



Main Library - Accomac

Northampton Free Library  
Chincoteague Island Library  
Cape Charles Memorial Library

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**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

June 8, 2021 at 1:00 pm

(Meeting held in-person at Accomack County Airport Meeting Room, Melfa and electronically)

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

**In attendance:** Cara Burton, Director. **Staff:** Charle Ricci, Barbii Rogers. **Capital Project:** Al McMath.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ryan at 1:00 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Davenport motioned to accept the minutes from the March 9, 2021 meeting. Pittman seconded. Motion approved.
4. **Financial Report.** Burton noted that June is the last month of the ESPL's fiscal year. Staff are busy spending remaining budgeted funds with the goal of no carryover of funds into the next fiscal year. Bloxom motioned to approve the reports as submitted. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
5. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
  - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. No new updates presented
  - b. Chincoteague Island Library - Included in system report. No new updates presented.
  - c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report. No new updates presented.
  - d. ESPL Friend's Reports – No report submitted. Burton reported that the ESPL Friends are gearing up to hold a July Book Sale, a favorite event of the local community. Friends' members continue to be very active with assisting Ricci with the withdrawal of books in preparation for the move. Davenport motioned to approve the reports as submitted. Poyer seconded. Motion approved.
6. **Library Director's Report** – Burton updated the board about an ongoing issue where the Accomac well water periodically tests positive for clostridium. A state health department representative recommended that the outdoor faucets be flushed. A plumber is working on replacing and upgrading both exterior faucets. The representative also recommended that the two backflow devices connected to the well and the boiler be replaced. During the boiler inspection earlier today, the inspector determined that that the boiler no longer needs a backflow device because of a built-in swing check. The management of the facility and equipment is taking up an increasing amount of the director's time and illustrates the need to expedite the move to the new facility. Moving forward, it will be important that the lease agreement between the ESPL and Accomack County ensures that the County will be responsible for maintenance and repairs of the new library facility. Burton also noted that she, along with other local government entities and non-profits, is busy trying to determine how to spend the available ARPA monies. Rose-Jensen motioned to accept the Director's Report. Davenport seconded. Motion approved.
7. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**
  - a. Capital Campaign Update – Davenport reported that the Capital Campaign Committee is operating actively and meeting every two weeks, with committee members working on both existing and new projects.
8. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – Valentine deferred to McMath to provide a construction update. McMath met with the Steering Committee to prepare a funding request to the Accomack Board of Supervisors for additional project costs related to COVID-related delays for both materials and

personnel. Because of water intrusion in the roof, there is a black mold issue. All parties involved have decided that the roof needs to be completely replaced. The contractor estimates that it will cost \$162,000 to replace the roof and there will be a 4-6 month delay while the necessary materials are acquired. Supervisor Muhly presented a request to the Supervisors for \$230,000 (which includes the cost of roofing materials and related architectural fees). Subsequently, the County has researched and found a materials source for the metal decking to replace the existing gypsum roof with a much shorter lead time of 4 weeks. The Supervisors have given County staff approval to proceed with the ordering of the needed materials. A meeting with Steering Committee members and the County's legal counsel will be held later today to determine who can legally purchase the materials – the County or the contractor. McMath also mentioned that certain items, such as the alarm and video systems, were removed at the beginning of the project through value engineering, however these systems will need to be purchased and installed at the appropriate time in coordination with the construction process. The Foundation has acquired a grant, independent of the original contract, and has received County approval to have these systems installed at the appropriate phase of construction. Additionally, the Foundation would like to sell the Mariner House, but there are currently a significant amount of materials stored there and the Foundation staff member is working there as well. Depending on the timeline of construction completion, the Foundation is contemplating whether or not to move the materials and sell the Mariner House or to wait to move and sell the property when construction is complete. Davenport asked about the possibility of sealing off the Heritage Center and completing that portion of the building while waiting for the roof replacement. McMath explained that the original idea to separate the Heritage Center and get that finished despite the wait for the remainder of the building would cause problems. There are shared electrical and mechanical systems between the two portions of the building and subcontractors objected to working solely on the Heritage Center due to the possibility of water damage while the library portion of the building remained open to the elements. Ryan agreed and noted that Tom Rakowski also determined that this would not be a cost-effective or practical strategy.

## 9. Old Business

- a. Strategic Planning – Davenport noted that strategic plans for the ESPL and the Heritage Center are necessary to qualify for grant funding but developing such plans can take a lengthy amount of time. A subcommittee made up of Davenport, Holland, Burton, and Casey Greer met to draft mission statements and vision. The subcommittee attempted to consolidate the results from the Strategic Planning Retreat into these statements. The subcommittee recommendations for these statements are included in today's trustee packet for editing and approval from the board. Poyer motioned that the statements drafted by the subcommittee be accepted and adopted for both the ESPL and the Heritage Center. Pittman seconded. Motion approved. Ryan expressed appreciation for the work done by the subcommittee. Davenport noted that the subcommittee will continue its work on the strategic plan and will notify the trustees of progress. Burton added that in years past, library staff met to determine how to apply the strategic plan in a practical way in regards to public service. Burton requested approval from the trustees to close the ESPL library system for one day in July to do the same with these newly adopted statements. Davenport motioned to authorize the director to close the library for one day for staff training and strategic planning. Poyer seconded. Motion approved.
- b. Grand Opening Planning – Burton noted that the grand opening committee met yesterday, with Burton and Holland attending as well as Hilary Hartnett-Wilson and Megan Ames, both event planning professionals. The plan is to hold a grand opening event on a Tuesday evening in March, with a donor reception after construction is substantially complete but before the library moves into the building, with 150-200 donors invited. Small group tours would be offered. The second event will

be a ribbon cutting/open house event on a Friday in April or May, similar to the ground breaking that was held a couple of years ago, and open to the general public. The event would continue throughout the day with tours offered, timing it so that the attendees would be spread out and perhaps the downtown restaurants and stores could be open in conjunction with live music downtown. This would spread the celebration throughout the town, help to support local businesses, and feature the revitalized areas of the downtown. Once the library moves, Burton plans to hold an event for children. The committee estimates that all of these events could be held for \$10,000 and requests feedback from the trustees to proceed. The Foundation will need to solicit sponsors for the donor event. Valentine noted that the downtown revitalization project is not moving ahead with much speed. Poyer asked about the possibility of offering transportation to attendees outside of the Parksley area through Star Transit. Ryan pointed out that the Accomack County school buses are used to transport pony swim attendees and Burton noted that buses of that size would hold more people. Burton also pointed out that the Hermitage, the CSB, and the Area Agency on Aging also have buses. Davenport suggested that Parksley businesses could offer a special discount to attendees of the grand opening.

#### 10. New Business

- a. Election of Officers – Davenport offered a report from the nominating committee for the Board’s officer positions which expire on June 30, 2021, which was made up of himself and Bloxom. After speaking with current and potential officers, the committee presents the following recommended slate of officers for the July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 term of office. For Chair, Joyce Holland. For Vice Chair: Pat Bloxom. The nominating committee would like to commend Chairman Ryan on his long, faithful, and effective service. The committee would also like to commend Valentine for his leadership contributions. Both officers will remain as active contributors to the Board. Davenport motioned that Holland and Bloxom be elected to the offices described. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
- b. ESRL Equipment and Technology Budget and COVID-related operation costs – At the Foundation’s request, Burton created an updated equipment and technology budget to update the trustees and to make it clear the process she is taking to make decisions. Burton has ordered everything for the NFL USDA Grant, and Burton is awaiting the USDA’s approval on procurement. Burton added a column to the budget of how much of each of the needed amounts have been funded. McMath mentioned the video surveillance and the burglar alarm systems earlier and Burton will update these items as fully funded through the Foundation. The contents of the budget have not changed, but the updates include any changes in pricing and items that have been funded. McMath explained that the Foundation is trying very hard to retain the contingency fund so that at the end of the construction project, there will be money remaining to purchase the needed equipment and technology. Burton also created and distributed a summary of the various COVID-related federal and state funding. CARES money was awarded in 2020, and was made up of federal money through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which was granted to the state library, which then granted it to the ESPL based on need. This money was to be used for the RFID materials tagging system and must be spent by September 30, 2021. Most of the supplies and equipment for this project have been purchased and tagging has begun. This will allow self-checkout and security, particularly with the Heritage Center collection. The construction delays have made it impossible for the purchased RFID system security gates to be installed before the CARES deadline. Thus, the gate installation costs of \$10,000 will not be eligible for reimbursement with CARES money. The LVA is allowing ARPA money to be used for installation instead, and Burton will be using most of the \$10,000 of CARES funding for a portion of a website development project, (which will total \$13,500 for two phases, one

with CARES funding and one with ARPA funding). The remaining CARES funds will support the Red Backpack program through Read Every Day project, which will provide 10 new books for each kindergartner and first grader in both Northampton and Accomack County schools, packed in a backpack, at a cost of \$1,000, and also the printing of the ESPL time capsule booklet to distribute to donors, supervisors, school board members, and participating students at a cost of \$1,500. These projects will utilize the CARES money before the deadline.

The ARPA funding available to the ESPL totals \$28,700 from the IMLS through the Library of Virginia. \$10,000 of the total will be designated for the RFID gate installation. The second phase of the website development project, costing \$5,500 would also come from ARPA. Software for any laptops or tablets purchased with the Equal Connectivity fund will need to be purchased and ARPA can be used for this purpose. The restrictions on the ARPA funding significantly limits what this money can be used for and Burton is deciding on how best to use the remaining \$10,000.

The Equal Connectivity Fund was given to the FCC by Congress to improve internet connectivity to the general public. A similar discount program that the library currently participates in, known as e-Rate, currently pays for 80% of our internet costs. The Equal Opportunity Fund will pay for 100% of certain items. This money cannot be used for internet or equipment within the library, but could be used for mobile Wi-Fi hotspots at locations outside of the library. Many libraries are offering circulating Wi-Fi hotspots, but this kind of program requires a staffing capacity greater than what the ESPL currently has. Because of this, and because of the number of devices necessary to provide sufficient levels of service to the Shore, Burton is reluctant to pursue this route. Burton has been considering sustainability and staff time in purchasing decisions using these additional sources of funding. Burton instead plans to pursue partnerships with local agencies and nonprofits to determine if they have programs which would lend itself to this type of technological equipment. For example, the library could provide tablets and Wi-Fi hotspots to patients of nonprofit healthcare organizations that would better allow program participants to keep their appointments. The nonprofits know which program participants would benefit from the equipment, and could offer anonymity. Additionally, because the Tangier museum and library are not officially affiliated with the ESPL, they could benefit from these potential resources. The SmartBus devices that the ESPL placed at the Saxis Museum and at the Tangier Community Center will need to be renewed using either the CARES, ARPA, or Equal Connectivity Funds. Burton noted that more SmartBus devices could be purchased and placed in internet dead zones on the Shore and can help develop more library/community partnerships. Another possibility would be book lockers that could be placed throughout the Shore in locations distant from library branches where patrons can pick up their requested items. Burton noted that this additional federal funding is coming at a point where we've done a lot of planning for the new building, but also allows us to look ahead to use new technology to serve the community, despite our low staffing capacity.

11. **Additional Comments** – Davenport commends Burton and library staff who do excellent work on a consistent basis. Davenport also asked if the Library of Virginia is looking into ways that individual library systems can protect themselves from ransomware. Burton made note of the question and explained that the LVA has just advertised for an adult services position, and that individual could help develop programs that would help with issues such as this. The ESPL has a sophisticated firewall to help ensure security and retains Robert Johnson as our technology consultant to help the library stay up to date. Ryan expressed his thanks to the trustees for their cooperation and understanding during his time Chair and wishes good luck to the new officers.
12. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, July 6, 2021 at ESPL in Accomac at 1:00 pm.
13. **Adjournment** – Valentine motioned to adjourn the meeting. Poyer seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 2:26 by the Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cara Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "C".

Cara Burton, Secretary