

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
January 17, 2024**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Rita Gibson – Isle of Wight County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Michelle Manfred – Isle of Wight County
Jessica Moore – Sussex County
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
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
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
Connie Henderson – Isle of Wight County
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin
Denise Tynes – Isle of Wight County

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

Agenda

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

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Minutes

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

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Central/System-wide Updates

There is one part-time Library Assistant vacancy in Wakefield/Waverly.

All regular staff completed at least one self-appointed training by December 31, 2023. A total of 32 trainings were completed in November/December.

The Holiday Food Drive was successful for all branches; fines waived to encourage generosity. Donations were distributed to appropriate partners throughout the service area.

Four staff members are scheduled to attend the LibLearnX conference in Baltimore later in the month.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – The committee did not meet. Ms. Moore reminded Trustees that it is budget season and of the importance of citizen advocacy. Mr. Neal encouraged Trustee advocacy as meetings and hearings are scheduled. Fiscal year 2025 funding requests have been sent to Surry, Southampton, and Isle of Wight Counties, and the City of Franklin. A packet has not yet arrived from Sussex County.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Vaughan – no report

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Mr. Worsham – Please check your handouts for updated Trustee and Board Committee lists.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Hedgepeth – Rawls Museum Arts is currently operating under winter hours. They are open Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. She will have an article published in American Military Anthology in May 2024!

Mr. Worsham – Please try to attend any budget meetings/hearings in your localities.

Ms. Moore – The General Assembly is in session, hopeful for full or over-funding of State Aid. Please advocate for this. Wakefield and Waverly resumed book clubs, Craftsy, and kids programming in January.

Mr. Neal – will be in touch as budgets progress with advocacy needs. There is no real legislation aimed at libraries this session. The minimum wage bill (HB-1 & SB-1) has passed both houses, waiting to see what the Governor does once it reaches his desk.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on February 21, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. 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 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary