

THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY
100 W. Dover St.
Easton, MD 21601
Minutes of the Board Meeting
June 20, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Mary Pellicano at 5:00 pm. Meeting held at the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy in Easton. Board President, Susan Sherman joined the meeting by Zoom and asked Mary Pellicano to run the meeting.

Attendees: Susan Sherman, Charles Yonkers, Becky Amaral, Robert Forloney, Andrew Thaler, Mary Pellicano, Alexis Roiter, Sue Regier, Ron Engle, Don Abbatiello, Town of Easton, Vivi Morris & Van Tran, Student Liaisons to the Board, Director, Dana Newman, Scotti Oliver, Assistant Director, Shauna Beulah, St. Michaels Branch Manager, represented the TCFL.

Excused: Pete Leshner, Talbot County Liaison

Guest: Katya Sindel Castro, Graduate Student from University of Maryland

Action Items:

- **Board members voted on and approved the May 16, 2024 minutes.**
- **Board members voted on and approved the Treasurer's Report: Income and Expense Statement, and Statement of Activities.**
- **The board voted whether to make an exception for use of the meeting room for a fundraiser by an outside group with all opposed and none in favor.**
- **The board voted on the changes to the FY25 budget.**
- **Reminder that at the July meeting board members will review board evaluations.**
- **Reminder that at the July meeting a naming opportunity will be selected from monies received from the board.**
- **Reminder that at the July meeting the board will vote on the re-election of Andrew Thaler and the election of Sandy Boyd.**
- **Reminder that there is no board meeting in August.**

Welcome from Lauren Halterman, Director of Advancement & Operations for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and Friends Council member. Lauren explained the rich history of the building and provided an overview of the mission of the organization. All thanked Lauren for letting us use their lovely meeting space.

Review of the May 16, 2024, Minutes: Mary Pellicano asked the board if there were any changes or corrections. Hearing none, asked for a motion to approve with Charlie Yonkers moving and Ron Engle seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried.

Guest Katya Sindel Castro, Graduate student from University of Maryland.

The board heard from Katya that she is a graduate of Easton High School and is currently in library school. She is taking several foundation classes and courses in leadership. Her goal is to be open to her education and wants to take advantage of any opportunities. She shared an observation that the work of libraries is changing and she notices that many social services are offered. Katya hopes that she will be properly equipped to serve the community with her library degree.

The board thanked Katya for her enthusiasm and wished her well in her coursework.

Advocacy sharing:

Becky Amaral shared that she encouraged her students at the end of the school year to go visit the library and sign up for summer reading.

Charlie Yonkers shared that he continues to wear his white polo shirt with the library logo on it to public events. This is a great way to share about the library and I get several people asking about the shirt, and it usually starts a good conversation about the library.

Mary Pellicano shared that she has learned that Hoopla and Mid-West Tapes have launched a rating system based on advice from Moms for Liberty. We will have to continue to be vigilant and work with the ALA to create a statement.

Sue Regier shared that they had a good turnout at the Rum Fundraiser and several connections were made in the community. We need to remember that it is important that visitors have a great time as they will remember it.

Vivi Morris shared that she has been telling her friends about summer reading and has encouraged her friends that are teens to visit the library.

Shauna Beulah shared that several events are happening at the St. Michaels library, such as the book group staff member Amy Wise is leading for women inmates and the growing popularity of Dungeons and Dragons. Shauna also shared that what she notices is at some events, such as Milk and Cookies Storytime, is that parents are coming in early and using the library before a program begins.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Collective Bargaining Training Review:

Dana reviewed the handout from the training and highlighted a few areas:

- A few libraries, including Anne Arundel, have unionized. We will want to make sure we are prepared.
- It is important to be trained as there are many specific laws and procedures regarding collective bargaining.
- The library board is a governing board and seen as an employer so we will all need to be on the same page.
- If someone from a Union should approach a board member, please refer them to Dana.
- Dana encouraged the board to review some of the sections of the training, such as Prohibited Employer Actions, Permitted Employer Actions, Private vs. Public Employer and more.
- The Eastern Shore library directors are putting together a FAQ that can be shared with board members and staff if needed. This will be reviewed with a lawyer.

Budget items:

New insurance costs

Dana explained that the library has looked into getting more cyber security insurance coverage. We have seen other systems get hacked and even shut down, so we need to take steps to protect patron and staff data. We have two quotes we are looking at, one for \$2,100 and one for \$2,900 a year. The board suggested having an IT person to check security generally and agreed that we don't want to be vulnerable. The board recommended this additional coverage and to review the two quotes.

Changes to FY25 budget

Dana explained the budget handout showing an increase in the state contribution to libraries of \$4,100. She highlighted the orange areas that were changes or additions to the budget:

- Move \$2,000 out of the DVD budget and move to children's books, citing that we are slowly pulling back on ordering DVDs as more movies and shows are streamed.
- Increase postage by \$110.00.
- Increase mileage for staff development by \$1,000.00 as staff are traveling more now to in-person trainings.
- Increases to the cost of telephone service necessitates an increase to the budget of \$1,000.00.
- Increase in administrative line item by \$1,000.00 to cover any legal fees.
- Increase marketing by \$1,000.00 to better publicize programs.

Mary Pellicano made a motion to move money around next year's budget with Ron Engle moving and Becky Amaral seconding. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion carried. Budget changes document included with these minutes.

Meeting room fundraising request for exception:

Dana received a request from a group in the community to reserve the library meeting room for a fundraiser. In our meeting room guidelines, we do not allow fundraising, but an exception can be made by the board. Dana explained that some library systems allow fundraising and others do not. A discussion followed where concerns around the type of fundraising being done, would it compete with library fundraising, would it make more work for library staff and more. After further discussion, Mary Pellicano asked for a vote for making an exception for this group to use the meeting room to fundraise with none in favor and all opposed. The board suggested that the group could be referred to area churches or the Easton Fire Hall and more.

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

- Susan thanked the board for their generous donations to the St. Michaels expansion and renovation. A total of \$2,400 was collected. We will decide on a naming opportunity at the next meeting.
- The focus of the July meeting will be the board evaluation. Susan will send the evaluation out to the board for comments and at the July meeting we will complete the evaluation.
- ESRL will hold a hybrid meeting on September 10, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. at the Easton library where we will have a chance to meet the new Director.

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 100% at budget for income and 93.9% for expenses and we are almost at year end.
- We are ordering fewer DVDs so some of the DVD funds were used to purchase VOX books.
- Weeding for the St. Michaels expansion slowed spending for new books so more purchases were made at year end.

- We are on track for the end of the year.

Mary Pellicano made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report with Ron Engle moving and Charlie Yonkers seconding. All approved and none opposed. The motion carried.

County Council Representative's Report- Pete Leshner was not present and had nothing to report.

Easton Town Council Representative's Report –Don Abbatiello updated the board on the sidewalk project saying the Town engineer sent a report with a cost of \$125,000 for the three sides. Public Works would do the work and not an outside group. The next step is to take this to the County Council. All thanked Don for his work on this.

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

- All are encouraged to come to the Gettysburg Battle and Campaign fundraiser on July 9th from 6-8pm. Local historian Mickey Terrone is the speaker and proceeds from the \$25 per person charge goes towards the purchase of books for the St. Michaels Library expansion.
- The last program at St. Michaels will be a program on the War of 1812 on August 5th. This is also a fundraiser for the expansion, but we will take donations at the door. Matt LaMotte will be our speaker.
- Dana asked Scotti to review the CCBF9 on Saturday, June 22nd from 10-2pm. It will be a busy day as we have many partners we work with and over 20 authors coming. Currently, we have 200 children signed up for Summer Reading and there will be an opportunity to sign up for summer reading on June 22nd. Every child and teen who signs up for summer reading will receive a voucher for a free author's book.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Charles Yonkers did not have an official report.

Teen Liaison's Report-Vivi and Van shared that they are getting ready for the first week of STEAM camp where each day there will be four lessons. There will be an educational component and activity and they have noticed that several who attended last year's camp, have returned. We will be organizing our supplies, buying food and working with our volunteers. They made \$270 from the Playa Bowls fundraiser that was used to order shirts. The board thanked Vivi and Van for leading this event. They thanked the Friends for their contribution as well.

Nominating Committee-Robert Forloney reported that there will be two action items to be voted on in July:

- Andrew Thaler's term ends and will be reapplying for a second term.
- We have a new board member, Sandy Boyd, who is from St. Michaels and the CEO of a non-profit. We will vote on her at the next meeting at the beginning of the meeting so that she can then join the meeting. Robert also shared that Marlene Thomas has stepped down from the board and Alexis has joined the Nominating Committee.

Friends' Report- Sue Regier reported that the Friends are still celebrating their 50th Anniversary. In September, we are planning another Improv Night and in October we are planning a bowling event at a local bowling center. The Friends will have their next meeting on Monday, June 17th.

Foundation Report- Dana Newman reported that the Foundation won't meet until next month and so there is nothing to report.

The board meeting officially closed at 6:30 p.m.

Reminder: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, July 18, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. at Easton.

Respectfully submitted, Katie Dodds