



Main Library - Accomac

Northampton Free Library
Chincoteague Island Library
Cape Charles Memorial Library

PO Box 25
Parksley, VA 23421
Phone: 757-787-3400
Fax: 757-787-2241
www.espl.org

**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

October 19, 2021 at 1:00 pm

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

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

In attendance: Cara Burton, Director. James Lilliston (Treasurer). **Staff:** Tiffany Flores, Charle Ricci. **ESPL**

Foundation: Frank Hall, Al McMath, Colette Nelson.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Holland at 1:00 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** – Amendments to complete motions of September 14, 2021 meeting. Item 10B: Approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the Library of Virginia for the IMLS American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding totaling \$28,709. Bloxom motioned to approve the MOU, with Valentine seconding. Motion approved. Item 10C: Bloxom motioned that the entirety of the Joyce Brown Milliner bequest be transferred to the ESPL Foundation for the immediate investment of the funds into a new Joyce Brown Milliner endowment at the ESVA Community Foundation for the benefit of the general library operating support. Davenport seconded. Motion approved. Adjournment: Davenport motioned to adjourn the September 14, 2021 meeting. Pittman seconded. Motion approved. Bloxom motioned to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2021 meeting. Rose-Jensen seconded. Motion approved.
4. **Finance Committee (Bloxom)** - Bloxom reported that the committee has met twice since September's trustee meeting and reviewed financial policies and a proposed organizational chart and budget. The highest current priority for staffing is a circulation manager. At the second committee meeting, Burton provided flowsheets to Davenport and Frank Hall that illustrate how donations are handled, the accounts payable process, and the payroll process. Burton provided an update regarding the recent incident of a fraudulent request for payment and the ongoing investigation. The library's insurance company has sent a representative to install security software on public and staff computers to allow activity to be monitored. Existing security and firewall will remain, but this will be an additional layer of safety. To her knowledge, no patron information was compromised, and the new security software will not impact patron privacy on library computers or Wi-Fi. Bloxom expressed appreciation to Burton for charts that allow the trustees to see how money is handled and flows through the organization. Davenport sees the need to address and reconfirm how large donations are handled. Burton noted that the auditor has determined that the best practice for handling large donations would be for the ESPL to deposit the donation and then a separate check would be written from the library to the ESPL Foundation for the same amount. This would create a paper trail and would allow the deposit to be tracked on the library's financial statements. Burton also noted that endowments are included in state aid calculations, and donations such as the Milliner would need to be included in the total. Davenport voiced concerns about delays that could result due to County restrictions on investing while waiting for the ESPL's check to clear and does not see an advantage to adding complexity to the process. Lilliston added that anything coming in to the library will need to be run through the library's checking account. Even though the library is separate from Accomack County, the County acts as the fiscal agent. The deposit will need to be

cleared before writing a check to the Foundation. Burton suggested that the auditor write a letter or call into the next trustee meeting to explain further. Davenport would appreciate additional clarification. Holland requested that this matter be referred back to the finance committee, which would consult with the auditor and with the ESPL Foundation and return with a recommendation at the November BOT meeting. McMath explained that he had understood that the motion made at the September 2021 BOT meeting meant that the Milliner money would go to the Foundation, not realizing that there was a circuitous route for the money to get to the Foundation. McMath would also like clarification on how much money constitutes a large amount. Burton explained that in the flowcharts she created, she used \$1,000 as the minimum amount considered a large donation, but this has not been officially approved. Davenport added that if the check is made out to the ESPL Foundation, the deposit would be directly to the ESPL Foundation. Hall noted that there are inconsistencies in what we are trying to do. He said that if the donation is to the library, the deposit should go to the library, which is good accounting practice, and that the issue is one of expediency. Having small donations deposited by the library and then issued through a second check to the Foundation can delay the thank you process, and Hall acknowledged that large donations are different. Burton spoke with the auditor regarding the previous motion regarding checks written to the ESPL for smaller amounts going directly to the Foundation. The auditor determined that this practice is fine, and it is only in cases of large bequests that the paper trail is required. Details from the auditor are needed as to cut-off amount that determines whether a donation is small or large and would be sent directly to the Foundation or deposited with ESPL before then being issued as a second check to the Foundation.

5. **Financial Report.** Davenport motioned to approve the financial reports as submitted. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
6. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. CCML Friends are holding some interesting programs over the next couple of months, including a lecture on the hops industry.
 - b. Chincoteague Island Library - Included in system report.
 - c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report.
 - d. ESPL Friend's Reports – No report submitted. Friends' members have been quite active and are to meet with Burton in November about volunteer coordination. The Friends recently held a very nice going away luncheon for member Barbara Laden.
7. **Library Director's System Report** – No updates presented. Flores and Burton plan to attend the Parksley Trunk or Treat event to hand out books on October 30th. Bright red children's shelving, purchased with the USDA Ag Rural Development grant in addition to the ES Community Foundation matching grant, has been delivered and assembled at the Accomac library in preparation for the move to Parksley. This new shelving is being stored in between other shelving units that have been emptied and consolidated to allow for additional storage room. Storing furniture and fixtures in the current facility has been challenging.
8. **Facility Committee** – Poyer submitted a report noting that he met with the representative of Johnson Controls for an exhaustive review of placement and installation of security and alarm equipment. Johnson Controls holds the security contract for the NFL. Davenport inquired about the alternative bid from a different contractor with a much lower price point. Davenport looked into the reputation of Johnson Controls and found that it is extremely poor and that former and current customers are extremely dissatisfied with Johnson's service. Davenport does not think it wise to select a contractor with such a poor record whose bid is three times higher than the alternative. The liability clause that caused the library to reject the alternative bid was not considered significant in a previous, similar situation with the County. Burton had also requested a third quote, which the committee has not yet reviewed, but Burton noted that it was unprofessional. McMath

noted that the security and video infrastructure will need to be installed after the roof was removed and the roof decking was welded, but while the roofers were still working on the exterior of the roof. The cable trays and raceways would ideally need to be installed before the walls were closed in and the window of installation is now. The coordination of installation is important to avoid unnecessary expense. Valentine explained that the roof decking is completed, but the roofing subcontractor is not showing up to install the roof because they have yet to be paid for their work on the Heritage Center in April. County officials are attempting to meet with the contractor to remedy this issue. Holland asked that the facilities committee could call a meeting if progress suddenly begins on the roof. In the meantime, the library could return to the attorney to see what could be done about the liability clause in the alternative bid. Burton noted that the library attorney and the insurance company both shared the concern about the liability clause. Davenport suggested that the facilities committee ask Mike Mason about his experience with similar clauses in contracts that the County has been involved with. Burton will also look into the revised Johnson Control quotation, and will look back in the records as to the original bids to identify another source for a quotation. Davenport noted that Accomack County and Wallops are both using Johns Brothers. McMath asked if the bids included a future monthly monitoring cost, and noted that in his experience, there can be a 3-5% increase yearly, and this will need to be included in operating expenses. Burton has yet to have anyone explain what the issue had been with Johnson. Holland asked that Davenport work with Poyer in Ryan's absence. If needed, the committee will ask Burton to contact Mason about his experience with Johnson and with liability clauses for the County.

9. **Personnel Committee (Pittman)** – The committee has met once, and Rose-Jensen reported that retention was discussed. The experts advise higher pay and benefits. A staff dinner was proposed, but with the pandemic, a spring picnic might be preferable. The committee also considered whether continuing education and trainings would be beneficial. A questionnaire or survey could be given to staff, keeping it short and simple, but the committee is unsure as to whether this would help get to valuable information. An issue to staff hiring and retention is selling the Shore, especially to young people. Holland spoke with Pittman and Burton regarding appointment of a staff member to the committee; this would allow better insight into employees' feelings and concerns.
10. **Grand Opening Committee (Bloxom and Holland)** Bloxom reported that a donor event will be held the last of March by the Foundation. Invitations will be sent, and hor d'oeuvres and wine will be served. The grand opening event is planned for the first of May, and will be very similar to the groundbreaking ceremony. There has been talk of involving the town and local businesses. There may also be an event for children in the summer. The committee will meet again on Monday with two representatives from the Foundation and two event planners.
11. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**
 - a. Capital Campaign Update – Nelson mentioned that the Foundation has a new director, Kasey Grier, who has been assisting the Foundation recently with grant writing. There is still some research going on to acquire funds to hire an archivist. Fundraising through the basket drawing is continuing, with the drawing to be held on December 3. Davenport asked each trustee to sell 10 tickets to the basket drawing. Letters to donors are being sent, including a recent Chairman's letter.
12. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – Everything is pretty much at a standstill.
13. **Old Business**
 - a. Strategic Planning (Davenport) – The next meeting will be held on October 21st.

- b. Milliner Estate – Addressed in minutes above. Hall noted that the Milliner endowment fund has been established with Hampton Roads Community Foundation. Burton suggested that some PR be done to recognize Milliner’s generosity.
 - c. Eastern Shore Community College MOU – Due to the amount of time that has passed since the MOU was originally proposed, Burton requested that the trustees reaffirm their approval of the MOU and Burton will proceed with signing and submitting it to Dr. Shaeffer, President of ESCC. It will benefit ESCC students and will involve cross-training between library and college library staff. The tutoring and meeting spaces at the new library will allow for in-person and virtual meetings for college students. Valentine motioned to reaffirm the MOU. Davenport seconded. Motion approved.
14. **New Business** – Burton noted that United Way donation forms are on the table. The library tries to support the United Way in appreciation for their generosity to the library in the past. The Davis Center is a new community center in Whitesville, abutting the town of Parksley. The family inherited a store, which they have converted into a beautiful space that includes a meeting room and computer center, and they just held a week of grand opening events. Burton has shared the ESPL’s after-school online tutoring resources with the Davis Center. Burton distributed a postcard to the trustees from the Davis Center that includes their mission and vision statements. Holland asked the personnel committee to include Cara in their next meeting. Holland expressed appreciation to the trustees for their work during these challenging times, and to the Foundation for their support; she welcomed ESPL Foundation members’ attendance at trustee meetings in the future.
15. **Additional Comments** – Davenport noted that things are going well with sale of Mariner House, with closing scheduled for November.
16. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 1:00 pm, Accomack County Airport.
17. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 2:23 by the Chair. Valentine motioned to adjourn with Pittman seconding. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Burton, Secretary