

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
June 15, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Susan Sherman, President at 5:05 pm. Meeting held in St. Michaels.

Attendees: Susan Sherman, Charles Yonkers, Becky Amaral, Mary Pellicano, Andrew Thaler, Robert Forloney, Don Abatiello, Town of Easton Liaison and Pete Leshner, Talbot County Liaison Director, Dana Newman, Scotti Oliver, Assistant Director, Christina Acosta Communications Manager, and Shauna Beulah, St. Michaels Branch Manager, represented the TCFL.

Guest: Betty Dorbin, Information Specialist at St. Michaels branch

Excused: Sue Regier and Marlene Thomas

Absent: Estela Ramirez

Action Items:

- **Board members approved the May 18, 2023, minutes.**
- **Board members approved the Income and Expense Statement.**
- **Board members approved the moving of \$20,439.00 from health insurance to the OPEB trust.**

Action items that didn't require a vote:

- **Charlie Yonkers volunteered to attend the July 11th public hearing.**
- **Andrew Thaler volunteered to attend meetings related to the St. Michaels renovation and expansion project and be the board liaison to the project.**
- **Committee chairs to begin submitting written reports in July.**
- **A Finance committee will be chosen at the July meeting.**
- **Mary Pellicano and Andrew Thaler will serve on the ad-hoc committee that reviews the By-laws and policies.**
- **At the July board meeting, the board will vote on Charles Yonkers serving a second term.**

Susan Sherman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and thanked all for attending. Don Abatiello was introduced as our new Town of Easton liaison.

Review of the May 18, 2023, Minutes: Susan Sherman asked the board if there were any changes. Hearing none, asked for a motion to approve with Charlie Yonkers moving and Robert Forloney seconding. The motion carried.

Guests: Betty Dorbin, Information Specialist at the St. Michaels library

- Betty shared that she has spent most of her career in libraries and spent 20 years as a school librarian. At the St. Michaels branch, she mainly works with Inter Library Loans but does a little of everything. The whole staff works together.
- She shared that she especially enjoys tracking down things no one else can find and likes being a representative for older patrons.
- Betty comes from a family of librarians where her mother after retiring from library work in Talbot County, worked to open a library in St. Michaels. They first opened their doors next to the Blue Heron coffee shop.
Dana explained to the board that we are lucky to have Betty at the St. Michaels branch, and all thanked her for her warm and welcoming manner.

Advocacy sharing:

Several board members shared stories of advocacy for the library. Charlie shared that he recently wore the library logo shirt at two events and he got a lot of comments and interest. Wearing the shirt provided a good opportunity to tell people about the library. Robert shared an idea of hosting a digital literacy summit at the library. Susan encouraged board members to contact Representative Harris to advocate for the library as he has not voted before for library legislation. Mary said a policy committee could be helpful, where, for instance we can make connections with others interested in book banning policies. Mary asked the board to let her know if they knew of partners that could help us. We can look at the recent news from Illinois on book banning as a model for us on how to do things.

Old Business: none

New Business:

St. Michaels Renovation and Expansion Project:

Dana reviewed with the board where we are with the funding of the project with some highlights from the handout:

- On July 11, 2023, there is a public hearing for County funding of \$314,800. It would be nice if a board member could attend and Pete Leshner supported this saying it would be a good opportunity to thank the County. Charlie Yonkers said he would attend this hearing.
- The total for the project is estimated to cost 6.3 million.
- Funding for the project is coming from a variety of sources, from the County, Maryland Library Capital Grant Program, USDA Federal grant and library fundraising.

Dana then referred the board to the schematic drawings from the architect showing the differences from April and the more current May drawings. Several changes and highlights were pointed out including newly expanded spaces outside, adding a third restroom, creating a café space, self-check out kiosk, study rooms and a youth services office. Teens will also be able to be involved, as we will be asking a group of teens to help design their own space. Board members were encouraged to let Dana know if they have additional feedback. The board discussed the importance of having a board member attend some of the

architect meetings and Andrew Thaler volunteered. He will attend the next meeting with the architect next Thursday at 9:00 a.m.

Review Action Items from Board Retreat:

Susan reviewed the action items from the retreat and asked the board for their feedback. All agreed that each topic captured the goals of the retreat. Some of the highlights include:

- **Advocacy:** Announce upcoming events and have board members sign up. Board members share current advocacy activities.
- **Communication:** Committees submit written reports and members continue to stay informed and share information on activities. Committee chairs will start to submit written reports in July.
- **Finance:** The board has fiduciary responsibility. Mary Pellicano is the Treasurer and at the July meeting, we will have a Finance Committee. It is important for board members to contribute financially.
- **Training:** We will hold a Friendraising fundraising training in September led by Graham Lee and Sue Regier and will decide on the dates of the other two trainings at a later date. New board members receive an orientation done by the nominating committee. An ad-hoc committee will review By-laws and policies regularly. Mary agreed to serve on this ad-hoc committee and Andrew and Becky Amaral will assist.
- **Board recruitment:** Quorum present at each meeting. Susan announced that board member Heena Paracha has resigned from the board.

Action Item: Other Post Employment Benefits – update and approval of resolution to join Maryland Association of Counties OPEB trust:

Dana gave some background regarding this request in that after talking with their legal and financial representation the library is not eligible to join this trust. We might consider joining an existing trust or creating our own. TCFL is asking in the letter to the County, to move funds appropriated for the anticipated 10% increase in health insurance to the OPEB fund in the amount of \$20,439.00. Susan Sherman asked for a motion to approve moving dollars from health insurance to the OPEB trust with Andrew Thaler moving and Robert Forloney seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

After the board meeting: The County got back to us to let us know we do not need their permission to move these funds in our operating budget.

President's Report-Susan Sherman had no report. Items have already been covered.

Treasurer's Report –

Dana Newman explained the Income and Expense Statement which shows activity through the end of May 2023. Dana then asked if there were questions. Hearing none, Susan Sherman asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's report with Robert Forloney moving and Becky Amaral seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

County Council Representative's Report- Pete Leshner did not have a report but did say the budget did pass.

Easton Town Council Representative's Report –Don Abatiello reported that there is still 1.6 million dollars left in the ARPA funds. We are allocating funds in 2024 and distributing in 2026 the last of the funds from Covid. Please send an email or letter to Mayor Cook if the library is interested.

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

- The Easton A.V. meeting room replacement project will begin August 14th. The new equipment will allow for recording library programs, teleconferencing and more.
- Ellen Walko is retiring from her position of Interlibrary Loan Coordinator. She has worked at the library since 2004. We will have a retirement lunch for her next week.
- On June 24th, the library hosts the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival from 10-2pm. We will be welcoming several partners including Imagination Library where the Talbot County Imagination Library is celebrating their 10th Anniversary.
- Several staff, including Dana, attended the Maryland Library Blueprint meeting that centered on understanding societal, technological, and other changes impacting libraries and planning for those.
- Staff participated in the parade in St. Michaels and the library was the only non-profit in the parade.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers reported that the committee last met on April 22nd where Scotti Oliver stepped down from the committee. We approved Christina Acosta and Mary Pellicano to the EDI Committee. The next meeting of the committee is TBD.

Nominating Committee-Estela Ramirez was not present and so Robert Forloney gave the report. Board member Heena Paracha has submitted her resignation. We will look to find a replacement. Charles Yonkers will be cycling off the board in 2023 but has agreed to serve a second term. The board will vote on this at our July meeting. Robert encouraged all the board members to be on the lookout for prospective new members.

Friends' Report- Sue Regier was not present and so Dana Newman highlighted several upcoming Friends events:

- Friends will host a fundraiser on the Patriot Cruise on October 12, 2023. This will be a fundraiser for the St. Michaels renovation and expansion project.
- Friends will host a book sale on Friday, June 30th from 9-4pm. Friends members can stop by for a preview party on Thursday, June 29th from 5-7pm.

Foundation Report- no report

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Reminder: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at Easton

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds