

**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY GETS \$500,000 APPROPRIATION**

The Commonwealth of Virginia will help fund the construction of a new library that supports the Eastern Shore of Virginia's literacy and cultural needs. Budget amendments introduced by Delegate Robert S. Bloxom, Jr. and Senator Lynwood W. Lewis, Jr. were approved for the new Virginia budget. Included in this appropriation is \$500,000 for a new library on the Eastern Shore. This amendment provides funding for the Eastern Shore Public Library to allow it to adequately serve its citizens in Northampton and Accomack counties. A new library will meet Virginia State Library standards, including ADA compliance, an expanded and modernized Eastern Shore Room to preserve and protect our historical and genealogical treasures, expand children's reading programs, computer and digital literacy, reduce illiteracy on the Eastern Shore and improve accreditation for schools. The funds will be matched by \$2 million from Accomack County and \$2.8 million from donors.

In December 2015, the Trustees of the Eastern Shore Public Library voted to move the main library from the Town of Accomack to Parksley. The new location will be six miles from the current location which is in a building built in 1964. The Accomack location is woefully inadequate. It fails to meet 20 out of 24 Virginia library standards for communities of similar size. The roof is in need of repair and an antiquated air-conditioning system threatens the precious books and genealogical data currently in its Eastern Shore Room. At 11,000 ft.<sup>2</sup>, the current library has no workspace for administration, classes and meetings. The need for a new library was identified by the library Board of Trustees and concerned citizens over a decade ago. Momentum for a new library culminated last year when the Accomack Board of Supervisors committed \$2 million to a library and the Town of Parksley stepped forward to provide a new home. The Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation, the library's fundraising 501(c)3 partner whose mission is to ensure the long-term financial stability of the library, purchased the property in March 2016. The building was formerly the Fresh Pride grocery store.

"This is great news for the Eastern Shore to move forward with this project. Volunteers and our representatives have worked together to ensure the new library building will become a reality." said Cara Burton, Library Director. "We are moving forward with the design and additional fundraising efforts to meet our goal of \$5.3 million. This new library is important for all citizens on the Shore and the Commonwealth of Virginia agrees."

The Eastern Shore Public Library system includes four libraries: the main library in Accomack, a branch in Nassawadox and member libraries in Cape Charles and Chincoteague Island. The main library provides services to all four libraries including book purchasing, cataloging, inter-library loan delivery, and overseeing state aid through the Library of Virginia. Individuals interested in using the library can stop by any location and receive a library card with proof of identification. For more information call (757) 787-3400. For more information about the Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation, visit <http://www.esplfoundation.org>.