

WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

Minutes

Thursday, May 4, 2023

1:30 pm

Present: Cheryl Angel (via Zoom), Sandra Basel, Carol Deal, Laura Johnson, Margaret Love, Patricia Swartzbaugh, Melony Winkelmann

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

Absent: Braxton Eggers, Dr. Scott Elliott, Natalie Harkey, Roberta Jackson, Max Ruthless

1. Call to Order & Welcome

President Sandra Basel called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – Meetings from January and March.

The meeting began with a lack of a quorum; the board agreed to table the approval of minutes from January and March.

Given the lack of a quorum, Sandi Basel brought up the issue of attendance at regular meetings. The following clarifications were offered:

- The Secretary of the Board (currently Margaret Love) is responsible for notifying chronically absent members of the possible removal from the Board. Margaret agreed to contact Max Ruthless, who has been absent without notification for several meetings.
- Ex-officio members (representatives of the Friends of the Library and the Western Watauga Friends) are voting members with seat and voice, but are not included in a quorum count.
- Regular members are required to attend meetings; ex-officio members are not.

3. Correspondence and Communication – None to report.

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

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program ended successfully. The Friends of the Library sponsored a lunch at Lost Province for the volunteers, which received positive feedback. The VITA volunteers logged 330 total hours and filed 224 tax returns.

Monica Gowan has been orchestrating a new seed library. There will be a volunteer meeting on May 6 at 10:00 a.m. More volunteers for sorting and packaging are needed. May 27 may be another volunteer day. Youth Services Librarian Emerita Judith Winecoff will continue to assist with the garden upkeep.

The Summer Reading program is kicking off June 2, with a theme of “All Together Now.”

The Library will be closed on Saturday, June 17th for the Boonerang Festival. There will be a Kids Zone at the Library lawn for the event.

Expansion Project: The Watauga County Board of Commissioners has made clear that library support is not a budgetary priority; they voted to only include \$50,000 towards the Library expansion project. There will be a budget hearing on May 16 at 5:30 p.m. Board members are encouraged to attend and speak in favor of allocating more funding during the public comment portion of the meeting. There is a change.org petition to support funding for the library expansion as well. During the Expansion Open House on April 28, twelve people offered to help. The Expansion Committee will be placed on hiatus until more momentum is gained.

5. Report of the Interim Regional Director – Tammy Holston ([See attached for details](#))

Tammy Holston reported that all library positions are currently filled, but the search for a regional library director continues. She offered thanks to all volunteers and staff for their support during National Library Week. *Financial Report:* Income and expenses are all on schedule, with 78% of revenues received and 77.49% of budgeted expenses allocated. In grant support news, letters have been written to Senator Ralph Hise (Republican - District 47) to increase state aid to libraries. The results of the LSTA grant process will be announced in June.

Technology Report: The MyLibro app is scheduled to launch in June. Kilby is researching a refresh to the library system website. There will be a workshop to discuss NC Live in early 2024.

1 Revisited. Approval of Minutes – Meetings from January and March.

Carol Deal joined the meeting, so the Board circled back to the first agenda item and approved the meeting minutes from January 5 and March 2. Patty Swartzbaugh motioned to approve the January minutes and Laura Johnson seconded; all approved. Patty Swartzbaugh again motioned to approve the March minutes and Carol Deal seconded; all approved.

6. Report of the Friends of the Library – Melony Winkelmann

Melony Winkelmann reported that the Friends Annual Meeting on April 29 was well-received, with keynote speaker Judy Geary, Senior Lecturer in Media Publishing at Appalachian State University. They are preparing for the spring Friends book sale June 1-3. In-house book sales continue to earn approximately \$1,000/month. Doris Isaacs is doing yeoman's work sorting and shelving. Puzzles and games are very popular items. More display space for Friends items is always needed.

The Friends staffed a booth at the recent Adult Services Expo, with a raffle prize offered.

The Reading and Rolling summer book delivery program begins in late May, with first deliveries scheduled for the week of June 15.

Research continues on the issue of whether sales tax is required to be charged on Friends book sales.

The question also arose regarding liability insurance; a Reading and Rolling volunteer was bitten by a dog. It was concluded that the blanket policy held by the library covers such incidents.

There is an online sign-up form for book sale volunteers.

The Friends held an election and new officers have been selected: President: Claire Olander; Vice-President: Maggie Christenbury; Past President: Melony Winkelmann; Secretary: Jack James; Treasurer: Don Olander; and members-at-large: Bettie Bond Director, Anita Clemmer, and Joan Hearn.

7. Report of Western Watauga Branch – Cheryl Angel

Cheryl Angel reported that dulcimer workshops with [Mary Greene](#) were very successful. The project received good coverage in local media and positive feedback from all involved.

State Library EZ Grant to fund a new van will be announced in June.

New officers were also elected for the Western Watauga Branch, with all current officers agreeing to continue another term.

Dementia Support: The dementia awareness support group still meets twice a month. The CARE Café has been successful; the program is not accepting new participants but is maintaining a waiting list. More volunteers are always needed. In addition to the CARE Café, a new training program for EMTs and other first responders to care for people with dementia is upcoming. CARE will be issuing identification cards and car stickers for caregivers as well. The Dementia awareness group will have a booth at the Farmer's Market during the summer. A resource brochure has been mailed to more than 60 rural churches.

The Western Watauga summer reading program, with a theme of “All Together Now,” is kicking off, with six programs offered throughout the summer.

New carpet is scheduled to be installed, which will precipitate a 2-day closure.

8. Old Business – none to report.

9. New Business

Endowment Board: Monica reported that the Endowment Fund committee still needs two representatives. The recruits can be from outside the WCPL Board. The Endowment Committee meets 4-5 times per year. Its goal is to find ways to supplement traditional avenues of funding. The next meeting will be on June 15 at 3:15 p.m.

Sandi Basel raised the question of errors and omissions insurance for the Advisory Board. Is it necessary, given that the Board serves only as an advisory body, and is not a policy-setting entity? Jack James will be consulted.

Concern Raised: A concern was brought to the Board regarding speaker conflicts of interest and soliciting business through the speaker program. The issue arose from a retirement seminar in which the speaker offered 30 minutes of free service and ended up receiving quite a lot of business – and thus revenue – from the contacts made at the free library seminar.

The meeting room is booked through the Adult Services Manager. There is a meeting room use policy that applies across the region. Speakers are not allowed to solicit for clients, and no money should be exchanged at such meetings. They may have business cards out.

Board Member Vacancies: Monica said that, due to Dr. Scott Elliott’s resignation and retirement, there is now a vacancy on the Board. A suggestion was made to inquire about the willingness and suitability of the Watauga High School Library Media Specialist to serve. One can also sign up to be on a volunteer board through the [County Commission website](#). The issue was also raised again about chronically absent members. Margaret Love acknowledged the secretary’s responsibility and agreed to send a letter.

10. Adjournment

Sandi Basel adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Love