

**Minutes of the
Rappahannock County Library Board of Trustees
Meeting on January 25, 2024**

1. *Call to Order*

Victoria Fortuna called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

2. *Confirmation of Quorum*

Library board members present: Victoria Fortuna, Debbie Knick, Judy DeSarno, Maureen Harris, Deborah Napier, Randi Shumate, Kit Johnston, John Beardsley, Bonnie Jewell, Patti McGill Peterson

Staff present: Amanda Weakley

Members of the Public Present: Ruth Welch, Friends of the Library (FOL); Ireland Hayes, Foothills Forum

3. *Approval of the Agenda*

Judy moved to approve the agenda, John seconded, and the motion was approved.

4. *Introduction of Newest Board Member*

Victoria Fortuna welcomed Deborah Napier as the board's latest member. Everyone around the table introduced themselves.

5. *Disposition of Minutes of the December 7, 2023 Meeting*

Accepted as presented without discussion.

6. *Public Comment*

Ruth reported that three long-time FOL Board members retired this past December, Sandra Cartwright Brown, Helen Williams, and Noel Lang. They were honored by the FOL and were the subject of a *Rappahannock News* article published on Jan. 18 that detailed their combined FOL service of 60 plus years.

Two new members have joined the FOL Board: Michael Handy, Master of Library Science (MLS), and a former Deputy Associate Librarian for Library Services at the U.S. Library of Congress; and Robin Schmid, who will serve as FOL Secretary and has 21 years of experience as a post-acute healthcare Sales Representative and Trainer for Medline Industries. She is also former President of Arden Courts Memory Care AL Family Council. FOL is now interested in recruiting as an FOL Board member someone who has children and is an active library patron.

Ruth outlined a number of actions taken by the FOL Board at its Jan. 15 meeting. The FOL has voted to hire a book keeper, and they agreed to make \$7,214 in donations to the library. This donation includes \$6,500 directly donated to support FY 2025 Library youth programs, FOL assembled baskets to support the adult summer reading program, and renewal of the library's *BookPage* subscription for staff and patrons. The FOL also agreed to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the FOL and the Library. The MOU was developed by Victoria, Ruth, the FOL, and Amanda. Ruth and Victoria are signatories to the MOU.

7. Report of the President

Victoria reported that the Personnel Committee met to consider Amanda's year-end performance review and had concluded that Amanda's performance was outstanding. Victoria had no further report.

8. Report of the Librarian

Amanda introduced the Library's redesigned web page (<https://rappahannocklibrary.org>) . Highlights include a feature of newly cataloged items, accessibility improvements, clarity, and ease of use across various devices. She demonstrated the website's Read Aloud feature that is intended to help users with dyslexia or other differing learning and vision abilities to access content by listening to it rather than reading it. It will also be helpful for those learning to read.

She also shared that the library now has a newsletter through Wowbrary (which provides RSS feed for the website). Patrons can sign up for the newsletter and find out about new addition to the library collection, information about upcoming events, and notices of library closures.

Amanda reported that Youth Services Librarian Sharon Buchanan is a featured reader on the Library of Virginia's Dial a Story. Sharon is also working on more teen programming as guided in part by a new teen advisory board.

Amanda presented FY 2023 Quick Stats highlights that included: 287 new registered users, 27,990 total circulations, 14,344 library visitors, 1,421 library program attendees, and 411 non-library uses of the meeting room during the last fiscal year. She also announced upcoming programs and expressed an overall excitement for library happenings.

9. Report of the Treasurer

Debbie Knick presented two reports, one highlighting expenses and revenues from 7/1/2023 to 1/31/2024 and one providing a budgetary comparison schedule from the Library Fund for the past fiscal year. She highlighted that the Library is "on track in expenses and revenue, and its investment fund is strong." She noted the net change in the fund balance of \$84,999 in the fiscal year and that these funds can be used for library purposes.

It was noted that while Debbie has resigned as a member of the board, she has asked to continue to serve as Treasurer in a volunteer capacity. Victoria moved that Debbie continue to receive a "notional listing" as the Board's Treasurer. There was no opposition.

10. Committee Reports

Personnel: Report was given earlier in the meeting.

Expansion: John noted some concerns raised by some Board members about Enteros' revised concept proposal for the expansion project, starting with future accessibility of the basement. At the Board's request, John and Amanda discussed this and other matters with the Enteros architect who expressed serious reservations and cost concerns about making the basement accessible. Another expressed concern regarded expanding the building out to both the east and west sides. A suggestion was made that expansion to both sides might not be needed or desirable, but the architect said just an east build out, for example, would make the building lopsided with no particular cost savings. Support was also expressed once again for the community space to be located upstairs to the east. John said that since the Board has already approved going forward with schematic design, "we will now go on to this, as there seems to be agreement to do so."

Buildings and Grounds: Bonnie reported that insurance will cover replacement of the defective boiler coil and asked everyone to be careful of the hole down to the rebar that has appeared on the front steps.

Finance: Debbie had nothing further to report.

Amanda then provided a report on the 2024-2025 proposed budget, beginning with revenue. The FY 2024 revised projection of revenue is on track, and FY 2025 projections show mostly positive trends, including an increase in State Aid and a \$6,500 FOL donation for youth programs. Asked what the Library Board would be asking for from the Board of Supervisors, Amanda responded \$5,000 before staff salaries and benefits are added. Specific increases in funding being requested for FY 2025 include for repair and maintenance of an aging building, IT expense, electrical service, office supplies, for which state aid can be used, adult services, and books and subscriptions, for which state aid largely covers. A motion was made and seconded to put forward the 2024-2025 Budget as presented. The motion carried.

Policy: No report.

11. *Old Business*

None.

12. *New Business*

Election of Officers for 2024. The results of the election of officers and committee assignments is attached.

13. *Open Discussion:*

Victoria noted that at the next Board meeting, members will discuss Victoria's and Amanda's annual presentation to the Board of Supervisors. She asked members to be thinking about what should be presented.

Ruth noted FOL can apply for funds for the Library when the Board is ready, such as grants from the PATH Foundation. The next opportunity to apply for the foundation's flexible fund is in January. There was some discussion to wait on this until the Expansion Committee is ready.

Judy asked whether the Library is closed when the county's public schools are closed. Amanda responded that is not always the case. "When library staff can get to the library safely in terms of weather, we will be here," she said. Amanda clarified the Library position on closing, and there was no change to the policy on closing.

14. *Adjournment*

John moved that the meeting be adjourned, Judy seconded, and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by Kit Johnston, Secretary

Signed: _____ Dated:

President