

**FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of Board of Trustees**  
**Tuesday, January 9, 2024 4:00p.m.**  
**Jackson County Public Library**

**Board Members Present:** Margaret Carton, Debbie Tallent, Tony Monnat, Ellen Snodgrass, Boyd Sossamon, Wood Lovell

**Absent:** Cynthia Womble, Rebekkah Watkins, Ed Trask.

**Others Present:** Tracy Fitzmaurice – FRL Regional Director, Lynn Cody- FRL Finance Officer, Jeff Delfield- Swain County Librarian, Abby Hardison, - Macon County Librarian, Meredith Fortner – Finance Specialist.

**I. Call to order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Carton at 4:00 pm, followed by roll call.

**II. Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2023 meeting, and minutes of the closed session**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023 meeting by Boyd Sossaman. Debbie Tallant seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval for the closed executive session from the November 14, 2023**

The minutes from the closed session were approved by signature of the board. The minutes were approved without changes unanimously.

**III. Review of correspondence and communications**

Two pieces of correspondence were received via email prior to the deadline date. One was regarding questions pertaining to the newly adopted background check policy, which Director Fitzmaurice has already addressed. The other an email regarding several topics. Chair Carton addressed the correspondence.

On the suggestion made that FRL is required to take public comment, Chair Carton clarified that FRL is not required to take verbal public comment at the meeting, but does welcome written public comment and appreciates the opinion of the community and that the best way to handle public correspondence such as these topics is to inquire if the board requests that any of the topics brought to light in correspondence need to be added to a current or future board meeting agenda.

Chair Carton called for motions for any items that should be added to current or future agendas.

No motions were made.

Chair Carton made some general comments on items listed in one of the pieces of correspondence. Topics covered included the process of the approval of the Regional Agreement.

An Overture from the Macon County Public Library Board of Trustees was read by Debbie Tallent, the sending of this overture was approved (not unanimously) by the Macon County Library's Board and read into record of the Fontana Regional Library Board as follows:

**Men and women of the Fontana Regional Library Board, the Macon County Public Library Board of Trustees would like to send this overture, or sign of good faith, to you in support of the new Fontana Regional Library Contract. With all the turmoil over the las few years regarding a variety of different issues, we believe that the approval and acceptance of this newly amended contract will do much in the way of promoting unity and community. Issue after Issue has been brought up and has caused a rift in the community. This contract does a good job of meeting the demands of both sides of the aisle. We are seeking to show our support of the commissioners of our county, as well as Fontana Regional Library itself, by sending this sign of good faith to you. Thank you for your consideration.**

**Sincerely,  
The Macon County Public Library Board of Trustees.**

Chair Carton clarified that this overture was asking the FRL Board to accept the amended contract based on only the input of Macon County, Amendments have not been made by Jackson or Swain County as of this date, and the final written agreement has not been reviewed by an attorney representing FRL, all which should be done before FRL would approve and accept a new Regional Agreement.

Chair Carton called for any motions to be made regarding the overture. No motions were made.

Chair Carton made comments on the following topics:

- What constitutes public record of any FRL Board of Trustees meeting.
- Items chosen to be a part of the FRL Strategic Plan and the Process for which this plan is written and approved.
- Accusations of Illegal Acts of the Friends of the Library Organizations.

Chair Carton called for a motion to be made to further discuss these issues or any other issues mentioned in public comment received.

No motion was made to add to the agenda from issues from comments.

#### **IV. Director's Report Tracy Fitzmaurice**

Director's report was given by Fontana Regional Director Tracy Fitzmaurice.

Report is attached with the minutes of this meeting. Points of note from the director's report includes topics:

- Digital Inclusion
- Health and Wellness
- Work and Economy
- Education
- Affordable Living
- Recreation and Leisure
- Operational Excellence
- The Celebration of the 80th anniversary of Fontana Regional Library
- Movement on the new Fontana Regional Agreement

Questions from the board included:

- Is the digital inclusion program suspended?
  - The Digital Inclusion program is still being offered within library locations, however until further funding is found the offsite digital inclusion programming is on hold.
- Wood Lovell asked for clarification on dissemination of the mentioned documentary to other locations.

#### **V. Financial Reports**

The financial Report was given by the FRL Finance Officer, Lynn Cody.

Topics Covered included:

- FRL Audit was received by the Local Government Commission of NC.
  - Lynn Cody made some clarifications regarding findings of the audit
- The 990 for FRL is in process.
  - Chair Carton requested clarification: The 990 will need to be approved by the board.
- Updates to the Budget
  - Increase of State Aid for the 24 FY

The budget amendments for the previous period were presented to the board by email. A motion to approve the budget amendments as listed was made by Wood Lovell, seconded by Ellen Snodgrass, and the motion carried unanimously, after no discussion.

Lynn Cody requested the board consider a change in the FRL Personnel Policy pertaining to FMLA, and the requirement of employees to pay their own insurance premiums during an FMLA event.

A motion was made by Tony Monnat to clarify the policy to amend the language in both locations to reflect that the employee would be responsible for both the employee and employer portions of their insurance during an FMLA event. Wood Lovell seconded the motion, hearing no discussion, Chair Carton called for a vote, and the motion carried unanimously.

Lynn Cody requested the Board consider making a motion to create a secondary budget fund for Capital Building projects. Chair Carton asked for clarification if this was discussing a separate bank account for these funds, discussion clarified that the funds were approved by the board to be moved into a separate bank account, however there was never an approval to create a secondary governmental fund for Capital Building Projects, and what the legal requirements for this fund entail.

Chair Carton called for a motion. Boyd Sossaman made a motion to allow FRL to create a secondary accounting fund for the Capital Project to include the current funds for the MBL Building project. Wood Lovell seconded the motion, and after no discussion the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Carton called for ideas for the 80<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Fontana Regional Library.

## **VI. Report of Committees (if needed)**

No ad hoc or standing

## **VII. Unfinished Business**

- A. Update of Marianna Black Library by Ellen Snodgrass
  - Proposal from a new architect.
  - Change in the suggested footprint for the project that would remove the current sewer issue.
- B. Update on the Nantahala Community Library by Tracy Fitzmaurice
  - Construction Update.
  - Internet Connectivity.
  - Date for Moving Update.
  - Funding for furniture and fixtures.
- C. Collection Development Policy – Approval needed Margaret Carton

Chair Carton commented that the policy with revisions requested has been sent to the board by Director Tracy Fitzmaurice, and briefly commented on the changes that were requested.

An overture from the Macon County Public Library Board was read by Debbie Tallent as follows:

The Macon County Public Library Board unanimously voted to send an overture to the Fontana Regional Library Board requesting with regards to the FRL Collection Development Policy that the following statement be added:

**“The library will neither promote nor censor any particular religious, moral, philosophical, political, or social conviction, or opinion”**

Director Fitzmaurice commented on the review of this overture by Dr. Hogue, the FRL Attorney. Discussion continued in regards to the response of the attorney.

No motion was made to include this statement in the collection development Policy

A motion was made to table the approval of the Collection Development Policy by Wood Lovell, the motion was seconded by Ellen Snodgrass, discussion points included the need for more time to review the policy. Motion carries unanimously.

Wood Lovell suggested an ad hoc committee be created to bring a recommendation regarding this overture. This committee will include Wood Lovell, Tony Monnat, Boyd Sossamon, and Debbie Tallent.

#### **D. Code of Ethics**

Chair Carton advised that the proposed Ethics Statement requires approval by the Board. Macon County Library Board voted (not by unanimous vote) to send an overture to the Fontana Regional Library Board requesting that FRL Board:

**“Scrutinize and revise the code of ethics proposed document so that the Trustees’ first amendment rights are not suppressed.**

Tony Monnat made a motion to move forward with the approval of the Ethics Statement as written. The motion was seconded by Debbie Tallent, and after no discussion the motion carries unanimously. Board members will be required to sign the Ethics Statement document annually.

### **VIII. New Business**

#### **A. Code of Conduct Policy**

Tracy Fitzmaurice brought a revision to the Code of Conduct Policy to the board, stating that at the September meeting of 2023, there was a request to clarify that the Code of Conduct applied to staff as well as patrons. These revisions have been made. A motion was made by Wood

Lovell to accept the Code of Conduct as revised, seconded by Ellen Snodgrass, after no discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**IX. Other Business**


**X. Executive Session**

Motion made by Debbie Tallent to move into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue, the motion was seconded by Wood Lovell and the motion carried unanimously. The Board moved into Executive session at 5:00 pm

**XI. Adjournment**

Wood Lovell made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ellen Snodgrass, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm

Respectfully submitted:

  
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Margaret Carton, Chairperson

Date: 3/12/2024

  
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Tracy Fitzmaurice, Regional Director

Date: 3/12/24