**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:   
Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library System**

2.13.24 |1 PM | Eastern Shore Regional Library & Heritage Center: Parksley, VA  
Meeting called to order by Chair, Joyce Holland

# **Attendance**

***Present:***  
Grayson Chesser, Dennis Custis, Gary Heintzelman, Joyce Holland (*Chair*), Michael Mason, Captain David Poyer USNR (Ret.), Carl Rose-Jensen, Frank Russell, Miranda Wisor (*Non-voting)*

***Absent:***

Larry J. Giddens, Sr., James Lilliston,

***In Attendance:***Tiffany Flores, Katherine Grier, Jamie Johnson, Paul Muhly, Colette Nelson, Christopher Pote

# **Call to Order**

The meeting was called or order by Joyce Holland at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

# **Public Comments**

None.

# **Approval of Minutes of January 9, 2024**

Gary Heintzelman moved that the January 9, 2024 meeting minutes be approved. David Poyer seconded. Motion passed.

**Old Business**

# **Finance Committee (M. Mason)**

No report.

# **Financial Report (M. Wisor)**

Miranda Wisor presented the Library system financial report:

* The 3rd quarter payments to the Library operating funds from Accomack and Northampton counties and State Aid have been received
* M. Wisor has distributed the monthly earning report for the interest bearing account that this Board voted to move the Library’s emergency funds to earlier this fiscal year. Growth in this account remains strong.
* Last week, M. Wisor learned that Accomack County is hiring a 3rd party contractor to evaluate the HVAC system in the Parksley building. There are some ongoing challenges with the system and the 3rd party evaluation is necessary for claims on the equipment and work of the system. Contingency funds currently held by Accomack County will be used to pay for the service.
* Last week, Joyce Holland and M. Wisor attended the Accomack County Board of Supervisors meeting to present the Library’s FY2025 budget support requests. They will do the same on February 27th with a visit to Northampton County. The requests presented at those meetings mirrors the needs outlined in the board packet this month.
* That was following the County Manager’s presentation of a balanced FY25 budget to the Board of Supervisors. To clarify, M. Wisor had requested an increase to the operating fund of $60,645 to align the Library with the county’s practices for insurance coverage for employees and for the addition of two full-time staff positions. The proposed budget recommended a $39,352 increase. Although this is slightly less than M. Wisor had asked for, it is still something to celebrate! M. Wisor thinks that the faith that Accomack County is placing in the Library represents an acknowledgment of the good work that ESPL is doing on the shore and the services that the Library System is providing to the community. We won’t know for sure until later this Spring what the approved budget for FY25 will be. M. Wisor has notified Northampton County of the proposed Accomack County budget and potential changes to align with the 75/25 agreement between counties. We won’t be able to make firm plans for FY25 until budgets are available from both counties.
* Last month, M. Wisor asked Karen Crockett’s office to update the Library’s Profit & Loss report to reflect the roll-over funds that were planned expenditures and subsequently spent to cover moving expenses. This will more accurately reflect the Library’s financial standings for the current fiscal year.

Dennis Custis moved to accept Miranda Wisor’s Financial Report. Mike Mason seconded, motion passed unanimously.

# **Branch and Friends Reports**

1. CAPE CHARLES MEMORIAL LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director’s System report.
2. CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director’s System report.
3. NORTHAMPTON FREE LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director’s System report.
4. ESPL FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY REPORT: Paper report submitted, attached to the minutes.

# **Library Director’s System Report (M. Wisor)**

System Director, Miranda Wisor reported:

* M. Wisor was pleased to report that the popularity of the Library’s programs is continuing to grow. In January, Northampton Free Library saw more attendance at programs than they have in a few months. As the days get longer, the hope is that more people will come out for events there. The Regional Library hosted a Teen Creative Writing event in January. It was planned to have been a solo event, but attendees enjoyed themselves so much that they request that it become a regular program at the library, so it will be added to the regular schedule of events.
* Vision assistance kits for patrons with low vision were made available this month for patrons to check-out. They are lit magnifying devices and are available for checkout at the Regional Library and Northampton Free Library.
* IT maintenance services have been moved to the vendor that M. Wisor had reported that was being reviewed last month: Cloud Server Techs.
* There were some challenges with the brick instillation that have extended the process. The bricks were intended to be installed three rows but were installed five bricks deep. The Foundation has ordered additional bricks to fill-in the remaining empty holes.
* In happier outdoor news, some much needed clean-up work was done outside of the Northampton Free Library last month. The hope is that the removal of overgrown landscaping and gravel will enable the library to better utilize the beautiful outdoor space for warmer weather programming. At the Regional Library, there are now outdoor trash cans installed!

**New Business**

# **Reagan Thalacker from the Library of Virginia**

Reagan Thalacker introduced herself as the Public Library Consultant with the Library of Virginia.

* She handles all new library Director orientations in the state of Virginia
* She can provide pointers and insights and answer any questions that the Board might have as they onboard a new System Director
* There are currently 6 library directorships open in the state of Virginia and it will likely take 4-6 months to fill the position
* There are specific places to post library position openings that R. Thalacker can assist with, some may have costs associated with them
* She recommends appointing an internal interim Director to fill the role until a new person has been hired
* Mike Mason asked about the use of outside firms to hire library Director’s, R. Thalacker explained that no one has used an outside firm in the time that she’s been in this position with the Library of Virginia, but that doesn’t mean that they couldn’t do so if they so chose
* Frank Russell asked about the ability of hiring someone for the position that doesn’t already hold an MLS degree and R. Thalacker explained that there is a waiver process in place so you can hire someone who doesn’t hold a MLS degree, so long as they’re actively working on the degree and prove that they’re completing the degree
* Joyce Holland asked about what a search committee size should be, and R. Thalacker recommended about 5-6 individuals

# **E-Rate Proposal Evaluation (M. Wisor)**

Miranda Wisor explained that this bid-rate process was to find a company to provide our internet service for the next 3 years.

* With the packet this month, there are three bids for internet services that were received during the open bidding process. Bids were provided for both general services and WAN (Wide Area Network) services. Also included was a matrix for comparing service from the various companies.
* The current WAN service provider is Eastern Shore Communications. They have provided good quality service and are quick to respond to disruptions or issues with the internet service. The current contract is set to expire this summer.
* M. Wisor recommends awarding the three year contract to Eastern Shore Communications for Wide Area Network services because their bid is competitive and there is an established relationship with the company that has been serving our needs well.

Frank Russell moved to accept the bid from Eastern Shore Communications. David Poyer seconded. Motion passed. *Mike Mason abstained; he is on the Board of Directors for the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority.*

# **President of the ESPL Foundation Introduction (K. Grier)**

Katherine Grier introduced herself to the Board of Trustees as the new Foundation President.

* The Foundation has had great success as a grass roots movement, in what they were able to achieve to raise funds and open the new library in Parksley
* They will be asking the Board and managers from each of the library branches what the strongest areas of need are so the Foundation can make plans to move forward as an organization
* K. Grier is working with the Foundation to revise their website to update and modernize the information
* The Foundation is also creating a new manual for their Board members
* They have created a formalized process for the branches to request funds and be reimbursed for different projects which involves a short application process
* The focus of the Foundation this year is to update technology across the 4 branches
* Foundation Board member recruitment is a priority, particularly to recruit those from Northampton County to serve on the Board
* The Raising the Green annual Fundraiser gala is coming up on March 16th at the Island House Restaurant; the funds raised will support the Heritage Center
* The Foundation will be holding the zero-turn lawnmower drawing again in the spring
* The Bricks-R-Us campaign bricks were installed incorrectly out front of the Regional Library in Parksley, VA; the Foundation is planning on selling more bricks to try and fill the areas that were left empty due to the incorrect instillation
* One way they are planning to sell more bricks is to market “Reading Star” bricks with stars on them for people to purchase on behalf of children

# **Closed Session to discuss personnel matters involving specific individuals as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-37 I (A) (1) (J. Holland)**

Joyce Holland, Chair: I entertain a motion for a closed meeting.

David Poyer moved that the Board enter closed session to discuss personnel matters involving specific individuals as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-371(A)(1): “Public bodies may hold closed meetings only for the following purposes:

1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals.”

Frank Russell seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

Joyce Holland, Chair: We are now in a closed session. The discussion in the meeting is confidential.

*Closed meeting ends.*

**Certification of Closed Meeting:**

Holland, Chair: “Do you certify that the matters discussed in the closed session just held were covered in the motion by which the Library Board entered closed session, and were excluded from the open meeting requirements of the Freedom of Information Act?”

**Roll call vote.**

Joyce Holland, Chair: Upon being polled individually by a roll call vote in open meeting, each Board member confirmed that these were the only matters of discussion during the closed session. Joyce Holland says “yes”, all members present voted “aye”.

Mike Mason moved to appoint Christopher Pote as the interim Director of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library System pending agreement on compensation for the additional duties. Greyson Chesser seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

# **Personnel Committee (Rose-Jensen)**

No report.

# **ESPL Foundation (Custis)**

Dennis Custis acknowledged that Katheirne Grier’s update on the Foundation was thorough, but emphasized the upcoming Raising of the Green gala on March 16th.

# **Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 3.12.24 at 7pm | at Cape Charles Memorial Library, 201 Mason Avenue, Cape Charles, VA.

# **Adjournment**

Dennis Custis moved to adjourn the meeting. Frank Russell seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m. by Chair, Joyce Holland.