



MINUTES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library System

7.9.24 | 1 PM | Eastern Shore Regional Library & Heritage Center: Parksley, VA

Meeting called to order by Chair, David Poyer

Attendance

Present:

Grayson Chesser, Dennis Custis, Joyce Holland, James Lilliston *ex-officio* (Zoom), Michael Mason, David Poyer (*Chair*), Frank Russell, Maureen Teague, Christopher Pote *ex-officio*

Absent:

Currently there is one vacant board member seat, Carl Rose-Jensen

In Attendance:

Jay Davenport, Tiffany Flores, Kasey Grier, Jamie Johnson, Judy Malarkey, Charle Ricci

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by David Poyer at 1PM. A quorum was present.

New Trustee Welcome

Maureen Teague was welcomed as a new Board of Trustees member and introduced herself to the Board.

Public Comments

- Judy Malarkey presented the Friends of the Eastern Shore Public Library June 2024 report

Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2024

Joyce Holland moved that the June 11, 2024 meeting minutes be approved. Dennis Custis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Recognition of Prior Board of Trustees Chair, Joyce Holland (D. Poyer)

David Poyer shared a letter with the Board written in acknowledgement of all of Joyce Holland's excellent contributions to the Library System as Chair of the Board of Trustees. The letter is attached.

Dennis Custis moved to accept the letter of recognition. Grayson Chesser seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee (M. Mason)

Michael Mason shared that the Finance Committee has not met recently-no report.

Financial Report (C. Pote)

Christopher Pote provided an update on the Library System financials:

- FY2024 is over and the Library System operated on a roughly \$90,000 deficit.
 - We over budgeted our grants income by \$151,049
 - The biggest overage was in the Equipment line
 - Several services were prepaid for FY 25: insurance \$15,231; Atrium (catalog) \$8,000; SOVALUe (ebooks): totaling \$28,731

At the conclusion of this portion of C. Pote's report, Michael Mason indicated to the group that it was important to acknowledge that while these expenditures appeared to be a budgetary deficit, they were in fact pre-planned costs to be incurred as part of the moving process and were spent out of ESPL reserves.

- First quarter FY25 disbursement requests have been made and received by both Accomack and Northampton counties.
 - Disbursements from the state should be made in the next week or two.
 - The allocation for Accomack is \$798,025; Northampton = \$239,100; and state aid = \$408,124 for a total of \$1,445,249

C. Pote's goal is to not change any large initiatives that the previous director had planned and to still provide all staff other than himself with a 5% COLA increase in July.

Branch and Friends Reports

- a) CAPE CHARLES MEMORIAL LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director's System report.
- b) CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director's System report.
- c) NORTHAMPTON FREE LIBRARY: Included in the Library Director's System report.
- d) ESPL FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY REPORT: Given by Judy Malarkey during the Public Comments section (report attached to minutes).

Library Director's System Report (C. Pote)

Christopher Pote's system report began with a recap of the many successful Library System events that occurred in June 2024:

- June 15 SummerFest
- June 15 Juneteenth – Northampton

- June 18 – Clara Small lecture about Harriet Tubman
- June 22 Juneteenth – Accomack
- June 26-29 – GHOTES

- July 2 – C. Pote held an All-Staff Meeting –to set the tone for his directorship
 - Staff were told that the next 3 months would be a learning phase. C. Pote wants to learn as much as he can about staff and their roles during this time.
 - C. Pote assigned staff to submit to him: 3 things ESPL does well, and 3 things ESPL does not do well and/or a service/procedure that should be implemented
 - C. Pote is scheduling one-on-one conversations all staff and a site visit to Northampton Free Library on 7/19
 - C. Pote will also complete site visits to Chincoteague 7/12/24 and Cape Charles 7/26/24
- C. Pote has met with 2 officials from the Library of Virginia as part of the new director orientation and is scheduled to meet with several more.
 - The first meeting was with Reagen Thalacker about overall LVA assistance and C. Pote’s role as Secretary of the Board, in particular on-boarding new trustees.
 - C. Pote held Maureen Teague’s new Board member on-boarding meeting on Friday 7/5/24.
 - Yesterday C. Pote met with Kim Armentrout about state aid and Bibliostat, which is the year-end statistical and financial report the library system must report to LVA which by November.
- The year-end statistics were not yet completed for July, but C. Pote will have those stats by the August meeting.
- United for Libraries virtual conference is coming up; C. Pote emailed the details to the BOT. United for Libraries is an advocacy group for Trustees, Foundations, and Friends groups. July 30 is the virtual session for Trustees, and will cover the following topics:
 - Advocacy: The Importance of Leveraging Your Community
 - Preparing for Troubling Times: Tips for Trustees
 - Rising to the Challenge: The Trustee's Role in the "Culture Wars"
 - Securing Tomorrow: Effective Succession Strategies for Library Boards
 - Valuing Your Library: Beyond Cost-Benefit Analysis
- C. Pote is also encouraging the Foundation and Friends to participate and has been informed that Margaret Donahue-Lynch (of the Friends) has already registered.

Chair, David Poyer encouraged the BOT to participate in the United for Libraries virtual conference on 7/30/24.

- Eastern Shore Communications has switched internet providers from Eastern Shore Broadband Authority to Spectrum’s fiber optic network.
- The sign at Fischer’s Corner is completely gone. C. Pote brought this issue to the attention of the BOT in case a need was felt to replace the sign. C. Pote will follow up with Paul Muhly as it is believed that he has already investigated this issue with VDOT and may be able to advise how to move forward.

- Kellee Blake is presenting in the Regional Library Lecture Hall on 7/18 at 6:30pm – “Inborn Strength Part II, Revolutionary Women of Northampton County”.
- The next fire systems inspection is scheduled for 7/16/24.

FY25 Budget:

- C. Pote submitted the FY25 budget. *Please note, the version originally attached to the board packet contained accurate data, but an incorrect header.* The spreadsheet and the board packet have been amended to reflect the accurate titles and corrected hard copies were provided.
- The majority of the FY25 budget draft was completed by previous System Director, Miranda Wisor, but C. Pote made the requisite adjustments to the decrease in anticipated income.
- Aside from confirmed allocations, C. Pote has been conservative with income considering last fiscal year’s issue, with an anticipated operating budget of \$1,491,899.
- The biggest change this year is personnel costs. Both M. Wisor & C. Pote have broached this in the past, but this budget accounts for:
 - 5% COLA increase for all current staff, and
 - The addition of 3 new positions:
 - The plan is to move Jazmine Collins to the Heritage Center full-time
 - Backfill Jazmine Collins’ Circulation Manager position
 - Add 1 FT position: in Tech Services
 - Add 1 FT position: an Archivist to replace C. Pote

It’s important to note, these positions are budgeted as beginning July 1, with conservative estimates for insurance and retirement expenses, so the actual expenditure will be less, freeing up some funds for other initiatives and/or emergencies.

C. Pote suggested that the Regional Library & Heritage Center work to host the next Heritage Fest. Frank Russell agreed to work with C. Pote to plan the event so that it would work with the schedule of the town of Parksley.

New Business

Approval of Trustees Roster

The new Trustee Roster was submitted for approval.

Joyce Holland moves to accept the roster. Frank Russell seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

Approved roster attached.

Facilities Committee Report (D. Poyer)

David Poyer would like to revive the Facilities Committee and make it more active. The plan is to host quarterly informal inspections checking on fire safety, access, drills, security, etc. Frank Russell volunteered to join the committee. D. Poyer discussed security with Larry Giddens (a former Accomack County Sheriff), who also agreed to join the committee for quarterly security checks.

Northampton Free Library (NFL) Prospectus Phase II Report (D. Poyer)

David Poyer explained that NFL was built in 2005 and opened in Feb. 2006. The architects' plans at the time included a future phase II expansion

- Land has since been donated that will allow for the expansion.
- An architect recently inspected the building with D. Poyer and Connor Buyrn to look for any new items that should be considered.
- D. Poyer shared a proposed phase II scope of work (attached).
- Foundation President, Kasey Grier, shared that the Foundation will be happy to be a partner in this project. The Foundation is very focused on adding more directors from Northampton County to their Board to help with this project. The Foundation doesn't want to be responsible for the construction process in this project like they were in Parksley; they want to play a supporting role and focus on fundraising.

Joyce Holland moves to proceed with preliminary planning for the Phase II expansion of the Northampton Free Library and authorize the Facilities Committee to work with the Foundation, the County, architects, etc... Frank Russell seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

FY 2025 Budget

Christopher Pote requested the immediate approval of a 5% COLA increase for all staff.

Michael Mason shared that he would feel comfortable approving a 3% increase today but would need to see more data to justify the additional 2% in terms of keeping the library staff range in line with the County employees.

Joyce Holland moves to approve a 3% COLA raise today and refer the additional 2% requested COLA raise to the Finance Committee for review. Frank Russell seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Michael Mason moves to approve the FY 2025 budget, inclusive of a 3% COLA. Joyce Holland seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee (C. Rose-Jensen)

Carl Rose-Jensen was not present to report: no report.

Foundation Report (D. Custis)

Dennis Custis shared that the Foundation is still focused on selling tickets for the Zero-Turn lawnmower drawing taking place on July 16, 2024.

Additional Comments

Frank Russell shared an update on the plaque project:

- A sub-committee is now working on a bench in lieu of the originally planned plaque.
- The bench will appear to be made of a stack of books, with the backrest of the bench containing a brief history of the first library on the Eastern Shore and acknowledging the people who worked on and helped to raise the funds for the new library in Parksley.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, 8.13.24 | 1PM Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library & Heritage Center 24313 Bennett St., Parksley, VA.

Adjournment

Dennis Custis moved to adjourn the meeting. Frank Russell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m. by Chair, David Poyer.