

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES  
June 18, 2025**

**Present**

Ora Briggs – Sussex County  
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County  
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County  
Deborah Dawson – Surry County  
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin  
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County  
Pam Lease – City of Franklin  
Kathy Lippard – 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  
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin  
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

**Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests**

None

**Agenda**

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

**Minutes**

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

**Public Comment**

Angela Brown with the Western Tidewater Community Services Board had questions regarding children under 18 receiving library cards. Mr. Neal and Ms. Lauver explained BRL's policy and card options for group visits.

**Correspondence**

Mr. Neal informed the Board that Karen Richardson would replace Ms. Moore on the Board for Sussex County, effective July 1, 2025.

**Library Director's Report**

Ms. Lauver gave an overview of BRL's Summer Reading Program that kicks off June 23, 2025. *Color Our World* will focus on engaging youth in art, literacy and educational activities to stem creativity throughout the summer. Summer Explorers Story Time offers preschool children the opportunity to explore and expand their boundaries with dynamic early literacy activities. She provided brochures and information to all Trustees and explained how to find programs and events on our website and social media.

BRL maintains its strong presence in the community with fun and educational programs in all localities. We also donated 400 books to the CHIP office for distribution to its families.

**Committee Reports**

*Budget & Finance* – Ms. Moore – BRL appears to have full funding for FY2026 in all localities.

*Personnel & Policy* – Ms. Vaughan – committee met, but did not have a quorum. Photo Enforcement Citation policy will fall under New Business.

*Long Range Planning* – Mr. Neal – The first community conversation at StoreHouse Coffee in Franklin on June 12, 2025 was very successful with approximately 20 attendees. Notes from the meeting are in handouts. Thank you to those Trustees who were able to attend. Ms. Hedgepeth stated that even StoreHouse customers not there for the meeting had good things to add to the conversation.

### **Accounts Payable**

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

### **Unfinished Business**

*Election of Officers for FY2026* – Ms. Dawson – The proposed slate of officers for fiscal year 2026 is Deborah Dawson, Chair; Pam Lease, Vice-Chair; and Ora Briggs, Secretary. Ms. Dawson asked for nominations from the floor – there were none. Ms. Moore moved, and Mr. Worsham seconded that nominations be closed and the slate of officers be accepted as proposed. The vote was unanimous. Ms. Vaughan moved, and Ms. Hedgepeth seconded that the slate of officers be elected as proposed. The vote was unanimous.

### **New Business**

*Acknowledgement of Outgoing Board Members* – Mr. Neal and Ms. Dawson expressed their gratitude to outgoing Trustees Terri Hedgepeth, Jessica Moore, Pam Vaughan and Bill Worsham. Each of these Trustees chaired committees and/or the Board during their years of service.

*Photo Enforcement Citation Policy* – Ms. Vaughan – a draft of the policy was distributed with the packet. Mr. Neal reviewed the policy and asked for questions. There was not a quorum at the committee meeting, but those present consented to recommend approval of the policy. Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. Vaughan seconded that the policy be accepted as presented. The vote was unanimous.

### **Board Member Comments/Announcements**

Ms. Lease – expressed thanks to outgoing Trustees

Ms. Hedgepeth – enjoyed serving on the Board

Ms. Claggett – expressed thanks to outgoing Trustees. Sorority will participate in Juneteenth activities in Smithfield and Surry

Ms. Lippard – expressed thanks to outgoing Trustees. Summer Reading looks fun!

Ms. Briggs – expressed thanks to outgoing Trustees. Sussex Community Coalition started a men's group. They are doing great things! Basketball and pickleball courts are complete. Received a \$325,000 grant to renovate daycare center!

Ms. Cuthbertson – was inspired by a 20 year-old at community conversation. Lots of good things happening!

Ms. Vaughan – will still be around to help with Windsor library! Loves the library and enjoyed serving on the Board.

Ms. Herrala - expressed thanks to outgoing Trustees

Ms. Moore – Find your passion and follow it! The library has been her passion, and she will still be around to help!

Mr. Worsham – to continuing Trustees – Carry on and keep pushing forward!

### **Announcement of Next Meeting**

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be Board Orientation/Refresher on July 16, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch. The Board meeting will immediately follow.

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for  
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary