

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
June 16, 2022

The meeting was called to order at the St. Michaels Branch by Susan Sherman, President at 5:05 pm.

Attendees: Susan Sherman, Charles Yonkers, John Stumpf, Marlene Thomas, Leslie Parkerson, Robert Forloney, and Hudson Berry
Director, Dana Newman and Assistant Director, Scotti Oliver represented the TCFL, Sue Regier, TCFL Friends, Ron Engle, Town of Easton, and Shauna Beulah, Branch Manager, St. Michaels
Excused: Pete Leshner and Andrew Thaler
Absent: Estela Ramirez and Heena Paracha

Action Items:

Board members approved the May 19, 2022 minutes.

Board members approved the Income and Expense Statement.

General reminders:

Susan will keep the board informed about finalizing the date in August for the board retreat. Based on responses so far, it is looking favorable for Saturday, August 13th.

Shauna Beulah will inform board members on when she will be meeting with the two new Town Commissioners.

Let Susan know if you would like to attend a Friends meeting.

Board members are invited to attend the MAPLA booth at the MACO conference in August.

When the library gets a schedule of library visits, they will let the board know.

Susan opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the meeting.

Review of the May 19, 2022 Minutes: Susan Sherman asked the board if there were any changes. Hearing none asked for a motion. All approved and the motion carried.

Guest: Shauna Beulah, Branch Manager of the St. Michaels library gave the board an update:

- We will be offering Lunch & Learn again in the Fall as well as a Native American program and a music at noon event. Increased partnership with the St. Michaels Senior Center is also a goal.
- There is an art exhibit in the hallway at the library featuring local young artists. In July, the artwork of the wife of Bryan Christie will be featured.
- The Town of St. Michaels will be getting a new Town Manager and two new Commissioners and so Shauna will invite them to tour the library. Board members are also invited.

Old Business: none

New Business:

Maryland Public Library salary survey highlights:

Dana shared with the board that the State Library offered a grant to study salary levels across Maryland libraries. 16 library systems are participating. One of the recommendations from the study is that positions that are difficult to recruit for should be looked at first as the pay is generally more in the private sector. Several aspects were studied, such as pay on the Eastern Shore vs. the Western Shore and studying which positions are paid below average and which are at average. When the study is done, the goal is for our library system to start looking at addressing discrepancies. A brief discussion followed with several board members citing the importance of paying a living wage, promoting advocacy for staff pay, making sure job descriptions are current and to pay attention to years of service when considering pay.

Budget updates FY22 & 23:

Dana informed the board that the library received our official letter from the County explaining that we received 100% of what we asked for. In addition to these funds, the St. Michaels community gave us \$5,000. This fiscal year we are receiving monies for two capital outlay projects for new security cameras and an upgraded key card access system.. Some of the equipment for these two projects won't be coming in time for this fiscal year, so the County has told us that we can request the funding to complete the projects. The Maryland Board of Public Works has approved \$120,000 for the design of the St. Michaels expansion and renovation project.

Easton Shore Regional Library Board updates:

- We will receive \$80,000 from ESRL and this is especially welcomed as it is \$5,000 more than last year.
- Recently hired a new IT Director and Staff Training coordinator
- MAPLA will be setting up a booth at the next MACO Conference in Ocean City the third week of August. Board members are invited to help man the booth. This conference is a great chance to advocate for the library. All the County governments and several politicians will be in attendance.
- ESRL will be paying for an analysis to be done of the library collection to study the equity, diversity and inclusion of the collection.

Foundation consultant updates:

We have had two meetings with the consultant who will help us market the library and foundation to potential donors and help advise us through fundraising for the renovation project. The first goal is to build the Foundation endowment which provides the operating line in the budget \$75,000. The focus is to fundraise for an additional \$40,000. The second goal is to start to build a marketing plan and build donor relationships. A brief discussion by board members followed with such topics as:

- Timeline for beginning the capital campaign
- Clarifying the differences among the different library entities, and their fundraising goals: Foundation, Friends of the Library, the Library itself, and the Renovation project.
- It is key to have a good fundraiser and to show potential donors we already have a number of large gifts in.
- Dana lifted up some additional areas where the Foundation can assist funding:
 - CCBF (Chesapeake Children's Book Festival) was raising money on its own, but recently the library has taken more of a role with a fundraising for this. We could ask the Foundation for \$10-20,000 to help fund CCBF.
 - The Seed Library is an ongoing program and the Foundation could pay \$1,000.

- Adding funds to the Library “rainy day-emergency” fund.
- Funds for the Board to use for fundraising purposes, such as for mileage to meetings and to help pay for sending flowers.

President’s Report-Susan Sherman reported on a few items:

- The board retreat will be on Saturday, August 13th from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Jayme Dingler, who is the marketing consultant will present and we will also have a session on book banning/censorship.
- On June 24th, ALA will have a presentation on literary freedom and how boards can address this topic. They will give participants a tool-kit. Susan is attending this and can share information.
- As a result of a meeting where we got to understand how the different entities of the library work regarding fundraising, Susan suggested that it would be helpful if a board member attended the Friends monthly meetings. **Board members are to let Susan know if they can attend a meeting.**
- Library visits are planned for staff to be able to get ideas for the St. Michaels expansion. It would be helpful if Board members could also attend. When the library gets the schedule, they will let the board know. This is a great opportunity for getting new ideas.
- The board is invited to a meeting in October at the new Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library in Anne Arundel County where they will be speaking about banning books.

Treasurer’s Report –

Dana Newman reviewed the Income and Expense Statement which shows activity through the end of May 2022.

- At the end of May, unrestricted contributions are \$42,546 which is up from last year at this time and we hope to build on this.
- The library received 69% income from the Foundation. We will put in another request for money at the end of the year.
- The number of grants is higher than last year due to the hard work Scotti has done with applying for several grants.
- Under operating expenses, operating equipment is 234% due to capital outlay projects. We anticipate \$130,000 to be added in later.

Susan Sherman asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer’s report with John Stumpf moving and Robert Forloney seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

County Council Representative’s Report- Pete Leshar was not in attendance and had no report.

Easton Town Council Representative’s Report - Ron Engle reported that the Town of Easton approved the budget. This includes a 7% increase in staff salary. The town has several comprehensive plans in the works. There is a 10-year plan currently being worked on and the hope is there are more citizens that attend the next public meeting as many important issues will be talked about, including zoning. Ron emphasized that it is important to get citizens’ feedback.

Librarian’s Report-Dana highlighted a few key items from her report:

- There is an increase in our door count, as well as, an increase in circulation and computer use. We are seeing more people using the meeting rooms and attending programming.
- We will be putting together a patron satisfaction survey in the future.

- We are applying for a Rural Economic Development grant to contract for instructors for beginning computer classes, one-on-one computer assistance and job hunting assistance.
- We have a subscription with North Star.
- We had five teens attend the last focus group and the teens said they would appreciate getting service hours for volunteer opportunities.
- On Tuesday, June 21st, staff will be visiting Poplar Island. There is space available if any board members would like to go.

Scotti updated the board with the Wi-Fi project in Trappe. We are currently waiting for the delivery and installation of equipment. It will be set up in Homerun Baker Park. We are looking to set up outdoor charging tables or stations and an additional computer for outreach if they can't accommodate outdoor furniture.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers reported that the EDI committee was created three years ago, and he is proud of the work the library, committee and the community has done to work together on EDI issues. One of the concerns of the committee is the issue of book banning/censorship and how board members need to be prepared with how to respond. A priority should be made to have a response and plan prepared for both staff and board members. A reminder that this topic will be discussed further at the August board retreat.

Nominating Committee- Robert Forloney reported that Ms. Bernice Michael submitted an application to be a member of the board. She is retired and has an HR background. More information about Bernice will be sent out the to the board.

Friends' Report- Sue Regier highlighted several upcoming Friends events from her report:

- The Children's Book Festival was a huge success with authors in attendance. Friends had a table and also contributed funds to the festival.
- June 17th is the "Thrill -Seekers" book sale. The next book sale will be on September 30th where the theme is "Our World of Adventure".
- Friends will have their next board meeting on Tuesday, June 21st at the Nature Conservancy office. Board members are invited.

Foundation Report-Dana Newman reported that the Foundation had their meeting on April 21st. Some key topics were the replacement of the President position. Funds will start to be set aside for cash to use for the library expansion and renovation project. The portfolio performance ending value as of March 31, 2022 was \$3,001,391.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Reminder: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. via hybrid format at Easton.

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds