

FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY
Meeting of Board of Trustees
Tuesday, March 12, 2024, 4:00 pm
Hudson Library- Highlands, NC

Board Members

Present: Margaret Carton, Ellen Snodgrass, Tony Monnat, Cynthia Womble, Boyd Sossamon
Absent: Rebekkah Watkins, Wood Lovell, Debbie Tallent

Others Present: Tracy Fitzmaurice – FRL Regional Director; Lynn Cody – FRL Finance Officer; Carlyn Morenus – Hudson 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 a roll call.

II. Approval of Minutes of the January 9, 2024 Meeting and Closed Executive Session:

Chair Carton initiated the approval of the minutes of the January 9, 2024. After confirming that the minutes had been circulated and no further edits were required, Tony Monnat motioned to approve the minutes as written, which was seconded by Boyd Sossoman. The minutes were unanimously approved with no further discussion and following a vote.

Subsequently, Chair Carton called for the approval of the closed session held on January 9, 2024. One copy of the minutes was passed among all board members, and each signed the copy to indicate their approval. The minutes of the closed session were unanimously approved and the sealed envelope was given to Meredith Fortner to be filed at FRL headquarters.

III. Review of correspondence and communications

Chair Carton began by informing the board about correspondence received from two individuals during the interim between board meetings. She expressed gratitude for their input from the individuals and highlighted that all board members had thoroughly reviewed the correspondence.

Furthermore, Chair Carton initiated a discussion regarding the potential inclusion of verbal public comments at future meetings. She mentioned that Director Tracy Fitzmaurice had conducted research on this matter and had outlined a possible process for structuring such comments. The Director indicated that if the board was interested, she could develop a recommendation for the next meeting. However, it was also noted that implementing this change would require an amendment to the bylaws of the FRL Board and might also be addressed in the regional agreement.

Upon discussion, the board requested that Director Fitzmaurice provide a recommendation at the next board meeting for further deliberation and subsequent motion.

Additionally, Chair Carton emphasized the intended purpose of public comment, which is to provide the public's prospective and input to the board, not to be utilized as a platform to criticize FRL employees or board members.

IV. Director's Report: Tracy Fitzmaurice

Director Fitzmaurice provided an overview of the ongoing activities under the FRL Strategic Plan in her Director's report.

V. Financial Reports

Financial Update and Approval of Budget Amendments - Lynn Cody

The Fontana Regional Library has successfully submitted its 990 federal tax form, confirmed by the IRS. Preparations for the upcoming audit are underway to ensure compliance and readiness.

Budget amendments totaling \$75,000 for the digital inclusion grant were submitted, bringing the total adjustments to approximately \$85,000. February revenues were reported at \$371,000 against expenditures of \$357,000. The library also reported liabilities of \$329,000, resulting in a fund balance of approximately 44%, which is within the state-mandated range of 42% to 48%.

A motion to approve the budget amendments as proposed by the Finance Officer was made by Cynthia Womble and seconded by Ellen Snodgrass. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Looking ahead to the 2024-2025 budget, challenges are anticipated, particularly with rising costs in health insurance and the North Carolina State retirement program. Health insurance is expected to increase by over 10%, and the retirement rate will rise to 13.68%, influenced by the financial impact of COVID-19 and the need to replenish retirement funds.

Grants and Telecommunications - Lynn Cody

Lynn Cody provided updates on grants and telecommunication issues relevant to the Regional Library. He noted an increase in regional grants and the Federal Government's allocation to telecommunication providers. Discussions included potential charges for underutilized phone lines and the implications for services such as elevator phone lines.

Financial Outlook and Challenges

The Finance Officer discussed the financial challenges facing the organization, with rising expenses and inflation rates. He emphasized the need for prudent fiscal management in light of these increases and highlighted the impact of inflation on employees' purchasing power.

VI. Report of Committees

Collection Development Ad Hoc Committee Report –

Tony Monnet presented the findings of the ad hoc committee tasked with reviewing the overture with the proposed addition to the Collection Development policy as written by the Macon County Library Board. The proposal suggested including a statement about impartiality in the Collection Development Policy. The committee recommended not including the specific statement as proposed.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Collection Development Policy

After considering the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation, Cynthia Womble moved to approve the Collection Development Policy as previously submitted without the addition of the statement. The motion was seconded by Ellen Snodgrass. With no discussion following, the vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Circulation Policy and Juvenile Access Cards

Tracy Fitzmaurice discussed proposed changes to the circulation policy, specifically introducing juvenile access cards. These cards would allow parents to choose the type of card they wanted their child to have and be able to control their children's borrowing privileges, limiting access based on age and content. Director Fitzmaurice outlined the technical aspects of implementing these changes and confirmed there would be no additional costs to the organization. The board expressed support for the proposal and agreed to further discussions on the age threshold and specific functionalities of the cards.

The term "audiovisual materials" was clarified to include DVDs, CDs, and similar items. Cynthia Womble moved to implement a Juvenile Card policy, in which a juvenile card would be offered as an option, this card for children 15 and under would restrict borrowing privileges to only Juvenile resources and exclude audiovisual materials. After a brief discussion, Womble amended the motion to limit the restriction to DVDs only. Boyd Sossoman seconded the amended motion. After further discussion, during which Director Fitzmaurice agreed that the amendment would simplify the process, the motion was voted on and unanimously approved. The process of incorporating this new type of library card for children will require catalog changes at the State level from NC Cardinal. Once this is carried out the date will be set to make the limited juvenile cards available.

C. FRL Regional Agreement Update

Chair Carton provided an update on a recent meeting with county managers from Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties and their legal representatives regarding the regional agreement. Chair Carton and Tracy Fitzmaurice attended the meeting. A comprehensive reconciliation of all edits to the proposed document was forwarded to county managers. Legal representatives from Swain and Jackson Counties are currently reviewing the document, with the next steps pending their proposed amendments.

D. Marianna Black Building Update

Ellen Snodgrass reported on the progress of the Marianna Black Library (MBL) Building Project. She highlighted ongoing work with the architect and noted that plans are expected to be presented to the MBL Building Committee within the next week. Snodgrass also mentioned that a potential sewer issue was circumvented by altering the building's footprint. Updates from the mechanical, electrical, and civil engineers are anticipated within the next two weeks, with the preliminary bid process expected to commence in the first week of April. Additionally, she provided an update on the financial aspect, noting that funding allocated from the State of North Carolina and the Federal Government totals approximately \$4.2 million.

E. Nantahala Library Building Update

The board received an update on the ongoing renovations at the Nantahala Library, which included the completion of new ceiling grids, sidewalks, and the grounding of a picnic shelter. Discussions on furnishings and staffing were also highlighted, with a tentative completion timeline set for July, contingent on the acquisition of new furnishings.

F. Macon County Library Repairs

Director Fitzmaurice informed the board that repairs to the portico are expected to be addressed before the end of the fiscal year, and roofing repairs are slated for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget.

VIII. New Business

No new business was brought before the board.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Carton called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, Tony Monnat made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Ellen Snodgrass and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM.

The next Fontana Regional Library (FRL) Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 4:00 PM.

Location: Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library, Cashiers, NC.


Margaret Carton, Chair FRL Board of Trustees


Tracy Fitzmaurice, Director

5/14/2024
Date

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Date