

Board of Trustees - Powhatan County Library

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

Library Small Conference Room

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Attending: Joanne Fico-Chair, Geri Venable-Vice Chair, Randy Schulkers-Treasurer, Susan Ash-Secretary; Trustees: Janice Epperson, Jacqueline Henshaw-Anderson, Betsy Mueller; Chandra McPherson-Library Director

Call to Order: Chair Joanne Fico called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

Joanne spoke kind words about Carson Tucker who recently died. He had been on the BOS for 12 years and was a tremendous supporter of our library; coming to the library's defense when there was a desire among a group of citizens to close the library a number of years ago.

Minutes: Upon a motion by Randy, seconded by Geri, the minutes of the January 11, 2023 meeting were voted unanimously approved.

Financial Reports: A review was presented by Chandra.

- The budget is approximately 48% spent, which is where we should be mid-year.
- The red question marks on the report indicate charges that we approved for payment in December but appeared in our January statements due to a delay in payments going out from the County.
- The \$400. fraud charge has been reimbursed.
- Janice asked if the credit card receipts were compared to the statements and Chandra said yes and explained the process.
- Janice asked what Baker & Taylor was. Chandra said it was the company we buy print books from. She went on to explain about standing orders and regular book orders. This discussion continued with Janice asking questions about how the library chooses books. Chandra responded in great detail about the process. *[This discussion was not over and it was asked that we continue it under the Director's report under a similar thread].*

There being no more comments or questions about finances, it was moved by Jacqueline, seconded by Janice, and unanimously voted in favor to accept the financial report.

Director's Report: Director Chandra McPherson gave the following report:

In addition to the report below, Chandra added:

- In April there will be library visits from all the kindergarten classes.
- Baker & Taylor continues to accept return of books for credit. They will even take donated books in very good condition.
- The library got a new dishwasher, a new bookdrop, and anticipate a new fish tank.

- Anne Blankman a staff member handling Youth Services is leaving.

- Anne Crothers has recently died. She was married to Sam who was the long time Treasurer of the Friends. She helped at the Friend's book sales and was a supporter.

Activities:

- I attended a preliminary budget meeting Bret Schardein on 1/12.
- I attended the FOL meeting, 1/17.
- The monthly staff meeting was held 1/17.
- Charles had a meeting on 1/19 with P& R staff to plan for a spring scavenger hunt event we are sharing with them. It will be held 3/17.
- The Books to Go Lockers Location launched 1/17. We have had some patrons use it and it has gone smoothly so far.
- The Writers Roundup on 1/20 featured twenty authors with an estimated attendance of 150. We've received a lot of positive feedback from authors and attendees.
- Our book group kicked off 1/27 with good attendance (13) and positive feedback.
- I attended the County's Leadership Team meeting 1/30.
- Michelle and I met with Friends President Bruce about the upcoming time capsule event and the proposed seed library project.
- Brooke, Anne B. and I met with Tracy Engle from the schools to discuss coordinated events for the SRP.
- Anne M. did outreach for the Community Matters 55+ group on 1/31 with a technology class.
- E-rate application for FY24 support was completed, and we'll be notified of the grant amount within the next few months.
- We are expecting the e-Rate Emergency Communication Fund Grant disbursement soon. The amount will be close to \$4300.

*** • We were informed that a local Facebook group had a comment posted complaining about some books in the children's collection. The two books mentioned were on the topics of anti-racism and gender roles. The poster included a picture of the books' location, and we realized that they were actually discussing the Parenting Collection. The original poster did not include that information and some commentors, believing they were in the juvenile collection, were unhappy. An equal or possibly higher number of comments however were supportive and positive. One individual, seeing the picture, emailed me with concerns. I responded to her and let her know that the items in question were part of the parenting collection, and she thanked me in response.**

Ongoing & Upcoming:

- I am working on updating job descriptions for staff.
- We expect to meet this month or next to discuss partnering on the Story Trail idea with Parks & Rec and possibly the Extension Office. We also will reach out to other interested potential partners.
- We applied for and received 1000 free Eclipse viewing glasses from STAR Library Network. They are to be used for programs related to upcoming solar eclipses; the next one is 10/14/2023.
- We provided library informational flyers and handouts for the Winter Family Night, held 2/9 at Powhatan and Pocahontas elementary schools.
- The shelving we ordered is expected to be delivered this month, and once delivered we will set

an installation date.

- I am attending the Spring Virginia Public Libraries Directors Meeting in March.

* The highlighted section of the Director's Report (above) presents an introduction to the discussion that was started under the financial report. This discussion continued for some time and opinions were expressed from wanting to ban books to feeling that our book collections are fine as is. It was stated at one point that the library needs to be like Switzerland, in that we are neutral, and need to put our personal and political beliefs aside and offer books that are of interest to all patrons.

As to why the parenting books were placed off to the side of the children's section the answer was that parents had requested it a number of years ago, so they could read them while monitoring their children within the area.

During discussion about the balance of books we have on any one topic, Jacqueline said she would do a review on books about Supreme Court Justices and determine if that topic is balanced. She said her findings would be presented at the next meeting.

Jacqueline moved that because the parenting books contain sensitive material they be moved from the children's area to the adult section. This was seconded by Betsy. The vote was 5 to 2 to move the books. Jacqueline then asked how quickly that would be done and Chandra said it involved staff to do the move and space needed to be created within the adult section.

Jacqueline asked they be put on a cart and placed in the adult area as soon as possible.

Patron Statistics: Chandra McPherson presented the report. There was concern expressed why so few 6-11 year olds participate. Chandra said this is typical among libraries.

Friends Report: Joanne passed out the financial statement of the Friends. This report includes the money raised within the bookshop.

Public Comments: No public was in attendance, and therefore no comments.

New Business: none

Old Business:

- Policy Update was on the agenda. It was moved by Joanne, and seconded by Randy, that due to the time we defer that topic to March. Unanimously voted in favor.
- There had been a comment at the last meeting to change our meeting time to 5:00 PM. Joanne said there was no regulations prohibiting us from doing so, as long as all board members are in agreement. Betsy stated that time would be a problem due to her work schedule. The start time of our meetings will remain at 5:30 PM.

Next meeting: March 8, 2023, at 5:30 PM.

Adjourn meeting: Meeting was moved to adjourn at 7:00 PM by Joanne Fico, seconded by Randy, unanimously voted in favor.

Submitted by Susan Ash
Secretary