

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EASTERN SHORE'S NEW REGIONAL LIBRARY PLANS FINALIZED



Photo above: The library's Construction Committee and the project Steering Committee recently met to approve the construction plans. Pictured left to right: Tom Rakowski, Charle Ricci, Dennis Custis, Richard Lewis, Supervisor Paul Muhly, Cara Burton, Tim Valentine, Pam Holley, and Stewart Hall.

(ACCOMAC, VIRGINIA) February 25, 2019 – The new regional library for the Eastern Shore of Virginia is moving forward to its next phase: going out to bid for construction. The new library facility will be located in Parksley, Virginia with groundbreaking starting this spring 2019 and opening in 2020. On Monday, February 25, 2019 a joint meeting of the Eastern Shore Public Library (ESPL) Construction Committee and the library project Steering Committee took place at the Chamber of Commerce to review the 100% design plans for construction. After a brief discussion reviewing a punch list of committee concerns, both committees passed motions to approve the plans and refer them to the ESPL Board of Trustees and the Accomack County Board of Supervisors for approval. Thereafter, the county Department of Public Works will oversee the construction.

The ESPL Construction Committee was formed June, 21, 2016 by the library Board of Trustees to work with the architects, Waller, Todd, and Sadler of Virginia Beach, to design the \$5 million facility that meets library program needs and stays within budget. The committee was formed to have representation by the trustees, library staff, counties, and community members. The 2019 committee was co-chaired by library trustee Dennis Custis and library volunteer Pam Holley. In addition to Custis, trustee representatives included trustee Chairperson Jacqueline Davis and trustee Tim Valentine. Staff representatives included Library Director Cara Burton and Librarian Charle Ricci. Accomack County's Superintendent of Public Works, Stewart Hall, was the county representative. In addition to Pam Holley, other community members included John Callander and Tom Rakowski.

The Library Board of Trustees greatly appreciates the time and dedication of the committee members in reviewing the multiple phases of library design work. In 2016, the committee chairperson was trustee Gerry Ryan and included past Trustee Chairman Kitty Hall, trustee Paul Berge, Jeb Wilson, and Parksley Mayor Jim Eichelberger, in addition to most of the current members. The committee lost a valued member when Mayor Eichelberger passed away suddenly in October 2017.

The committee challenged the architects to refine the plans to create a practical, aesthetically pleasing public building that will serve the library needs of both Accomack and Northampton counties for generations. Public information meetings provided for community feedback. The program plan was transformed in 2017 with requests to provide for the Eastern Shore's archive preservation and access needs, creating the Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center. It will be located in a newly constructed addition to the former grocery store. The plans are on view in the library in Accomac.

In September 2018, the construction committee began to meet jointly with the project Steering Committee, which was formed under the Memorandum of Understanding between ESPL and Accomack County. The Steering Committee consists of a Trustee, Tim Valentine, a County Supervisor, Paul Muhly, and a community member, Richard Lewis. Lewis, who owns Associated Grain in Parksley and served as a Parksley Town Councilman from 1987 to 1997, is the Steering Committee Chairperson. The Steering Committee members and the library director also participate in the Parksley Downtown Revitalization Project.

The ESPL Foundation continues to raise funds for the construction and the furnishing for the new regional library. Individuals and organizations interested in supporting this project still have time to donate for a naming opportunity, to be on the donor walls, or to buy a brick. Information on the many ways to support the library can be found at www.shorelibrary.com, by picking up a donation form at any of the four Shore libraries, or calling the campaign office at (757) 787-2500.

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