

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2025**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Margie McClenny – Southampton County
Karen Richardson – Sussex County
Kisha Watford – Southampton County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:10 p.m. at the Franklin Branch. There was not a quorum present.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

No quorum

Minutes

No quorum

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

One vacancy as of 10.7.2025

Several BRL staff attended 2025 Virginia Library Association conference; learning and sharing with other library professionals throughout the state.

Circulation +8% through first quarter of fiscal year compared to same period last year.

Ms. Lauver gave an overview of new sensory kits available for checkout. She also explained changes to upcoming Winter and Summer Reading programs. Both programs will focus on reading goals.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Mr. Neal – Committee met prior to today's Board meeting, but did not have a quorum. The proposed FY2026 budget was presented. Please send questions to Mr. Neal, Ms. Dawson, and/or Ms. Lease. Staff holiday gift cards will appear on the November 19, 2025 meeting agenda.

Personnel & Policy – no report

Long Range Planning – Mr. Neal – committee met October 8th. There is a draft of Pillars, Goals, and Strategies in today's meeting handouts. Please send feedback/new ideas to Ms. Dawson and Mr. Neal. Staff will begin fine-

tuning strategies and goals. Further discussion planned for November Board meeting. BRL's current strategic plan expires December 31, 2025 – new plan to be adopted in January 2026.

Accounts Payable

No quorum

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Judge Harris – loving all the new ideas and creative programming offered at BRL

Ms. Dawson – Chippokes Fall Festival scheduled for 10/18. Happy to see BRL In-Service Day in Surry this year.

Plans for revamped Winter Reading and Summer Reading programs are great and timely.

Ms. Briggs – Fall Festival at Community Center scheduled on 10/25 to include a trunk-or-treat.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be the Budget Workshop on November 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch. The Board meeting will immediately follow.

Adjournment

No quorum

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Ora Briggs, Secretary