

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
April 18, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Susan Sherman, President at 5:00 pm. Meeting held in St. Michaels.

Attendees: Susan Sherman, Charles Yonkers, Robert Forloney, Becky Amaral, Andrew Thaler, Marlene Thomas, Mary Pellicano, Sue Regier, and Van Tran, Student Liaison and our guest, Alexis Roiter Director, Dana Newman, Scotti Oliver, Assistant Director, Christina Acosta, Communications Manager, and Shauna Beulah, St. Michaels Branch Manager represented the TCFL.

Excused: Ron Engle, Don Abbatiello, Town of Easton, Vivi Morris, Student Liaison to the Board, Pete Leshner, Talbot County Liaison

Action Items:

- **Board members voted on and approved the February 15, 2024 minutes.**
- **Board members voted on and approved the Treasurer's Report: Income and Expense Statement, and Statement of Activities.**
- **Board members voted on and approved the Quarterly Balance sheet.**
- **Board members voted on and approved that Mary Pellicano serve as Library liaison to the Foundation with voting rights.**
- **Board members agreed to review the Budget policies draft and to be prepared to vote on this policy at the May board meeting. Dana will be looking at other examples from other libraries and will bring them to the next board meeting.**
- **Board members voted on and approved Alexis Roiter to be a member of the Board of Trustees.**
- **Reminder: May 29th from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. is Virtual event on collective bargaining/Unions.**

Susan Sherman opened the meeting asking the board to vote on Alexis Roiter as a new board member. Robert explained that the Nominating committee put her name forward and asked if anyone had any questions. Hearing none Susan asked for a formal vote to have Alexis join the board and hearing none opposed, the vote carried and Alexis was approved. She joined the meeting, and all introduced themselves and welcomed her.

Review of the February 15, 2024, Minutes: Susan Sherman asked the board if there were any changes or corrections. Hearing none, asked for a motion to approve with Charlie Yonkers moving and Robert Forloney seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

Guest Res Kowalski was unable to attend via Zoom.

Advocacy sharing:

Becky Amaral shared that the Talbot Interfaith Shelter had a commercial and she was in it and wore her library shirt to help advertise the library.

Mary Pellicano shared that last week was National Library Week and she created several media posts.

Robert Forloney reported that at the State level, the Freedom to Read bill passed.

Susan Sherman applauded Dana, Scotti and others on receiving the 2.8 million state grant for St. Michaels. Susan also shared that she is on the board of the ESRL (Eastern Shore Regional Library) and they are searching for a new Director. This position is a very important one.

Dana Newman invited board members to the budget hearings on May 7th. One is at 2:00 p.m. at the Courthouse Bradley Room and the other meeting is at 7:00 p.m. at Easton Elementary. It would be great to have a show of support. We also congratulate Vivi Morris for her award for achievements for young people under 18. Congratulations also to Jeremy Hillyard, Friends Council Member, for getting the Talbot County Teacher of the Year award.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Library Board of Trustee liaison with voting rights:

Dana explained to the board that they have had a member or two who is a liaison to the Foundation and the Foundation decided they would like this person to have voting rights. The merits of this are it keeps the board more in touch with the Foundation. Mary Pellicano has agreed to serve in this role. Susan Sherman asked for a motion to have Mary be this voting liaison with Andrew Thaler moving and Marlene Thomas seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

St. Michaels update

Dana shared some things:

- We received the 2.8 million dollar state grant for St. Michaels.
- On Tuesday, we heard the County Council report on the budget and while the budget is not posted yet, we are hopeful that we will receive most of what we asked for in our budget request. We did hear that staff will receive a 3% salary increase. In the operating budget request, we did ask for funds for a lease and utilities for the temporary location and so we will hear soon if that is approved.
- We recently received a gift of \$110,000 for naming opportunities for the St. Michaels expansion in the form of a gift of Wal-Mart stock as well as another pledged future gift of a stock transfer.
- Spoke with a potential donor yesterday. An extra thank you to Sue, Christina and Susan for getting the article out in the Star Democrat about the recent gift.
- Scotti and I are reviewing the lease for the temporary location.

Presentation of new proposed Budget Policy (vote would be at May meeting)

- Scotti reviewed the different categories of this proposed policy, such as Balanced Budget, Budget Categories, Budgetary Control and more.
- Board members were asked to review this document and we will vote on it at our next meeting in May. The board was encouraged to ask any questions prior to the next meeting.
- One category that Dana highlighted was the Grants section and reminded the board that certain grants over \$25,000 will automatically be received and deposited, such as the reoccurring ESRL grant and would not need board approval. But any grant application that is over \$25,000 will need board approval.
- Dana will be looking at other examples from other libraries and will share with the board.

President's Report-Susan Sherman reported that she is on the ESRL committee, and they are currently doing a search for the new ESRL Director. She encouraged board members to try and attend one of the upcoming Budget hearings on May 7th. Susan also mentioned that this is her last year of being on the CML (Citizens for Maryland Libraries) board and encouraged those on the library board to consider joining CML. Meetings are held quarterly and they meet in locations around the state. Let Susan know if you'd like to join.

Treasurer's Report

Mary Pellicano presented the three reports. Earlier, the finance committee reviewed the Income and Expense report, Statement of Activities, and Quarterly balance sheet and approved the documents. A few things to note:

- We are at three quarters through the year with 77% income and 68.3% of expenditures.
- Lost books paid back is 167.6% due to the success of library staff working with patrons to pay for lost books.
- The total for postage and delivery has increased to \$2,913 which is close to the budgeted amount. The reason for the increase spent is due to the rise in postage costs and the library is mailing out a lot more.
- A foundation reimbursement request is not yet reflected in the statement of activities.
- Dana shared that in the OPEB trust, it was at \$45,000 and now it has a balance of \$70,000.

Susan Sherman made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report with Robert Forloney moving and Marlene Thomas seconding. All approved and none opposed. The motion carried.

County Council Representative's Report- Pete Leshar was not at the meeting and had nothing to report.

Easton Town Council Representative's Report –Don Abbatiello was not present but did want the board to know that the library did not receive ARPA money.

Librarian's Report-Dana Newman:

- Our door count is way up and we are seeing an increase in patrons using our WiFi. At Easton, internal and external use is up 109%. At St. Michaels, usage is up 45%. In Trappe, the usage is up 500% and that is without much advertising.
- At the MAPLA (Maryland Association for Public Library Administrators) conference, the topic of collective bargaining was discussed. The collective bargaining bill did pass which enables library staff to unionize at any library. A few of the urban library systems are being approached by Unions. It will be important for library staff and administration to be educated about Unions. There is a virtual panel May 29th from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. where library board members are invited.

A few highlights from the Librarian's report are:

- All are invited to the June 13th Rum Fundraiser at St. Michaels.
- Christina Acosta does a great job serving on both the board of ChesMRC (Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center) and the Art Academy and is very involved with planning several community events and building partnerships. She also leads the EDI bookgroup.
- Amy Wise runs a book group at the Women's detention center, and it is going very well, and Shauna was a presenter at Great Decisions.
- Susan Sherman has been nominated for the Talbot County Citizens Award. The ceremony is on April 25th.
- The library was selected partner of the year by the Talbot County Public Schools.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers did not have an official report but did share that he had stopped in to talk with ChesMRC's director who had great things to say about Dana, Christina, Scotti and the staff at the library for all they are doing.

Teen Liaison's Report-Van Tran reported that Teen Night is going very well with many attending Teen Night at the Art Academy. Vivi and I are working on getting ready for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics) camp. The camp will be offered in two sessions from 10-2pm and will include lunch. We will have a fundraiser on May 2nd at the Easton restaurant, Playa Bowls. 10% of the proceeds will go towards shirts for the volunteers and for next year's budget. Thanks to the Friends for giving us \$1,500 towards STEAM camp.

Nominating Committee-Robert Forloney welcomed Alexis Roiter to the board. The Nominating committee is looking for new members and we are also looking for additional board members.

Friends' Report- Sue Regier reported that the Friends are planning to set up a table at the Easton Farmers Market where they give away free books. On May 1st there is a Trivia Night at Easton. Two events being planned are a lecture by Mickey Terrone on the Civil War on July 9th and on August 5th a lecture on the Revolutionary War and its impact on St. Michaels by Matt LaMotte. Our annual membership drive is in May and the Friends voted to give \$50,000 to the St. Michaels expansion and renovation.

Foundation Report- Dana Newman reported that the investment portfolio is doing well with a balance of 3.1 million. The Foundation board discussed the recent gift of Stock and the process of the transfer. They voted that gifts of stock be sold immediately and invest the results into a money market, as it needs to be in a short-term investment to be accessible.

The board meeting officially closed at 6:25 p.m.

Reminder: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. in St. Michaels.

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds