

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
May 15, 2024**

Present

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Michelle Manfred – Isle of Wight County
Jessica Moore – Sussex County
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
Bill Worsham – Southampton County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
Denise Tynes – Isle of Wight County
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director

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

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 17.2% gain in 2023, and is up 6.0% to date in 2024.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Minutes

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

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

Library Director's Report

BRL celebrated National Library Week in early April with special promotions and events. Isle of Wight Museum ran a special promotion for free entry with a BRL card; 40 of the 150 visitors that week got in free with their library cards.

Staff attended Public Library Association conference and attended 16 trainings.

Customer service changes implemented in late April, including eliminating overdue fines to increase access to the library.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – did not meet, but may need to meet prior to June Board meeting. BRL does not have a funded budget to date, may need to make alterations.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Vaughan – did not have quorum for meeting, so no business was conducted. The committee completed Mr. Neal’s annual evaluation.

Nominating – Ms. Lease – The committee presented the following slate of officers for fiscal year 2025: Chair: Deborah Dawson; Vice-Chair, Pam Lease; Secretary, Sylvia Claggett. Ms. Lease asked for nominations from the floor, there were none. This slate of officers will be voted on at the June Board meeting. Ms. Lease thanked the committee members for their work.

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Mr. Neal – Board Orientation is typically held prior to the July Board meeting. There could be four new members appointed by then. Since none of the representatives from the Library of Virginia are available on July 17, Mr. Neal asked if the date should be moved. Ms. Hedgepeth moved that Board Orientation be rescheduled for July 24, 2024 at 1:00 p.m., with the Board meeting immediately following. The vote was unanimous.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Hedgepeth: Rawls Museum Arts hired a new Director, Zoe Beale. The high school art show is up until the end of the month, all local schools represented. The VMFA Art Bus will be at RMA on 5/18/2024.

Ms. Dawson: Happy to see the parking lot in Surry being paved.

Judge Harris: received email regarding library cards and gaining information regarding voting and opposition vs libraries in the community

Mr. Neal – new marketing campaign – 1,500 homes in service area (areas with high concentration of blocked cards) will receive three postcards each over the summer inviting them back to the library.

Ms. Moore – Waverly Farmer’s Market has started, staff at both branches preparing for SRP. Wakefield Friends group is in need of officers and members. May need to look at programming for adults over 65.

Ms. Vaughan – LVA United for Libraries monthly newsletter has very good articles and training opportunities.

Mr. Neal will send link to Board.

Ms. Briggs – Much excitement regarding progress of community center! Pickleball court is almost done; large meeting space in progress.

Ms. Manfred – June is her last month on the Board. Just signed up for Hoopla and loves it.

Mr. Neal – State Aid will increase in FY2025. 94% funded in Governor’s budget.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on June 26, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary