

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
February 16, 2023

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

Attendees: Susan Sherman, Charles Yonkers, Marlene Thomas, Becky Amaral, Mary Pellicano, Robert Forloney, Andrew Thaler, and Sue Regier
Director, Dana Newman and Scotti Oliver, Assistant Director, represented the TCFL, and Ron Engle, Town of Easton Representative, Guest, Alanna Peerman, TCFL Circulation Clerk and Youth Assistant
Excused: Pete Leshner, Talbot County Liaison
Absent: Estela Ramirez, Heena Paracha

Action Items:

Board members approved the January 19, 2023 minutes.

Board members approved the Income and Expense Statement.

Dana Newman will create a list of bullet points about the St. Michaels Expansion and Renovation project that board members and staff can refer to when asked questions.

General reminders:

Dana Newman will keep the board informed on whether the library budget presentation to the County Council will be on March 7th or March 8th in the afternoon.

The Board Retreat is on Saturday, March 11, 2023 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the St. Michaels Library. Morning refreshments and lunch provided.

The next regular board meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2023 will be held in St. Michaels.

Board members were reminded to turn in volunteer hours.

Review of the January 19, 2023 Minutes: Susan Sherman asked the board if there were any changes. Hearing none, asked for a motion to approve with Robert Forloney moving and Sue Regier seconding. The motion carried.

Guest: Alanna Peerman, TCFL Circulation Clerk and Youth Assistant

Alanna gave some highlights of her work at the library:

*She works at the Circulation desk and with children and teens. She especially enjoys story time and working at the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival where she demonstrates 3-D printing and button making.

*Outreach is another job Alanna enjoys where she greets patrons at information tables set up at the Farmers Market and at BAAM. It is gratifying for her to greet kids and patrons outside the library. She also likes handing out book bags to kids and seeing the joy on their faces.

*Some other tasks Alanna does is order periodicals, designs bookmarks and posters and is currently working on a special project taking inventory of the books in the children's area.

Dana told the board that Alanna does a great job connecting with the youth and the Board thanked Alanna for all her hard work.

Old Business:

Review email votes on changes to the FY24 operating budget. Dana Newman reviewed with the board the email vote taken regarding the two changes to the operating budget request:

*provide an 8% increase in staff salary up from 5%

*after reviewing a library staff study of recommended salaries for five positions where it had been for three positions.

The board approved the above changes and they were sent to the County.

New Business:

Board retreat update:

Susan Sherman relayed that the Board Retreat is for Saturday, March 11, 2023 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the St. Michaels library. Eight board members can attend and there will be a questionnaire sent out before if board members can complete this before the retreat. The focus of the retreat is on board effectiveness.

Meeting Room policy changes

Dana Newman updated the board regarding a change to the meeting room policies. We will be going back to pre-Covid limits on meeting room use. The language highlighted in red will be removed:

Meeting room limits due to COVID-19 are:

Easton Meeting Room: maximum 100

St. Michaels Meeting Room: maximum 75

Frederick Douglass Room: maximum 15

All other criteria of the meeting room policy remain.

Susan Sherman asked for a motion to approve section in red to be removed with Robert Forloney moving to approve with Andrew Thaler seconding. The motion passed.

St. Michaels Expansion update

Dana Newman explained a few highlights of the status of the expansion project:

*meetings are being planned with staff and the architects and the board is welcome to attend. Dana encouraged the board to become familiar with the expansion in order to be able to answer questions and Dana will make a list of bullet points about the expansion to help with this.

*Staff and board members attended Legislative Day in Annapolis and met with each of our representatives. All were very supportive of the project. The library has a good reputation in Annapolis. We were grateful to be able to also

meet with Senator Johnny Mautz who encouraged the library to apply for additional funding through the State of MD bond initiative.

*Survey work will be done at St. Michaels next week and meetings with the architects and the public and staff will start in March and April. The goal of the meetings is to gain further ideas about the schematic design of the project.

*The library will be sending a short survey out to the community to get their most current thoughts on the project as it has been a few years since we last sent a survey out.

*The library will be going through planning and zoning to get a variance from the town of St. Michaels. We are hoping the engineers can complete this by May. The historic commission will also have to approve the project.

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

- Susan was able to go on the tour of the St. Michaels library and thought it was good that the Council could see the current condition of the building. Susan also reminded the board to turn in their volunteer hours to Sabine Simonson at the library. All board members were thanked for their attendance to numerous outreach events and meetings.

Treasurer's Report –

Dana Newman explained the Income and Expense Statement which shows activity through the end of January 2023. Not much has changed since the last treasurer's report. Two items to note:

- We received close to \$30,000 from the annual appeal letter to donors.
- Under expenses it shows an over budgeting in subscriptions but this was due to several annual subscriptions coming due in December.

Dana Newman asked if there were questions. Hearing no other questions, Susan Sherman asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's report with Robert Forloney moving and Sue Regier seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

County Council Representative's Report- Pete Leshar was not present at the meeting and had no report.

Easton Town Council Representative's Report - Ron Engle reported that the Fire and Ice Festival is this weekend, (February 17-19) and all were encouraged to attend. Ron also relayed to the board that the Economic Development Commission bought the Discover Easton website.

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

- Friends donated a Frosty the Snowman ice sculpture to the library for the Fire and Ice Festival and so all were encouraged to stop by to see it.
- Library staff will be participating in the Easton St. Patrick's Day parade.
- We are partnering again with AARP to offer the Tax-aid program. We help a lot of people with this free service.
- We have partnered with the office of Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism to do the "Let's Talk Business" Speaker series. The next presenter on March 6th, is Ken Kozel, the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health President and CEO. He will speak about the new hospital coming to Talbot County.
- Two staff members, Amy Wise and Christina Acosta, will be participating in the newly formed Talbot County Equity Coalition being sponsored by the Talbot Family Network.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers did not have a report but wanted to say how much he likes the library website as it shows how involved the library is with EDI issues. The commitment to EDI topics is evident.

Nominating Committee-no report

Friends' Report- Sue Regier highlighted several upcoming Friends events:

- Another Improv night is being planned for March 24th
- The booksale last week was very successful and brought in about \$620 in sales.
- The Marketing and Development committee members were able to meet with two consultants in the community and came away with several ideas for fundraising for the St. Michaels renovation and expansion project. They gave helpful advice on fundraising in a time where there are a lot of different projects going on and so many organizations are reaching out to donors. Also, we are to keep an eye on the possible rise in construction costs due to inflation and continued supply chain issues.
- The next meeting of the Marketing and Development committee is Tuesday, February 28th.

Foundation Report- no report

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Reminder: The Board Retreat will be on Saturday, March 11, 2023 at the St. Michaels library.

Our next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at St. Michaels library.

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds