

# WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

## Minutes

Thursday, September 5, 2024

1:30 pm

**Present:** Cheryl Angel (ex-officio), Braxton Eggers, Wendy Jessen, Laura Johnson, Margaret Love, Hollis Smith, Patricia Swartzbaugh

**On Zoom:** Natalie Harkey

**Present for the library:** Monica Caruso (Watauga County Librarian), Tammy Holston (Appalachian Regional Library Finance Director), Jacob Stark (ARL Director), David Goldston (guest)

**Absent:** Claire Olander (ex-officio), Mary Stolberg, Candice Trexler

### 1. Call to Order & Welcome

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

### 2. Approval of Minutes

- A. **July 11, 2024** - After review, Laura Johnson moved to approve the minutes; Braxton Eggers seconded; minutes were approved.
- B. **May 2, 2024** – After review, Margaret Love moved to approve the minutes; Cheryl Angel seconded; minutes were approved.
- C. **Called meeting July 19, 2024** – After review, Margaret Love moved to approve the minutes; Wendy Jessen seconded; 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 WCL Librarian Report for further details)

- Monica introduced the Library staff present and welcomed them.
- Monica will participate in a radio interview discussing the Friends of the Library 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Friday, September 13.
- Common Reading author Hope Jahren ([\*The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here\*](#)) will speak at the Schaefer Center on Tuesday, September 24 at 7:00 p.m. [Common Reading](#) is a program for incoming Appalachian State University students as part of their orientation process. By participating in the Common Reading Program, students establish a common experience with other new students that helps develop a sense of community and introduce them to a part of the academic life they are beginning at Appalachian.
- A drop-in party for retiring Youth Services Librarian Lisa Flanigan will be held on Friday, September 27 from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Lisa retires on October 1.
- The [Repair Hub](#) is back, with the next workshop to be held on Saturday, September 28, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- A volunteer drop-in celebration is scheduled for Friday, November 15, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. at the Jones house, as a big thank you to all 2024 volunteers. (UPDATE: THE TIME IS NOW 10 AM)
- A staff training day will be held during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December.
- Circulation manager Randy Feimster reported that the WCL had over 34,000 visitors in June and July! 27,000 youth books were checked out in 4 months; 450 new patrons have been registered, bringing the total to about 35,000 patrons.

- Adult Services Librarian Ingrid Hayes reported that the [Watauga County Project on Aging](#) is holding tai chi classes with Nicole Heigl every Monday beginning on September 9, as part of their falls prevention and senior wellness programming.
- The VITA tax assistance program will kick off soon. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$54,000 or less, persons with disabilities and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.

#### **5. Report of the Regional Director – Jacob Stark**

- Jacob introduced guest David Goldston, incoming treasurer for the Friends of the Library.
- The Library Expansion Committee has entered its “silent phase” of fundraising. Jacob requested 100% participation from all boards, whether with money, time, or vocal support.
- Jacob praised the WCL managers. This is Jacob’s last WCL board meeting; the WCL board wishes him well in his new endeavors.

#### **6. Financial Report – Tammy Holston**

- Tammy reported that about \$9,000 in restricted and unrestricted donations were received. \$4,096 were allocated to Digital Watauga internship salaries and the rest was distributed to Western Watauga Branch professional services, supplies, A/V equipment, and furniture & equipment.
- The NCCMT Watauga Building Fund stands at a balance of \$41,451.34.

#### **7. Friends of the Library – Monica Caruso on behalf of Claire Olander**

- Monica reported that the Friends received a \$5,000 donation to support the Reading & Rolling program.
- David Goldston has been appointed treasurer. David will be supervising the audit, and will work to renew the solicitation license, which expires in November.
- The account to support the expansion project is currently held at LifeStore Bank. The funds will be moved to Truist when the CD matures.
- Increased membership fees will go into effect on September 21, and renewal cards will be mailed on October 1.
- Membership is currently at 260.
- The semi-annual book sale will be held the first week in December. Alternative spaces are being explored, with a large room at the Mast Store in Boone being the likely choice.
- Volunteers are still needed for the September 21 Friends 50th Anniversary Celebration, as well as for set-up the day before.
- Packets are being printed for the soft launch of the capital campaign.
- On behalf of the Friends, Donna Breitenstein has been awarded funding for a Quilt Project through [America250](#). Through this project, a quilt reflecting our region will be created and shared within our community. The Friends will receive \$2500 through the Town of Boone Outside Agency Funding Program for Youth books in the fiscal year 2025.

#### **8. Western Watauga Branch – Cheryl Angel**

- Welcomed 4 new annual Friends’ members in August: Randy Harris, Linda Nelson, Georgeanna Robinson, Elaine Zugarek.
- Basket raffle prep work continues for WW Friends fall fund-raiser. We have enough baskets collected and are getting in items to include in them. We plan to raffle at least 5 baskets, and sell tickets at \$2 each or 3 for \$5. The raffle will begin mid-October and we will draw winners after our Christmas drive-through event on December 11th at the Senior Center (bad weather date is December 18th).
- A grant request to the Watauga Arts Council for further dulcimer lessons for the Mabel School in Zionville was submitted; with a match from the Friends of the Library, total request was for \$3,476.63.

- Summer Reading and Rolling went great. 23 bags with 10 books each, taken to homes 4 times this summer (230 books!!).
- Summer programming included Gem Mining (full with participants), May Wildlife Rehabilitation (70+ kids), and Professor Whizz-pop Foam Party (90-100 kids). ASU Math and Science Center went to Cove Creek Elementary School this summer as an outreach program for the Western Watauga Branch; they had Science Learning Stations and attended some of our activities.
- Dementia Support Group continues meeting regularly over the summer; we plan to start another group in the fall. Volunteers are needed to facilitate a group; several Friends are helping now.
- A goal is to set up a Care Café, but volunteers and location are needed.
- Next meeting will be on December 11 after Basket Raffle and Drive-Through Christmas.

**9. Old Business – Monica Caruso**

- Monica expressed thanks for the staff and volunteer support for the Ron Rash speaking event.
- A Watauga representative for the regional board is still needed, to replace both Robert Jackson and Sandi Basel. Cheryl Angel and Mary Stolberg both volunteered. There were resounding cheers all around.
- Officers for 2024-2025 were selected. Chair will be Patti Swartzbaugh; Hollis Smith will be Vice Chair; and Margaret Love will continue as secretary.

**9. New Business – Monica Caruso**

- WCL department managers will be attending Board meetings if schedules allow.

**10. Adjournment – Patti Swartzbaugh adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Love