

**FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of Board of Trustees**  
**Tuesday, May 14, 2025, 4:00 pm**  
**Albert Carleton Cashiers Community Library, Cashiers NC**

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:** Cynthia Womble (Vice Chair, Acting Chair), Ellen Snodgrass, Tony Monnat, Lori Richards, Marva Jennings, Deborah Smith, Bill McGaha

**Board Members Absent:** Marcia Moxley

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

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Vice Chair Cynthia Womble called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and welcomed attendees. Meredith Fortner conducted roll call. A quorum was established with seven board members present.

Acting Chair Womble introduced newly appointed board member Bill McGaha, representing Macon County. Mr. McGaha shared a personal introduction, emphasizing his professional background, commitment to public service, and dedication to decision-making.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

Board Member Bill McGaha made a motion to approve the agenda for the May 14, 2025 meeting, noting that Item 6B had been corrected from “Adopt” to “Discuss.” The motion was seconded by Board Member Marva Jennings. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Introduction of New Board Member**

Acting Chair Womble introduced newly appointed board member Bill McGaha, representing Macon County. Mr. McGaha shared a personal introduction, emphasizing his professional background, commitment to public service, and dedication to decision-making. Chair Womble also clarified that there is still one vacant seat on the FRL Board which Macon County should be filling in the near future.

### **III. Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2025**

Board Member Ellen Snodgrass made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2025 meeting. The motion was seconded by Board Member Tony Monnett. Discussion followed regarding necessary corrections.

Board Member Marva Jennings requested clarification that the mention of a firearm found at the Jackson County Public Library had not been part of the Director's Report, but rather had been raised by her as a separate question.

Board Member Lori Richards sought clarification on language in Section 9B, regarding library policy procedures, noting procedural inconsistencies. The board had discussed the approval process for library policies, specifically in relation to the overture presented by the Jackson County Public Library Board. It was clarified that advisory boards may submit overtures — formal recommendations — to the Fontana Regional Library Board, but **only FRL board members** may introduce motions for action, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Board member Lori Richards explained that while she had brought forward the overture on behalf of the Jackson County advisory board, the motion made at the FRL level was her own and not made by the advisory board itself.

The discussion highlighted the need for accuracy in procedural language and affirmed that motions must originate from individual board members, not the advisory boards they represent. The board acknowledged the importance of maintaining procedural integrity when considering recommendations from local advisory boards.

It was found that there was not a mistake in the March minutes however there would be a clarification noted in the minutes of this meeting.

Board Member Bill McGaha requested removal of a specific insurance premium figure that had not been presented in the meeting.

Following discussion, Acting Chair Womble directed the Recording Secretary to review the meeting video to confirm the requested changes. The minutes were not approved at this time and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

### **IV. Public Comment and Correspondence**

The board discussed receipt of public correspondence. A motion was made by Board Member Lori Richards to exclude any correspondence received after the stated Friday

noon deadline in accordance with board policy. The motion was seconded by Board Member Marva Jennings and passed unanimously.

There was discussion about the clarification about what to do with correspondence that is received after the deadline, and the board asked that all correspondence received after the deadline be held until the next meeting to follow policy.

A 30-minute public comment session was held. Due to high public interest, Acting Chair Womble asked for a motion to extend the public comment period to accommodate additional speakers after the conclusion of New Business.

Board Member Lori Richards made a motion to extend the public comment period beyond the standard 30 minutes to allow remaining speakers to address the board. The motion was seconded by Board Member Marva Jennings and passed unanimously.

During the public comment period, speakers shared a range of views related to library materials, community representation, governance, and staff performance. Topics included concerns about age-appropriate content, support for inclusive services, appreciation for library staff and leadership, and comments regarding recent administrative and governance developments.

## **V. Director's Report**

The Library Director provided an overview of current activities, projects, and programs across Fontana Regional Library. Highlights included:

- **Grants & Technology:** Ongoing digital grant activities were noted, with a possible impact pending congressional action on legislation affecting hotspot checkouts. The board briefly discussed the uncertainty and potential limitations if the legislation is passed.
- **Programming & Community Engagement:** Updates were shared about new and continuing programs including health and wellness workshops, summer reading initiatives themed “Color Our World,” and adult tax filing assistance in partnership with AARP. Community events such as gardening sessions, biodiversity presentations, and music jams were also mentioned.
- **Public Services:** The board was informed of summer lunch offerings at select branches and outreach activities like newsletter sign-ups and guided walks.
- **Staff Development:** The in-service training day results were reviewed, including positive feedback on policy updates, training sessions, and staff development interests moving forward.
- **New Juvenile Limited Card:** The new library card type launched May 1st, and early adoption metrics and promotion strategies were discussed. Board members

asked follow-up questions about ongoing communication and parent understanding of the card's purpose and limitations.

- **Website Accessibility Update:** A new website is being pursued through CivicPlus to ensure ADA Title II compliance, allowing for font size, contrast, and screen reader support features.

Board discussion focused primarily on improving the timeliness of reports, implications of federal broadband rules, parent responses to the new juvenile card, and strategies for public outreach and engagement.

## **VI. Financial Report**

Finance Officer Lynn Cody presented budget amendments for FY 2024–2025. The total increase of \$15,692 reflected adjustments from all FRL branches and headquarters.

Board Member Ellen Snodgrass made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Board Member Deborah Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

During his presentation, Cody also addressed the pending FY 2025–2026 budget and noted that a special called meeting would be required for adoption due to the 30-day public posting requirement, which began on April 30. Lynn Cody also provided the Board with an overview of the 2025-2026 budget in detail. He fielded questions about the source and use of various line items, clarifying how budgeted funds are allocated across staff salaries, utilities, collections, and digital services. He emphasized the collaborative nature of the budgeting process, wherein local librarians provide input to ensure the budget reflects each community's needs. Additionally, Cody noted the importance of accurate financial reporting to maintain the system's nonprofit status. Board members expressed appreciation for the detailed documentation and transparency in the process.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

### **A. Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Tony Monnat, met on April 21, 2025, at the Jackson County Public Library. All members were present, and the committee followed the FRL bylaws in their deliberations. The following nominations for FRL Board officers were presented:

- Chair: Cynthia Womble
- Vice Chair: Tony Monnat
- Secretary: Bill McGaha

All nominees accepted their nominations. In accordance with FRL bylaws and the Regional Agreement, the board will vote on this slate of officers at the meeting closest to July 1, which will be held on July 15, 2025.

## **B. Circulation Policy Ad Hoc Committee**

The Circulation Policy Committee, chaired by Lori Richards, met on May 6, 2025. Members present included Bill McGaha, Cynthia Womble, and Director Tracy Fitzmaurice (ex officio). The committee reviewed the first half of the circulation policy and agreed on several changes. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2025, to complete the review.

Key discussion points included the clarity of the borrower's application form, particularly around the number of card types available. Although the form implies five card types, only three actually exist. Director Fitzmaurice is in the process of redesigning the form to better reflect this.

A major focus of the committee was the Student Access Card and its compliance with the North Carolina Parents' Bill of Rights (PBR). The committee discussed potential conflicts between the program—which allows students access to the full library catalog using school-issued credentials—and the PBR, which prohibits access to materials on gender identity or sexuality for students in grades K–4. Concerns were raised regarding the default "opt-out" nature of the program, as the PBR requires an "opt-in" model. Supporting documents were presented, including a formal statement from State Senator Kevin Corbin confirming that the Student Access Initiative must comply with the PBR, and an email from Jackson County Superintendent Dr. Dana Ayers explaining the county's decision to withdraw from the program in 2023 for this reason.

The committee also referenced language from the Memorandum of Agreement between FRL and the Board of Education that frames the library's role as an extension of the classroom—further supporting the applicability of PBR standards. The committee plans to continue its policy review and compliance evaluation at its next scheduled meeting.

## **VIII. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Update Marianna Black Library Building Project**

Ellen Snodgrass provided a detailed update on the Marianna Black Library construction project. She reported that the current construction bids remain over budget due to

increases in material and labor costs. The contractor is working to reduce the price, and a final number is expected within the week. If costs remain too high, a contingency "Plan C" would reduce the overall footprint of the building without sacrificing planned services. Additionally, the site is being prepared as much as possible in advance, including the removal of a Friends of the Library storage shed and the relocation of a historically significant tree to Darnell Farms. The library also has a plan in place to maintain access to children's services during the initial construction phase, by creating a separate area within the existing building. Donations are continuing to come in from foundations and private sources, and the board remains hopeful about the project's progress.

#### **B. Macon County Public Library Building Repairs**

Bill McGaha updated the board on repair work at the Macon County Public Library, as of May 6. The building's portico has been stabilized and column work completed. However, water damage above the entrance revealed mold and structural deterioration behind the stucco facing. Mold remediation is currently underway, and new exterior facing will be installed. A temporary interior walkway tunnel is being constructed to allow safe access for patrons and staff during ongoing repairs. Mold found at the apex of the roof was attributed to poor ventilation rather than water damage. Improved ventilation is being evaluated as part of the resolution. Completion of this phase of repairs is projected for mid-June, after which flat roof sections will be addressed. The children's area continues to suffer from leaks and water damage, an issue reported to have existed since the building's construction.

#### **C. FRL Bylaws Draft Amendment**

Chair Cynthia Womble reminded the board of the proposed amendment to the FRL Bylaws, first presented at the March 2025 meeting. The revision corrects outdated language in Section 3.8, changing the notification recipient from the "local county library advisory board" to the "local county commission" in cases of trustee termination. A motion was made by Lori Richards and seconded by Tony Monnett to adopt the amended language. The motion passed unanimously. Board members were asked to sign the updated bylaws, which are now officially approved.

### **IX. New Business**

#### **A. Board Retreat**

The Board briefly discussed plans for a future retreat. It was noted that a retreat had been considered previously but had not yet occurred. The idea was revisited as a way for board members to engage in more in-depth planning, reflection, and governance development.

While no formal decisions were made, members expressed interest in scheduling a retreat in the upcoming months and emphasized its potential value for team-building and strategic alignment.

**B. Records Request**

During the meeting, the Director and board members addressed the request that Cynthia Womble received to provide all emails, that contained Board business, and what this is entails.

**C. Appointment of Interim Secretary**

Due to the recent rotation of the board member previously serving as Secretary, the Board was required to appoint an interim Secretary to fulfill necessary duties until the next officer election in July. A board member was nominated to serve in this interim role, ensuring the ability to sign official documents such as bylaws and minutes and to take minutes in any closed sessions. Lori Richards made a motion to appoint the Bill McGaha as Interim Secretary. The motion was seconded by Marva Jennings and unanimously approved by the Board.

**D. Banking Resolution and Check Signatures**

The Board reviewed a resolution required by First Citizens Bank to authorize designated signers for library checks. To ensure uninterrupted financial operations, the resolution included authorization for four individuals to sign checks: The Finance Officer, Library Director, (Chair or Vice Chair), and an additional designee. This measure aligns with financial policy and state recommendations for backup authorization. Ellen Snodgrass made the motion to adopt the resolution as presented was made, seconded by Bill McGaha, Marva Jennings asked if this resolution would suffice for what the bank would require or if they would have to have a copy of the May minutes as well which would not be approved until July. Lynn Cody answered that the minutes would be needed as well. After no further discussion and motion approved unanimously.

**E. Board Member Acknowledgement**

The Board formally recognized the upcoming end of term for a long-serving member from Swain County, Ellen Snodgrass. The member was thanked for her past service, including time served as Chair, and presented with a token of appreciation, though she will be present for the special called meeting in June to approve the budget.

**X. Continuation of Public Comment.**

A total of 8 speakers participated in the second public comment session. Speakers in the second public comment session voiced perspectives on several key topics, including

support for library staff and services, the benefits of remaining in the regional system, concerns about misinformation surrounding library funding and access, and opposition to censorship and politicization of library materials. Comments also addressed community values, parental responsibility, and the importance of shared resources, digital tools, and interlibrary systems in enhancing educational and community engagement.

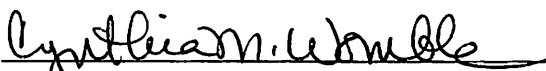
## **XI. Executive Session**

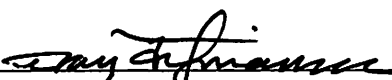
No executive session was held.

## **XII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Lori Richards to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bill McGaha board member. There being no objections, the motion was approved unanimously.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.**

  
Cynthia Womble, Vice Chair (Acting Chair)

  
Tracy Fitzmaurice, FRL Director

07/08/25  
Date:

7/8/25  
Date: