

WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

Minutes

Thursday, January 4, 2024

1:30 pm

Present: Cheryl Angel, Western Watauga Friends President; Braxton Eggers, County Commissioner; Roberta Jackson ; Margaret Love, Secretary; Patty Swartzbaugh: Sandi Basel, Chair; Natalie Harkey; Laura Johnson

Present for the library: Monica Caruso (Watauga County Librarian), Jacob Starks (Appalachian Regional Library Director), Tammy Holston (Appalachian Regional Finance Director)

Absent: Carol Deal, Max Ruthless, Claire Olander, Friends President

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Sandi called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – Meeting from November 2, 2023

Patty made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2023 meeting. Margaret seconded. The minutes were approved.

3. Correspondence and Communication – None to report

4. Report of the Watauga County Library/Five Year Plan Progress – Monica Caruso (*See attached for details*)

Thank you to the Friends for the gift certificates and lunch!

We received \$1000 from AARP as part of their Age-Friendly Book Exhibit Initiative.

The county installed new water fountains in the main area and children's area.

Movie showings attendance here have been better for youth/family movies than for adults. We also provide popcorn and candy at movies. The DBDA may want to explore an outdoor movie for the summer. We also will incorporate the license into the Summer Reading program.

National Library Week is the week of April 7 and we'll be planning events that week. Maybe the FOL could have a table at our events/story times to promote the upcoming book sale and membership.

Monica would like to bring the shred truck again this year, probably sometime in late April. I'll ask the DBDA for partial funding like I did last Feb. This is a very popular service and many people express their appreciation for this.

We have already been getting numerous calls regarding signing up for VITA. Monica will check with the Senior Center to see if they will offer the service.

Monica will be working on a brief annual report for the County Commissioners and the Town of Boone and will present this in mid-February at their meetings.

We'll be working on evaluations this month for staff.

Ingrid and Monica were guest reviewers for an architecture class at ASU; 2 small groups chose our library for their design project. Posters here. One provides a 2nd floor and the other has a green outdoor area with seating before expanding out on the lawn; this was to replace the lawn area on a smaller scale and can be used for outdoor programming. We have 2 2nd grade classes scheduled for library visits so far.

5. Report of the Regional Director – Jacob Starks (See attached for details)

Jacob talked about his five system-wide goals which include increasing compensation, improving workflows, improving patron interactions, facility improvements, and enhancing cross-county collaborations.

Regarding facility improvements at each location, Ashe is looking at renovating the basement conference room; at Wilkes it's about adding an upstairs bathroom and other interior improvements. For Watauga, it's about the expansion.

MS365 will allow for more collaboration between counties.

Water fountains were replaced.

Goals: independent of the 5-year plan all tie back to it.

Sandi asked if Jacob's emails could be shared the with local board.

Budgets & Finance: Tammy reported that fines/fees were separated from copier fees.

We earned \$178 in interest from the NCCMT.

The state aid will cover new PCs, e-books and security cameras here at Watauga.

All locations are 50% of spending, which is normal for this time of year.

6. Report of the Friends of the Library – Monica for Claire Olander

The Treasurer's report from Life Store Bank has a balance of \$16,188.

The motion to provide \$447 towards the shred truck at the Library was *passed*. The total membership, counting 13 Life members, is 256, the same as it was 11/1/23. The book sale was very successful and had an extensive amount of advertising. There have been 12 new people since July who have indicated interest in volunteering.

The hospitality committee *approved* a vote to fund a gift card-only for staff appreciation. Jacob said ARL will fund a lunch on the in-service day. And Anita volunteered to help with the in-service and the 50th. In summary, the Hospitality plans are:

- Annual Meeting on April 27
- Boonerang Table on June 15
- 50th Celebration on Sept 21
- Staff Appreciation Gift Card typically around Thanksgiving
- Staff In-Service Day Luncheon (with elected officials, FOL Board members, etc) likely in early December (ARL paying expenses)

Don is still frustrated with filing for renewal of our solicitation license that expired November 2023. He has sent the paperwork in and has not received any response. We need the Nominations Committee to produce a slate of potential officers to approve at our March

meeting. Friends are unclear about tax implications regarding fundraising for 2024. We tabled volunteer recognition.

7. Report of Western Watauga Branch – Cheryl Angel

Cheryl talked about the successful holiday drive-thru with Santa, Grinch and elf there. Attendance increased by 10% and they had lots of sponsors. Attendees left with 3 goodie bags. Jackie met with Youth Services for summer reading planning. The new van is getting lots of use. They also received a new printer and table, thanks to the Endowment and Western Watauga Friends.

Statistics have increased for Wi-Fi as logins have more than doubled. They now have 60 Friends members. Dementia Club now has a part-time coordinator and their brochure was revised. Western Watauga Library highlights were completed for 2023. They ordered new stationery, notepads, and pens as gifts, were featured in the state’s newsletter and sent a report to County Commissioners with a thank you.

8. Old Business

None

9. New Business

None

10. Adjournment

Cheryl made a motion to adjourn, and Patty seconded it. The meeting finished at 2:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Monica Caruso