

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
February 17, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Susan Sherman, President at 5:05 pm via Zoom.

Attendees: Marlene Thomas, Hudson Berry, Susan Sherman, Barbara Heatly, John Stumpf, Andrew Thaler, Robert Forloney, Heena Paracha, Ron Engle, Town of Easton Representative and Pete Leshar, Talbot County Council Liaison

Director, Dana Newman and Assistant Director, Scotti Oliver represented the TCFL

Excused: Charlie Yonkers

Absent: Estela Ramirez

Action Items:

Reminder: Board members were asked to bring ideas for strategic planning to the next board meeting in April.

Reminder: Interested board members are to contact Dana if they would like to attend the St. Michaels Commissioners Meeting on March 23rd at 6pm.

Reminder: No board meeting held in March.

Action: Board members made a motion to approve raising the library credit card limit from \$3,500 to \$7,500.

Action: Board members made a motion to approve reallocating \$5,000 from the automation revenue budget line to the building maintenance and janitorial revenue line.

Action: Board made a motion to approve the Income and Expense statement.

Review of the January 20, 2022 Minutes: Susan Sherman asked the board if there were any changes. Hearing none made a motion to approve with all approving. Motion carried.

Guest: none

Old Business: none

New Business:

Strategic Plan update

Dana shared with the board that the first meeting of the Strategic Planning committee is Thursday, February 24th from 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. via Zoom. She thanked board members Susan Sherman, Andrew Thaler, Robert Forloney and Marlene Thomas for serving on the committee. The committee's main focus is to raise awareness about what the library offers, especially reaching out to those in the community who don't always use the library. Focus groups in the areas of Youth, TC school system, Senior Center, BAAM, TCFL Friends, TCFL staff and more will be tapped for their input. Dana asked the board to bring ideas to the next board meeting in April.

St. Michaels Expansion and Renovation update

Dana explained to the board a few updates:

- Architect Pam Gardener will be updating the project cost estimate for the feasibility study. With the rise in costs of construction materials and supply chain issues, this figure will probably rise. She will also update the timeline and cash flow projections.
- There is a meeting with the St. Michaels Commissioners that Dana will be attending on Wednesday, March 23rd at 6:00 pm to update them about the project. Any board member who would like to attend, please let Dana know.
- The town has not changed its planning and zoning laws, but we do need a variance from the town. The library will get the services of a lawyer to handle this.
- It is very important that we have a good sense of the maintenance needs for the project, such as making sure we have a new HVAC system, the boiler is in working order, exterior is well-maintained, etc. We have enlisted the services of Entech Engineering to do a facilities audit.
- ESRL also has the library architecture firm HBM doing a facilities master plan for all 8 of the library systems on the Eastern Shore. We have received a draft and this will help us as we submit our grant in May.

Continue meetings via Zoom or move to hybrid meetings again?

The board discussed the options of holding the next board meeting in person, via hybrid or via Zoom. The board decided the idea that made the most sense is to hold the April 21st meeting via Zoom. A reminder that there is no board meeting held in March.

Action Item: Raise library credit card limit

Dana reviewed the handout proposing the raising of the library credit card limit from \$3,500 to \$7,500. Having a higher limit would help the library pay for more expensive items, such as staff development attendance at conferences and paying for equipment, books and more on the credit card. Budgeted funds are used to cover credit card purchases. The board agreed that the amount needs to be increased. Susan Sherman made a motion to raise the credit card limit to \$7,500 with John Stumpf moving and Robert Forloney seconded. All in favor. The motion passed.

Action Item: Proposal to move FY22 operating funds from automation to building/janitorial maintenance.

Dana reviewed the handout proposing that for the FY2022 budget (current year) that \$5,000 be reallocated from the automation revenue budget line to the building maintenance and janitorial revenue line. These funds will aid in paying for the updates needed for the St. Michaels renovation feasibility study. Susan Sherman made a motion to move these funds with Robert Forloney moving and John Stumpf seconded. All in favor. The motion passed.

President's Report-Susan Sherman reported a few items:

- Shauna Beulah and Susan Sherman attended a very interesting conference on Ethics and nonprofits. Led by Rob Leavitt, it covered a wide range of topics from the importance of a solid mission statement, crafting ethical guidelines and values, building a donor base, creating a set of core values and having clear ByLaws and board policies. Susan reported that our library is in a good position compared to some of the other small nonprofits.
- Susan, Dana, and other Board members attended several legislative meetings and met with our three Maryland delegates about some upcoming bills being introduced related to libraries. We are so fortunate to have their support and it was heartening to hear from each of them how well versed they are with the

contents of the bills. Dana told the board that we are lucky to have their support and that Senator Addie Eckardt even sends us newspaper clippings (with a handwritten note) featuring our library.

Treasurer's Report – Dana Newman reviewed the Income and Expense Statement showing the two columns for the current budget year and comparing income and expenses to the previous year. Dana thanked John Stumpf for promoting this new format. Dana explained that at the last meeting, details about the financial report were covered and so the two updates since January 20th are:

- Under the current month first line under % variance it shows -85% and under year to date it shows -6% variance. The board will note in the comments section that this is due to the County grant not yet recorded from the bank statement.
- Under payroll expenses it shows that we did have to pay unemployment last year to a few subs. Susan Sherman made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report with Robert Forloney moving and Hudson Berry seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

County Council Representative's Report- Pete Leshar reported that the County Council is receiving budget requests from area agencies and the week of March 1st will be budget hearings. We are not sure yet whether the meetings will be virtual or not. The County will lift its mask mandate at County buildings and will work with State mandates on when this will happen. Pete told the board that he will see that the letter of support for the library gets shepherded to the Council. All on the board thanked Pete for his continued support.

Easton Town Council Representative's Report - Ron Engle reported that the Town of Easton has asked Dana to come speak to the Town Council on Monday, March 7th at 5:30 p.m. He wants the town to see the impact the library has on our town. The Town is pleased to announce the hiring of a new police chief, Sargent Mallory, who is also a practicing attorney. The Town of Easton will be hosting the Fire and Ice Festival February 18-20. The next event is the St. Patrick's Day parade on March 17th. The board was encouraged to come out for these exciting events.

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

- Thanks to Friends for paying for two Story book character ice sculptures featured at the Fire & Ice Festival. There will also be a special Story Time on Saturday, February 19th and a Saturday Family Film, *Soul*, featured.
- A reminder for these important dates: Tuesday, March 1st at 5:30pm will be the budget presentation to the County Council. Monday, March 7th at 5:30pm is the presentation at the Town of Easton meeting. On Wednesday, March 23rd at 6:00pm is the St. Michaels Commissioners Meeting.
- On Wednesday, February 16th, Talbot County Emergency Services had its normal call and mentioned mask mandates. The County and State are effectively dropping their mask mandates next week, but we consulted further with the Health Department. They advised that people should continue to wear a mask in public buildings until the transmission rate goes down. Talbot County is currently in a high transmission rate and we want to wait until it becomes a moderate rate. The library, therefore, will stay on course until we receive further guidelines from the Health Department. The board also agreed that to align our policy with the public schools makes sense.
- We are pleased to say that the Fire Department in Trappe has agreed to be a location the community can come to for WiFi access. We also might have a second location in Trappe and will keep the board informed.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers was not in attendance. Scotti shared some highlights including the success of the libraries EDI Book Group, continued planning with the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival, participation in the Juneteenth celebration and BAAM Festival and continued staff training in EDIAJ from the MD State library. The library is also partnering with area museums to offer a limited supply of free family museum passes. Scotti was thanked by all for her work keeping everything organized and the good work of the committee.

Nominating Committee- Robert Forloney reported that the committee, made up of Robert Forloney, Marlene Thomas and Estela Ramirez, will be formally nominating board candidate Leslie Parkerson. She is a CPA with a strong financial background and is very involved with the library. Marlene noted that she knows Leslie and is a very nice person and strong candidate. Robert will put her name forward and will email the board her bio.

Friends' Report-Dana said that there is nothing to report, but at the next Friends meeting, she will be asking Friends to choose a liaison to the board. We again thank the Friends for their generous gift for the 2 ice sculptures featured at Fire and Ice.

Foundation Report-Dana Newman reported that there is no formal report but that the Foundation did receive a proposal from the Development Consultant. The next Foundation meeting is Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Easton Library.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. A reminder that there is no board meeting in the month of March.

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds