

FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY
Meeting of Board of Trustees
Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 4:00 pm
Hudson Library, Highlands, NC

Attendance:

Board Members Present: Cynthia Womble (Vice Chair, Acting Chair), Debbie Tallent, Ellen Snodgrass, Tony Monnat, Lori Richards, Marva Jennings, Deborah Smith, Marsha Moxley (Virtual)

Board Members Absent: Kay Rowland

Others Present: Tracy Fitzmaurice-FRL Regional Director; Lynn Cody- FRL Finance Officer; Abby Hardison, Macon County Librarian; Meredith Fortner (Recording Secretary), Finance Specialist

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Acting Chair Womble called the meeting to order at the Hudson Library at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, followed by a roll call.

II. Approval of the March 11, 2025, Meeting Agenda:

Lori Richards made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Marsha Moxley seconded.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

III. Approval of the January 14, 2025, Meeting Minutes:

Debbie Tallent moved to approve the minutes as written. Marsha Moxley seconded.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Correspondence and Communications

Seventeen items of correspondence were received:

- Eleven letters expressing concern for the future direction of the library system and the viability of county branches.
- Five general inquiries or letters of support.
- One miscellaneous comment. Board members were invited to highlight specific correspondence. No further discussion was held.

V. Public Comment and Correspondence

Raised concerns about procedural adherence, specifically regarding a prior circulation policy vote and proper use of Robert's Rules of Order.

Voiced frustration about delays in the children's access card program and urged swift implementation.

VI. Director's Report

The Director's report given by FRL Regional Director Tracy Fitzmaurice included a summary of programming and events as well as services under 8 of the goals of the FRL Strategic Plan.

Key Highlights:

Digital Inclusion:

Macon County Digital Navigators held three classes.

Outreach through the Digital Champion Grant continued; \$68,000 received to date of \$300,000 total grant.

Health & Wellness:

Programs included yoga for kids, healthy eating workshops, and chair exercise classes across Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties.

Education:

Programs included geography showcases and a Japanese cultural workshop.

Affordable Living:

Budget cooking classes and distribution of over-the-counter medication kits continued.

Recreation and Leisure:

Library-hosted events included movies, book clubs, and a symphony string quartet.

"Sit and Stitch" group launched in Nantahala.

Facilities & Operational Excellence:

Progress noted on study rooms and telehealth access.

Bids for e-rate projects underway.

COLA adjustment of 2.5% confirmed.

At the conclusion of the Director's Report, board member Marva Jennings asked a question regarding an incident involving a gun found at the Jackson County Public Library. This incident was not included in the written or verbal Director's Report but was discussed in response to Ms. Jennings' inquiry. The board briefly addressed the situation during the meeting, but no formal action was taken.

VII. Financial Reports

The Financial Report was given by Lynn Cody, FRL Finance Office, and highlighted the following points.

Budget Amendment #5:

- Adjustments totaled \$17,815, covering \$315,627 in revenue, \$224,497 in expenses, and \$91,131 from other sources.
- **Vote:** Motion to approve the budget amendment as presented was made by Ellen Snodgrass, seconded by Deborah Smith.
- **Result:** Passed unanimously.

Review of Budget Items

- Lynn Cody stated that the liability insurance premium for the upcoming year had not yet been finalized and would be discussed at a March 18 meeting. He noted that the previous year's premium had increased by approximately 18%, but no new rate had yet been provided."
- 97.36% of expenditures allocated to salaries.
- Fund balance reported at 48.3%.
- Budget for FY2025 must be submitted by April 27, 2025, and available for public comment.
- Audit fieldwork begins June 6.

VIII. Unfinished Business

A. Marianna Black Library (MBL) Project

Ellen Snodgrass reported \$200,000 in savings, a USDA grant secured, \$35,000 raised since the last report.

Community room access improved with movable IT infrastructure.

B. Macon County Library Repairs

Debbie Tallent reported the removal of damaged beams completed; concrete pouring for footings planned.

C. Circulation Policy

A motion to approve the full revised circulation policy as written, including implementation of juvenile cards for ages 15 and under, was made by Debbie Tallent and seconded by Marsha Moxley.

Lori Richards from the Jackson County Local board read an overture from the Jackson County Advisory Board and made a motion for: "The juvenile card program for children ages 15 years and younger will be enacted upon approval by the Fontana Regional Library Board. All Cards previously issued to juveniles will expire. Parents will sign a new application form and a parental consent for use of library card by a minor form."

Chair Womble explained that the Circulation Policy would need to be approved before making this motion.

Several members raised concerns over the tone and content of the proposed parental consent form and the initial plan to expire all existing juvenile cards.

Ellen Snodgrass and others emphasized a more positive communication approach to build parental support.

Vote: 6 in favor, 2 opposed — Motion passed.

IX. New Business

A. Incident Notification Policy

Discussion emphasized need for a formal incident reporting and communication protocol following the partial weapon discovery.

Staff praised for rapid response; board agreed to review potential new policy at the next meeting.

Several trustees expressed concern about not being notified about the incident sooner and recommended proactive updates for major issues.

B. Review of Library Policy Approval Procedures

Jackson County Public Library Board approval process was discussed, emphasizing the need for advisory board votes on all significant policy changes.

The board unanimously voted **against** a prior motion to expire existing juvenile library cards without parental consent.

Clarification was made that consent forms are administrative processes, not policy themselves, and thus need not delay broader circulation policy votes.

C. Bylaws Review

The board reviewed a proposed update to the FRL bylaws (Section 3.8), changing language from "local county library advisory board" to "local county commission."

This change aligns with the new regional agreement.

A vote will be taken at the next meeting.

D. Nominating Committee Formed

An ad hoc committee was formed to nominate board officers for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

Members: Tony Monnat (Swain), Marsha Moxley (Macon), Deborah Smith (Jackson).

E. Student Access Card Program

Director Fitzmaurice reviewed the program's history, started in 2017 with legislative support and funding.

Concerns were raised about compliance with this law and ensuring parental awareness.

A committee has been formed to reevaluate the Circulation Policy, especially the Student Access portion.

Vote: Motion to form committee by Lori Richards, seconded by Marva Jennings.

Vote: 6 in favor, 2 opposed — Motion passed.

F. Fines and Fees Policy

Macon County requested a review of late/lost material fines. Referred to the Circulation Policy Committee for review.

G. Recognition

Debbie Tallent was thanked for six years of dedicated service to the FRL Board and the Macon County Library.

X. Other Business

No Additional business was discussed.

XI. Executive Session (If needed)

No need for an Executive session.

XII. Adjournment.

Debbie Tallent made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Lori Richards seconded the motion, and the vote was passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at: 6:12 pm.

The next FRL Board meeting is Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Location: Albert Carleton Cashiers Community Library


Cynthia Womble (Vice Chair, Acting Chair)

07/08/25
Date


Tracy Fitzmaurice (FRL Director)

7/8/25
Date