Buzz Club Financial Literacy Program.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – budget information is still pending in Sussex and Surry. Sussex held a budget workshop, indicating external agencies would be held to level funding. BRL should not have a problem. There is a public hearing scheduled for the proposed budget on May 18, 2023.

Ms. Dawson – Surry held its public hearing, no cuts for BRL in proposed budget. Should consider and vote on budget May 18, 2023.

Mr. Neal – Franklin and Isle of Wight approved budgets with full funding for BRL. Southampton plans to vote on May 23, 2023, with BRL fully funded in the proposed budget.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Briggs – The committee met on May 3, 2023 and reviewed ten policies. The following changes are recommended:

- D1 – Appointment of Personnel – removal of “Board” from the first sentence, “and salary review” from the second sentence, and “personal” from the fourth sentence. The first bullet point should be removed entirely. The second bullet point should change from “race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, handicapped status” to “race, age, gender identity, physical and/or print/learning disabilities, national background, or personal beliefs.”
- D2 – Classification and Benefits - Both mentions of 37 ½ hours should be changed to 36.25 hours. The mention of 7 ½ hours should be changed to 7.25 hours.
- D3 – Fringe Benefits – The wording “5 percent of compensation” should be removed.
- D5 – Flowers and Memorials – should be changed to read “At the discretion of the Director or Board Chair, the Director and/or Chairman of the Board shall provide appropriate evidence of the Board’s sympathy and concern in cases of death of Board members, staff members, or their family members.”

Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes

Nays: none

The following policies were reviewed, but no changes made:

- D1 – Nepotism Policy
- D4 – Travel and Training
- E3 – Unscheduled Closing Policy
- E6 – Uniformed Services Leave
- E7 – Civil Leave
- E10 – Leave Donation

Long Range Planning – Ms. Dawson – The committee tried to meet on April 3, 2023, but did not have a quorum. A short discussion was held resulting in one proposed update from staff. Bullet 1 in Objective 6 should be changed from “Use of a cataloging and processing metric to achieve established baseline results” to “Increase physical collections to meet the evolving needs and demands of our community.” Ms. Moore seconded the motion and Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes

Nays: none

Ms. Dawson stated that the committee would take a closer look at the plan next year; the current plan expires in 2025.

Nominating – Ms. Lease – The committee presented the following slate of officers for 2023-2024: Mr. Worsham, Chair; Ms. Dawson, Vice-Chair; Ms. Claggett, Secretary. This slate, and any nominations from the floor, will be voted on at the June meeting.

Accounts Payable

Ms. Briggs moved, and Ms. Hedgepeth seconded that the accounts payable be filed for the Annual Audit. Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes

Nays: none

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Moore – Wakefield and Waverly book clubs will take a summer break after June meetings and resume in September. Staff looks forward to Summer Reading. Craftsy programs will stop in May and resume in the fall. Waverly Friends of the Library held a successful plant sale fundraiser and Farmers Market. The next Farmers Market is on June 20th.

Ms. Henderson – There is a nice photo of Carrollton’s plant sale in the May 17th Smithfield Times. IOW Historical Society, Schoolhouse Museum, and Main Street Baptist Church are collaborating to sponsor a Juneteenth program, speaker will focus on Rosenwald Schools. Mr. Neal stated that BRL would participate in the event.

Ms. Funk – Windsor Friends of the Library hosted a well-attended going away party for Bethany Hardy (who filled a full-time Senior Library Assistant position in Smithfield). Melody Ranck was promoted to Senior Library Assistant in Windsor.

Ms. Dawson – Surry and Claremont will begin Summer Reading programs in the afternoon this year. Surry hosted a nice Mother/Daughter tea on Saturday morning.

Ms. Hedgepeth – Rawls Museum Arts High School Art Show is up until Memorial Day weekend. She is concentrating on writing and working one day per week at RMA. Interviewing with agents soon. Writing short stories of military brats during the cold war.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees will be at 3:00 p.m. on June 21, 2023 at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

Ms. Funk moved, and Ms. Dawson seconded the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Carter conducted a roll call vote.

Ayes: Briggs, Claggett, Dawson, Funk, Hedgepeth, Henderson, Lease, Manfred, Moore, and Tynes

Nays: none

The meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Terri Hedgepeth, Secretary