



Main Library - Accomac

Northampton Free Library
Chincoteague Island Library
Cape Charles Memorial Library

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**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

April 13, 2021 at 1:00 pm
(Meeting held electronically)

Present: Gerry Ryan (Chair), Patricia Bloxom, Jay Davenport, Joyce Holland, Althea Pittman, David Poyer, Tim Valentine (Vice Chair), James Lilliston (Treasurer). **Absent:** Dennis Custis, Carl Rose-Jensen.

In attendance: Cara Burton, Director. **Staff:** Stacia Childers, Tiffany Flores, Charle Ricci, Karen Sharp.

Capital Project: Al McMath.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ryan at 1:02 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** McMath reported that he, Tom Rakowski and Jeremy Shiflett (Accomack County DPW) met onsite earlier today and agreed that the original roof has some issues and that a different track than is currently planned needs to be taken for reconstruction in order to avoid problems in the future.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Poyer motioned to accept the minutes from the March 9, 2021 meeting. Holland seconded. Motion approved.
4. **Financial Report.** Holland motioned for the Financial Reports as provided by Burton to be accepted. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
5. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. Burton visited CCML yesterday and the staff, consisting of Rutledge and Silvey, are doing quite well. The town of Cape Charles is getting increasingly busy leading up to the summer season.
 - b. Chincoteague Island Library - Included in system report. No new updates presented.
 - c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report. A very successful Artmobile event was had on Thursday in Nassawadox and in Onancock on Friday and Saturday. The Nassawadox stop generated a great deal of excitement and many spontaneous visitors in addition to the scheduled appointments. There were approximately 50 visitors each day. Burton expressed thanks to the volunteers who helped and to Flores and Rogers who helped to organize and promote the event.
 - d. ESPL Friend's Reports – No report submitted. Burton reported that the office space currently occupied by the Foundation at Four Corners Plaza will no longer be available. The boxes of books stored at the office for a future book sale are now being stored at Carol Callander's house. The ESPL Friends have been more active now that some members are fully vaccinated and they have been very helpful in processing discarded books to send to Better World Books.
6. **Library Director's Report** – Cara has been working lately on signage for the new library. Interior room identification signage is covered by the contract with RH, but not directional signage or names on the building's exterior. The signage work has been subcontracted to ADCO signs. The font has been determined and by using vinyl lettering instead of hard molded plastic signs, more purchasing power is gained. Burton also requested that the acceptance of a sculpture by a potential donor be approved by the Board. Burton recognizes the need for a donor policy and hopes to have a draft ready for a first reading at the May trustee meeting. Burton placed the second SmartBus public wifi device and an iPad at the Saxis Museum. Also, an iPad was sent to Tangier Island for their library and museum. The current fiscal year's budget included \$3,000.00 for library services on Tangier and Burton is going to request a \$2,500.00 disbursement in order to

support their construction/staffing needs. The remaining \$500.00 has already been expended for travel expenses and other services. Bloxom motioned to accept Director's Report. Poyer seconded. Motion approved.

7. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**

- a. Capital Campaign Update – Davenport plans to address the Foundation's request for beginning a Strategic Planning process for the Heritage Center under New Business.

8. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – Things are moving slowly and there needs to be a change in how the roof over the original building is reconstructed. The appropriate personnel are involved at the Steering Committee and the County level. McMath added that the decision will need to be made relatively quickly.

9. **Old Business** – None.

10. **New Business**

- a. Donated Sculpture – Burton displayed a photograph of the sculpture from a potential donor. Poyer motioned to accept the donation of the sculpture. Holland seconded. Poyer concurred with Burton that a donation policy should be developed and put in place for future donations. Burton is working on such a policy. Motion approved.
- b. Strategic Planning – Davenport noted that the Foundation has recently run into a roadblock that needs to be addressed so that their fundraising work can continue. In the past, an attempt to secure funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the Library was successful. However, the NEH denied a grant application for the Heritage Center because the Heritage Center does not have a strategic plan. A second grant was denied just a couple weeks ago for the same reason. The NEH is a large source of funds and also a gatekeeper for many other grant sources and organizations. Approval from the NEH opens the door to other sources of funding. Davenport requests that the trustees discuss and agree to develop a strategic plan for the Heritage Center. The Library of Virginia will provide an experienced individual to assist the trustees with beginning the planning process during a retreat. Burton provided a timeline for developing a strategic plan in this month's board packet. Ryan expressed his full support for the development of a strategic plan, but would like to ensure that there be appropriate input from the members of the Foundation that have participated in the development of the Heritage Center over the years. Bloxom asked whether the planning retreat could be in person. Davenport noted that the meeting could be held at the Chamber or at the Onley Town Center. Davenport explained that input from the Foundation is included in the process and is a part of the timeline after this initial first step of approval. Davenport motioned that the board of trustees agrees to initiate the timeline to move forward with a strategic plan, recognizing the need to begin taking these steps promptly. Holland seconded. Motion approved. Davenport will send an email with the potential dates for the retreat and will compile the results to determine which date works best for the largest number of trustees.
- c. Grand Opening Planning – Burton requested direction from the library board as to what is being envisioned for the grand opening event, as well as if the planning will be done by the Foundation, the trustees, a committee, or a combination of the three. It could be traditional, with dignitaries and ribbon cutting, or more of a celebratory party. The library will plan a family-friendly event as well. There has been some discussion about retaining an event planner. Colette Nelson and Burton interviewed a recommended event planner who volunteered to help. Burton suggested that this planner be involved as an advisor, managing a more local, "on the ground" individual, who would be compensated. Poyer agreed that the use of a paid professional would be beneficial. McMath expressed support from the Foundation through financial help and volunteer work, but asked that the details of the event be decided upon by the trustees. Bloxom inquired about COVID restrictions as to number of attendees. Burton is hoping that large group restrictions could be relaxed by the time

the grand opening would be held, possibly in September. Ryan asked whether the opening should be grand, or a more scaled down celebration. Davenport expressed his support for an expansive celebration to share the new facility with the public and ensure their future support. Holland and Pittman agreed. Ryan noted that an event of this nature and scale would require a professional planner and asked that along with the Foundation, Burton proceed with finding an event planner and preparing a proposal and a budget for the opening.

- d. ESPL Budget Plan Revisions FY2021/22 – Bloxom noted that the program expenses during this fiscal year were much lower than budgeted and Burton explained that this was due to COVID. Burton also noted that virtual programs are less expensive in general. Burton wanted to make clear to the trustees that the library will not be open to the public as many hours as in the past because of flat-level funding from Accomack County. Burton explained that adding evening and weekend hours present difficulties in finding qualified people willing to work those hours. The state requires that the main library be open on Saturday as well as one evening each week. The current plan includes evening hours at Accomac and Nassawadox one night each week and Saturday hours in Accomac. Davenport motioned to accept the budget plan revisions. Bloxom seconded. Motion approved.
- e. Personnel Manual – Revision to provide more specific guidance for meal breaks – *Second Reading* – Bloxom motioned to approve for second reading the “Meal and Rest Breaks” addition to the Personnel Manual. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.

11. **Additional Comments** – Ryan is hoping to meet in person at the May meeting and asked that anyone who objects to such a meeting make it known.
12. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at ESPL in Accomac at 1:00 pm
13. **Adjournment** –Valentine motioned to adjourn the meeting. Davenport seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:57 by Chair.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Burton, Secretary