



Main Library - Accomac

Northampton Free Library
Chincoteague Island Library
Cape Charles Memorial Library

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**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

August 10, 2021 at 1:00 pm

(Meeting held in-person at the Northampton Free Library, Nassawadox, and electronically)

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

In attendance: Cara Burton, Director. **Staff:** Tiffany Flores, Charle Ricci, Hannah Swimley. **Capital Project:** Al McMath.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Holland at 1:01 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** – Poyer motioned to accept the minutes from the July 13, 2021 meeting. Bloxom seconded. Motion approved.
4. **Financial Report.** Burton is focusing on getting monies still outstanding that are to be reimbursed, such as those from FEMA. Another round of FEMA money related to COVID expenses has just opened and Burton plans to apply. The USDA Rural Development reimbursement is forthcoming, but will not be issued until we have expended all of the matching funds, purchased all equipment, obtained invoices and accepted delivery of items onsite. IMLS money from the CARES and ARPA grants are also still to be collected. Burton included a revised budget in the trustees' packets to reflect an update from the approved April 2021 budget with some firmer figures that more accurately reflect the FEMA and ARPA money and actual state aid funding. Burton received Accomack County and Northampton County CARES money towards operating expenses last year. Burton has not asked either county for ARPA money to avoid conflicts with Foundation asking for ARPA money for the capital project. McMath explained that the Steering Committee requested \$230,000 from Accomack's ARPA money to be used to replenish the contingency fund, which had been completely expended for the roof. (Accomack County funded the additional \$7000 that was above the amount in the contingency fund.) The Foundation is reaching out to individual towns to request some of their ARPA monies, but success for this approach may depend on what the County and the Town of Parksley are contributing. Valentine reported that Mason has indicated that a motion will be made at this week's Board of Supervisors meeting to allocate \$215,493 of the County's ARPA funding towards the construction of the roofing system. Burton noted that once this is approved, the trustees can decide whether or not to approach Northampton County to match 25% of Accomack County's contribution. Davenport motioned to accept the financial reports as submitted. Bloxom seconded. Motion approved.
5. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. Burton observed that the CCML is spending a lot of energy in service to tourists, possibly to the detriment of service to local residents. Burton has asked CCML and CIL about service areas outside of the Town of Cape Charles (and south of the Town of Eastville) and the Town of Chincoteague (and north of Temperanceville). We may have underserved areas in lower Northampton and upper Accomack Counties. Burton is asking for guidance from the board for the levels of service being provided by the ESPL system for the areas outside of these towns, the local residents of the towns that may be impacted by the need to concentrate on tourists, and the individuals and families that reside on the Shore seasonally to

provide migrant labor. Holland suggested that this be addressed through the strategic planning process. Holland also asked about how to best reach people to let them know of programs at the library in order to boost attendance, particularly youth services programs. Burton noted that at CCML and CIL, many program attendees are tourists. Additionally, summer reading plans for this summer had to be made during the pandemic, with uncertainty as to what kind of programming would be possible. Summer food is being offered by local schools, which could lead to lower attendance at the library's summer food programs, which in the past were held in conjunction with activities and hot meals. Covid-related restrictions have made this difficult this year. Ryan pointed out that once the library is located in Parksley, the hope is that more children from the town and the neighboring school will be able to attend, without the need be driven to the library, as is necessary in Accomac and Nassawadox.

- b. Chincoteague Island Library - Included in system report. No new updates presented.
- c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report. Burton introduced Hannah Swimley, the new branch manager.
- d. ESPL Friend's Reports – No report submitted. ESPL Friends continue to provide invaluable volunteer assistance with donations and discards. Some members will also be training to assist with RFID tagging.

6. **Library Director's System Report** Burton traveled to Northampton High School this morning to help prepare for the packing and distributing of special backpacks purchased with CARES money and a grant from the Soho Center that included 10 books for each of the approximately 800 children in kindergarten and first grade in Accomack and Northampton County schools. Participants of the re-entry program at the regional jail assisted in packing each backpack with the books. Additionally, Burton provided copies of the book of the Arcadia Middle School's winning entries for the library time capsule contest, which the ESPL printed with CARES money. Flores will distribute copies of the booklet to Accomack schools, the Library of Virginia, and the Governor's office. Burton also presented copies of the Nassawadox walking tours, 10,000 were printed with Northampton County's CARES Act funds, and the brochures demonstrate how the Heritage Center can support tourism on the Shore. Burton plans to continue working to expand the Nassawadox brochure, as well as begin work on an Exmore Walking Tour. Burton demonstrated a CSB WalkKit that includes an MP3 player with over 160 lessons focusing on health and mindfulness for elementary, middle, and high schoolers. Local teachers have been utilizing the kits to encourage their students to increase their physical activity and learn while moving. Burton also pointed out the Story Trail outside of the NFL, and described the off-site story trail at Indiantown Park. The Historic Onancock School and Kerr Place have expressed interest in partnering with the library to add Story Trails as well. Brush has been pruned back around the NFL and Burton plans to reclaim the back of the library lot over time to make the space more usable. She noted that the NFL has the nicest green space for programs out of all four Shore libraries. Burton met with Accomack Health Department and environmental consultant that shocked the well at Accomac library. Burton understands that Accomack County will be obtaining a temporary chlorinator for the library well, which should help resolve clostridium issue. The town of Parksley is making good strides with the sewer system, but Burton has concerns about Parksley town water for drinking and has suggested to the Town of Parksley that they use some ARPA money to improve water lines in the town. Burton acquired a 2020 drinking water assessment from the Accomack Health Department that indicated that many recommendations have been made to the town by the Health Department that have not been addressed. She feels this is a good time to address this, because the federal ARPA funding and the newest infrastructure bill could support some needed improvements. Holland expressed thanks to ESPL staff for their talents and dedication.

7. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**

- a. Capital Campaign Update – McMath noted that the Foundation had previously voted to fund the alarm and video systems for the new library, which had been value engineered out of the original construction contract. It makes sense to install these systems during construction, rather than later at additional expense. Now, APRA money is available for these systems, so that \$11,000 allotted originally will now be applied to the Foundation’s debt. Tom Rakowski will oversee the installation of these systems as well as internet cabling. The Foundation now owns the Mariner House, and ESPL has been left a portion of the Milliner (Accomac) estate. Dominion Energy just donated \$15,000 to the Foundation, and other pledges continue to come in. The Foundation still has a debt of \$230,000 that they are working to pay down. McMath’s goal is that within a year, an endowment will be in place that will contribute support to the library for years to come.

8. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – Construction on the roof started this week and progress is being made. Valentine asked about the subcontractor who had begun installing internet cable without cable trays or conduits before the project halted because of roof issues. Burton noted that a change order will be issued so that the cabling will be installed properly.

9. **Old Business**

- a. Strategic Planning (Davenport) – Burton noted that the most recent strategic planning meeting was productive. The library staff are working on the strategic plan; and the library will need to close to allow the public services staff time needed to complete their portion of the plan. The next planning meeting date will be September 20, 2021. Ryan motioned to approve the library closing on September 20, 2021. Davenport seconded. Motion approved.
- b. Grand Opening Planning (Holland and Bloxom) – One of the event planning consultants has not been available recently, and so there are no updates for now.

10. **New Business**

- a. Temporary storage of library archives – Burton explained that there had been some concern about having people in the Mariner House besides Childers and the Foundation administrative assistant. Burton suggested that the archives be moved out of the Mariner House so that the Foundation could proceed with the sale of the property. Valentine offered space for the archives at his bank building in Parksley, and the Foundation office will operate out of space at the Historic Onancock School. Approximately 95% of the Mariner collection is boxed and ready to move, and the goal is to move everything out of the Mariner house by Labor Day. Burton has a local person who is qualified to move the collection with assistance from library staff. Ryan motioned to approve the move of the archives to the bank building in Parksley, with Davenport seconding. Motion approved.

11. **Additional Comments** – Davenport noted that the current Covid surge is expected to peak in September or October. As much as we’d like to put this behind us, the pandemic may continue to affect us into the new year, with respect to the Grand Opening. Holland has been collaborating with Burton about long-term planning for retaining employees. Holland has asked that the Personnel and Finance Committees meet separately to review this and then jointly form a recommendation that can be made to the board. Holland presented Ryan a book, signed by the trustees, with thanks and appreciation for his wonderful leadership as Board Chair.

12. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 1:00 pm, at the Melfa Airport.

13. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 2:09 by the Chair. Valentine motioned to adjourn with Bloxom seconding. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cara Burton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'C' and a decorative flourish at the end.

Cara Burton, Secretary