

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
November 15, 2023**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Michelle Manfred – Isle of Wight County
Jessica Moore – Sussex County
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
Bill Worsham – Southampton County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
Connie Henderson – Isle of Wight County
Denise Tynes – Isle of Wight County

Chair, Bill Worsham called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 2:57 p.m. at the Franklin Branch following the Budget Workshop.

Agenda

Ms. Briggs moved, and Ms. Lease seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Minutes

Ms. Hedgepeth moved, and Ms. Claggett seconded the minutes be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Central/System-wide Updates

BRL participated in three National Night Out events in early October, bringing total National Night Out events to seven for the year in our service area.

Holiday Food Drive (Food for Fines) continuing through early December for local food pantries.

Smithfield Branch Manager, Terry Andrews, honored by IWCS with ISLE Award for “bringing the library and literacy to life because she is passionate about creating a reading community in Isle of Wight.”

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – The committee met prior to the Budget Workshop to discuss budget options for FY2025, the annual audit, and holiday gift cards for staff.

FY2025 Budget – The Budget & Finance Committee recommends adoption of the option to increase the salary scale to a minimum of \$13.50 per hour. The vote was unanimous.

Annual Audit – The Budget & Finance Committee recommends acceptance of the annual audit and to continue the internal controls procedures in place by the Board. The vote was unanimous.

Holiday Gift Cards – The Budget & Finance Committee recommends \$30 gift cards for all permanent staff to come from the Administration line. The vote was unanimous.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Vaughan – no report

Accounts Payable

Ms. Briggs moved, and Ms. Vaughan seconded that the accounts payable be filed for the Annual Audit. The vote was unanimous.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Hedgepeth – attended a writer’s conference in VA Beach and was able to pitch her novel and short stories to multiple agents and both were accepted.

Ms. Claggett – commended Terry Andrews on her recent award and is happy to partner with her in other areas.

Ms. Vaughan – commended all staff on their awesome work throughout the system.

Ms. Manfred – shared email that Ms. Henderson sent to Isle of Wight Board of Supervisors, copied to Isle of Wight Library Board Members about library-related concerns. Some members of the board voiced the importance of speaking as one voice to community stakeholders.

Ms. Lease – Community Business Expo is Thursday, 11/16 at the Workforce Development Center; free event, everyone is welcome.

Ms. Moore – Book Club continues, Santa is coming to Waverly, Wakefield Branch is assisting the Town with their tree lighting and providing crafts to children as well. Sadly, Wakefield Friends President Judy Baldwin tragically passed in October. The Friends will be seeking a new President in future months.

Ms. Briggs – Community Coalition’s Harvest Festival took place recently. They were recently awarded \$100,000 from Dominion Energy and \$50,000 from Obici Foundation.

Mr. Worsham – very impressed with the number of library events in the newspaper.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on January 17, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

Ms. Hedgepeth moved, and Ms. Dawson seconded the meeting be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary