

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY  
100 W. Dover St.  
Easton, MD 21601  
Minutes of the Board Meeting  
May 16, 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, Becky Amaral, Marlene Thomas, Mary Pellicano, Sue Regier, Ron Engle, Don Abbatiello, Town of Easton, Vivi Morris, Student Liaison to the Board, Pete Leshner, Talbot County Liaison, and Alexis Roiter

Director, Dana Newman, Scotti Oliver, Assistant Director, Christina Acosta, Communications Manager, and Shauna Beulah, St. Michaels Branch Manager represented the TCFL.

Excused: Robert Forloney, Van Tran, Student Liaison, Andrew Thaler

**Action Items:**

- **Board members voted on and approved the April 18, 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 proposed Budget Policy.**
- **Board members agreed to have the board contribute a nominal amount to a naming opportunity for the St. Michaels renovation and expansion project.**
- **Board members voted on and approved the sending in of an application for the Library Capital Grant program for the FY26 grant for construction of the St. Michaels project.**
- **Reminder that Dana will send the board information on the date for the next *Conversations on Race*.**
- **Reminder that the board meeting in June will be held at the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy.**

**Review of the April 18, 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 Alexis Roiter seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

Guest Katya Sindel Castro was unable to attend.

**Advocacy sharing:**

Becky Amaral shared that she encouraged her faculty members to support the fundraising effort of Van and Vivi at Playa Bowls by ordering something and she went to pick items up.

Mary Pellicano shared that there was a great show of support at the budget hearings and that it is important to cultivate relationships with our elected officials.

Susan Sherman reminded board members that her term on the CML board will be ending and she is hoping to have another board member join. Currently, she is the only board member on the Eastern Shore. Mary expressed an interest in serving. Susan also relayed that ESRL has selected a new Director and will vote on them soon.

Dana Newman shared several activities and programs that are happening where board members might like to help volunteer. Events such as the Rum Fundraiser need greeters, at the CCBF9 help is needed at various stations and Popsicles at the Park is a great way to interact with the community. Dana will send a list of events out to the board.

Charles Yonkers took two former roommates to visit the library recently and they got to speak some Russian with Becky Riti and Sabine Simonson.

### **Old Business: None**

### **New Business:**

#### *Presentation of new proposed Budget Policy (vote):*

Dana explained that the purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the budget. Section three (Grants) was highlighted where she 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. We might call them regular annual grants. The board discussed this additional phrase and agreed it made sense. Susan Sherman asked for a motion to have the board approve all grants except excluding allocated funds from the MD State Library and ESRL-they would not need board approval. The motion was moved by Becky Amaral with Ron Engle seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

#### *Foundation naming opportunities*

Susan shared her thoughts that if we are asking contributors to fund certain areas of the St. Michaels expansion and renovation project that it would be nice if the board was named as a donor as a group. It is important to have the board support the project. The board discussed ways they could participate (confidentially), perhaps donating a brick, or something else. The board agreed this would be a good idea. Susan asked members to let her know how much they can contribute and after seeing what amount we have, decide on what to contribute to.

#### *St. Michaels update*

- Shauna Beulah shared that there have been several interesting programs at the library from hosting two authors in April (Sue Ellen Thompson and Jenda Simpson), hearing a presentation from Terry Mengden on being an ambulance driver in Ukraine, to several youth programs. Diana Hastings has been busy organizing a Cherry Blossom tea party and is working on planning the Hawaiian culture program. We recently received a surprise donation from a patron who had admired the library's jade trees. The library couldn't sell the trees, but the patron decided to give a generous donation.

- Dana shared with the board that they have been finalizing the lease for the temporary location, staff have been busy weeding the collection, and library staff has met with Gipe Engineering to make sure the details are on track.
- Dana then explained to the board that she is working on submitting an application for \$225,000 for additional construction costs to the MD State Library Capital Grant project. Susan asked for a vote for the sending in of an application for the Library Capital Grant program for the FY26 grant for construction of the St. Michaels project. The motion was moved by Mary Pellicano with Becky Amaral seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

### *Summer reading preview:*

Dana mentioned that Laura Powell wanted to let board members know that Summer Reading is from June 10-August 16<sup>th</sup> and is for ages birth-18 and for adults. Other youth activities planned are the Chess Club and Project Steam camp.

**President's Report**-Susan Sherman had nothing new to add.

### **Treasurer's Report**

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

- We are at about 2/3 through the year with 85.9% income and 76% of expenditures.
- Some unrestricted Foundation reimbursements are still to come in.
- Mileage is high as staff are going to more in person training and the mileage rate increased in January 2024.
- Only 38% of the budget for purchasing new DVDs has been used so staff will be catching up on ordering.
- Under equipment maintenance there is a new product that will come out of this budget line, called Library Market-a calendaring and room reservation software.
- A large payment will be made for data for Kajeet WiFi hotspots.
- Dana shared that the OPEB trust continues to build funds.

Susan Sherman made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report with Becky Amaral moving and Ron Engle seconding. All approved and none opposed. The motion carried.

**County Council Representative's Report**- Pete Lesher had nothing to report.

**Easton Town Council Representative's Report** –Don Abbatiello did not have much to report on but did relay that he and Mayor Cook talked about Council members serving on community boards. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the month he will bring things up that the library discusses. This is a great way for fellow Council members to get to know what is happening in our community.

**Librarian's Report**-Dana Newman reviewed a few highlights from her report:

- Staff have been busy planning for the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The board is encouraged to help and a press release was provided at this meeting.
- TCPS recognized the library at a breakfast appreciation for being their District Community Partner of the Year for 2024.

- Scotti and Laura have been working on the state library's competitive grant for funding a sensory space. These spaces benefit all children, but especially students with specified sensory needs.

**Diversity and Inclusion Committee-** Charles Yonkers did not have an official report but did share that he had attended the *Conversations on Race* program and was impressed by the young facilitators. Talbot Family Network who sponsors this event appreciates the library.

**Teen Liaison's Report-**Vivi had to leave the meeting and so Dana just relayed to the board that both Vivi and Van have been planning for Project STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics) camp. The camp will be offered to two age groups and there is no charge to students. Vivi and Van were able to secure funding from the Friends of the Library.

**Nominating Committee-**Marlene Thomas reported that the nominating committee had been given the name of a potential board member with excellent references. The board will be able to meet this candidate soon. She is from St. Michaels.

**Friends' Report-** Sue Regier reported that there was a great turnout on May 1<sup>st</sup> for Trivia Night at Easton. May is membership month and so appeal letters have been sent out. The Friends will have their next meeting on Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Foundation Report-** Dana Newman reminded the board that Mary has agreed to be the board liaison to the Foundation. To review: at the last board meeting Dana had 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.

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

**Reminder: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. at the Easton Shore Land Conservancy at 114 S. Washington Street, Easton, MD.**

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds