

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES  
May 20, 2026**

**Present**

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County  
Ora Briggs – Sussex County  
Jacqueline Carr – Isle of Wight County  
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County  
Deborah Dawson – Surry County  
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County  
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County  
Margie McClenny – Southampton County  
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin  
Kisha Watford – Southampton County  
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County  
Bonnie Lauver – Interim Library Director  
Amy Fisk – Administrative Services Coordinator

**Remote (via Zoom)**

**Absent**

Pam Lease – City of Franklin  
Karen Richardson – Sussex County

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:07 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

**Agenda**

Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. Watford seconded that the agenda be approved as amended. The vote was unanimous.

**Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests**

None

**Minutes**

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

**Public Comment**

Charlene Herrala spoke as a citizen of the Town of Windsor regarding the placement of the proposed Windsor Library. The Friends of Windsor Library are assisting in circulating a petition to have the new library built on a vacant lot near the Old Point National Bank building, recently purchased by the Town of Windsor to be the future town office. Ms. Herrala, and the Friends of Windsor Library, feel this would be a better location, as opposed to, the proposed location near Windsor Town Center. Currently, the Windsor Wildcats football organization rents the proposed site at Windsor Town Center. Ms. Herrala stated the Wildcats have spent their own funds on the field and many feel it is just as important to keep the football program as it is to have a new library. Also, the parking lot at the proposed site is very congested when school lets out. She feels the other location, beside the future town office, will be a much better place due to easy access and room for playground equipment.

**Correspondence**

None

**Library Director's Report**

BRL Summer Reading Challenge will be available at all locations June 15 through August 8, 2026. The program is open to all ages; registration is available through the Beanstack app or website. Information on all challenges is available on the BRL website.

Library staff attended the Dolly Parton Imagination Library kick-off event hosted by Early Childhood Western Tidewater, the City of Franklin and Southampton County. We are pleased all localities are now participating in this amazing literacy initiative.

The Surry branch has an upcoming Virginia 250 program, presented by the Library of Virginia, on May 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm. This program will provide local history of events that happened during, and shortly after, the Revolutionary war.

### **Committee Reports**

*Budget & Finance* – Ms. Dawson – No report

*Personnel & Policy* – Ms. Briggs – no report

*Search* – Ms. Dawson – The job announcement was posted to various job boards. The committee has received 8 applications as of May 15<sup>th</sup>. The committee reviewed all applications at the first meeting held earlier today (May 20). The committee will continue to review any applications that come in between now and when the job posting closes May 31<sup>st</sup>. The next Search Committee meeting is scheduled for June 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm in the Franklin Branch meeting room.

### **Accounts Payable**

Ms. Blunt moved, and Ms. Watford seconded, the accounts payable be filed for the Annual Audit. The vote was unanimous.

### **Unfinished Business**

Locality budgets should be finalized in June.

City of Franklin reappointed Pam Lease to serve on the Board for her second 4-year term.

### **New Business**

Nominating Committee – Ms. Lease – the committee recommends Ms. Richardson to be the Board Chair and Ms. Lease to remain the Vice Chair. There is no current recommendation for the Secretary position. Nominations can be taken from the floor when the Board votes at the next meeting.

Schedule of meetings FY 26-27 – Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. Blunt seconded to approve the FY 26-27 Schedule of Meetings with the amendment to remove Board Orientation from the schedule. The vote was unanimous.

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

Ms. Herrala – Met the new Branch Manager, Oliver Kish. He is very excited to be in his new position and would like to be included in the planning of the new library.

Judge Harris – The search for a new Library Director is a lot less discouraging as she originally thought it would be. Very happy to have a pool of candidates to select from.

Ms. Dawson – Very excited about the upcoming Virginia 250 program coming up in Surry.

### **Announcement of Next Meeting**

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on June 17, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Watford moved, and Judge Harris seconded the meeting to be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Fisk for  
Ora Briggs, Secretary