

**Wilkes Library Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday May 3, 2022**

Members present: Glenda Adams, Wilkes Friends of the Library President; Jane Blackburn, Appalachian Regional Library Director; Bill Davis; Gwen Minton, chairman; Suzanne Moore, Wilkes Librarian; Ola Norman, Traphill Branch Friends of the Library President; and Beth Foster Tharrington

Members absent with notice: Becky Ball, Casey Joe Johnson, Wilkes County Commissioner (Who was able to join the board later in the meeting.) and Sharon Underwood

Chairman **Gwen Minton called the meeting to order** at 3:30 pm in the Wilkes Friends of the Library room.

There being no additions or corrections, the **agenda** was approved by a motion by Bill Davis and second by Ola Norman.

The **minutes** of the February advisory board meeting were sent to all board members prior to the meeting and were approved as written. Motion for approval was by Bill Davis and second by Ola Norman.

Wilkes Friends of the Library president Glenda Adams reported on the Wilkes Friends' activities. She has met with Suzanne Moore to co-ordinate the Friends plans for activities with the library's 5-year strategic plans. April book sale totals were unavailable at this time.

Ola Norman, **Traphill Friends president**, reported that Maxine, at the Traphill Grocery Store, continues to sell books for the Friends. Several new memberships have been sold at \$5 individual and \$10 per family. Bill Davis inquired as to the minimum number of memberships and Ola replied that 12 attended the recent Friends meeting but likely there currently are 20 members. Librarian Suzanne Moore has been glad to meet with the Traphill Friends and her involvement with playing her banjo, Pickin' at the Branch with the Friends, and the formation of the Reading Trap book club has increased interest, attendance and membership in both the Friends organization and the branch library.

Jane Blackburn reported that there was neither **correspondence nor communication** during the past two months.

Old Business, presented by Suzanne Moore, included plans for Rose Herring's memorial donations. The amount received in March, \$15,500, was allocated for furnishings and equipment. It is desired that Rose Herring be recognized for her advocacy of and contributions to the library. After the decision is made as to the disposition of the funds, a plaque will be placed over the area noting that this area, equipment, furniture, etc. was made possible by donations in memory of Rose Herring. The garden club will plant a tree in the landscaped area in her memory. More memorials are expected, so Suzanne is trying to plan for the best use of the funds. Lockers were considered but found to be too expensive. For consideration, as to the more attractive and efficient use of space, is improvement of the area surrounding the stairwell which will probably be the most expensive change. Jane Blackburn encouraged all board members to submit ideas for improvement of this area. Bill Davis commented that we cannot request a blank check from the county commissioners, and Casey Joe Johnson recommended the use of matching funds. Bill remarked that this request for matching funds is not so unusual because we have \$15,000 now to be matched. New blinds upstairs are necessary because of their present damaged condition. The study tables with their brass lanterns are worn out and need to be replaced and new

display shelving is also under consideration. Suzanne will gather ideas from the staff and others and share them with us. Bill Davis asked what amount of money would be required, to which Suzanne replied, since there are other ideas to be considered, she is not sure now. As to the Herring family's wishes for the use of the memorials, Beth Tharrington asked how involved the family wished to be in how the memorial funds would be used. Suzanne responded that she had met with Lee Herring and will share our ideas with him. To date, the library has received 47 gifts and one to the endowment. Last year's donations exceeded \$20,000, some of which were in remembrance of Virgil Adams. Suzanne noted that the LSTA grant is more likely to be used for lockers for which she will solicit estimates.

Casey Joe Johnson was asked by Bill Davis what he thought would be the reaction of the county commissioners if we asked for additional funds. It could be posed as, "We have \$15,500 and we need \$___. Is it possible to put this in the library's budget to the County Commissioners or is it too late to request additional money?" To this, Casey responded that the budget has not been received by the county commissioners, but everyone is getting additional money. Bill suggested that it is easier to ask for matching money than to ask for the total amount. He determined that we need to request the additional funds as soon as possible. Bill Davis requested that Casey Johnson, the county commissioners' representative to the Wilkes Library Advisory Board, take the request to the County Commissioners' Board. Casey responded that there is a work session coming up during which the commissioners will receive the budget proposal adding that important to the county board right now, are employee retention and many other problems.

New Business for consideration was board member terms and vacancies. Presently, we need to replace Sharon Underwood, Becky Ball and Gwen Minton and one additional member should be appointed. The board is allowed up to 12 members, each approved by the county commissioners, so we could have 5 additions. However, to have the necessary numbers to operate efficiently, we need to have 10 members. Chairman Gwen Minton asked if there were any names to be presented to the board. She requested that if current members have someone in mind who is willing to serve, and who is an advocate for the library, we should encourage them to apply. Several names were suggested and the members will follow-up with these persons. Jane noted that we need to balance people who are interested and people who have sway with the community. Names should be submitted by July for our board to approve and send them to the county commissioners. In closing the discussion, Bill Davis commented that possibly the reason we're not receiving money from people is that they are not thinking of the library as needing funds. We need to encourage people who have money to give who, after they learn more about the library, will want to give. Casey suggested the town commissioners who could take library information back to their respective boards. Suzanne suggested that we could hold a "friend raiser" and invite all who we want to consider as candidates for board members.

County and Regional Librarian reports were distributed via email prior to the meeting. These are also available on the Library Board Document Page. Outstanding items from the **Wilkes Librarian's report** were:

- *The grand opening of the Wash and Learn Literacy Center
- *National Library Week which included FOL treats for library staff appreciation and an open house for Friends, endowment committee members, library board members, and elected officials which included a display recounting the history of the Wilkes Library and library tours.
- *Bill Davis donated Wilkes County Library caps which the Friends are selling for a fundraiser.
- *Suzanne, Wendy, Aruna, and Mara Lynn attended various functions to spread information about the library and garner support from individuals and groups.

*Suzanne attended the Chamber Blast at the Harley Davidson store to promote NC Reads 22:Driving With the Devil.

Programs currently being promoted are: summer reading, a library scavenger hunt, The Talking Service Book Club, Nicole taping some poetry readings and Ask-Me-Anything Trivia. A new microfilm reader was purchased with funds from a LSTA grant and Wilkes Genealogy Society. STEAM kits and books were purchased with funding from ASU.

No decision has been reached in regard to pressure-washing the library exterior. It is hoped that a façade grant from the town of North Wilkesboro will cover the majority of this expense. Staff and volunteer progress has been made with the VHP, training on mental health first aid, Trauma Resilient Communities, and workplace wellness programs.

In the near future, Suzanne will visit with the two towns and the county governing boards to share progress of the Veterans' History Project's digital archive. In recognition of African-American History Month, the library will co-host a concert with the Heritage Museum and the Arts Council on June 25. That same day is Towel Day which commemorates the work of Douglas Adams' The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Juneteenth celebrations and recognition of Rainbow Month also take place in June.

Jane Blackburn, Appalachian Regional librarian, presented the **regional librarian's report**. All staff positions are currently filled. Ashe, Watauga, and Wilkes county commissioner boards have approved the revisions to the interlocal agreement. Three signatures must be obtained from each county and a signed copy sent to the state library. Wilkes County attorney, Tony Triplett will do this. No information is available on the one-time allocation from the State Aid Budget.

Budget and finance for the period ending April 30 showed the following: Revenues 78.34 % and Expenditures 74.05%. Although less was budgeted for the fiscal year from fines and fees, these revenues are still running ahead of budget. Grant money received for regional and individual libraries in 21-22 remains at \$108,610.

In technology, current evaluation of the county library's web page usage is under way. 17 new hotspots were placed in Wilkes to take advantage of an offer from the company to replace our existing devices for free. The upgrade and migration of the Deep Freeze console, which provides protection for every public PC across the region, was completed. Each county was asked to submit a \$15,000 grant application for the LSTA Bright Ideas grant.

The regional board will meet May 19, 2022 and the local board will meet July 12, 2022.

Gwen Minton expressed thanks to all who shared information relative to the region and Wilkes library. She then asked if anyone had anything they needed to discuss. Hearing no response, Gwen declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Foster Tharrington
Secretary

