

WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

Minutes

Thursday, July 7, 2022 (Hybrid)

1:30 pm

Present: Cheryl Angel, Sandra Basel, Carol Deal, Margaret Love

Present via Zoom: Natalie Harkey, Roberta Jackson, Max Ruthless, Patricia Swartzbough, Melony Winkelmann

Present for the library: Monica Caruso (Watauga County Librarian), Jane Blackburn (Appalachian Regional Library Director)

Absent: Scott Elliott, Laura Johnson, Billy Kennedy

1. Call to Order & Welcome

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

Margaret Love motioned to amend the agenda as suggested; Cheryl Angel seconded. The motion passed.

2. Approval of Minutes – Meeting from May 5, 2022

Cheryl Angel made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 5, 2022 meeting. Roberta Jackson seconded. The minutes were approved.

3. Correspondence and Communication - None to report

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

Monica announced several staffing changes, including that Judith Winecoff, Youth Services Manager, is retiring effective October 2. She mentioned several media events and displays celebrating the Town of Boone's 150 year anniversary. The Summer Learning Program has been very successful, with over 450 students signed up.

The county has fully funded the WCL's request for fiscal year 2023.

Monica also provided an update on the Library expansion project.

She mentioned that the staff morale committee has continued to work on steps to improve and enhance investments in staff mental and physical wellbeing.

Monica announced several upcoming events:

- As part of the Town of Boone 150 year-long celebration, authors Dr. David Cratis Williams (son of Cratis Williams) and Dr. Patricia Beaver will read from "The Cratis Williams Chronicles: I Come to Boone" on Saturday, July 9 at 10:00 a.m.
- The WCL is partnering with Appalachian State University's Belk Library to bring New York Times bestselling author Wiley Cash to the Rosen Center on Monday, July 18 at 3:00 p.m.
- Storytelling sessions by John Ashburn will be held on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. starting in July.
- Anna Welch will offer children's art programs fitting the theme of the Summer Reading Program on July 19 and 21.
- Senior Center director Billie Lister will present an active shooter/community safety program on Friday, July 22 at 3:00 p.m.
- The library will host a blood drive on August 5.
- Farewell event for Judith Winecoff will be held sometime in late September

- Dr. Susan Keefe, author of “Junaluska: Oral Histories of a Black Appalachian Community” will speak in late September, as part of the Common Read author event and on September 10 as part of the Boone 150 series.

5. Report of the Regional Director – Jane Blackburn (See attached for details)

Jane Blackburn reported that the search committee for the regional library director position is still accepting applications. The interview process should begin in another month. The Inter-Local Agreements are finally completed for all three counties. Ashe and Watauga Counties are fully funded; Wilkes County is not, but the county commissioners provided enough to support staff raises. ARPA has awarded \$10 million to library systems; the regional portion will be approximately \$150-200,000, to spend between now and 2024. The regional budget and financial reports have not been prepared yet due to the closing of the fiscal year. The region was awarded an LSTA Bright Ideas Grant of \$15,000, \$5,000 of which will be used for a microfilm reader/printer at Watauga. This year, the ARL has received \$133,610 in grants. In a tech update, the libraries will be phasing out the use of RFID tags, as the system is not effective.

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

Melony Winkelmann reported that plans for the July 14-16 book sale are going well. Matt and Marsha Walpole are assisting with pricing donations and are listing items online to sell, as well. Local non-profits are welcome to collect unsold books after the sale. Please email wataugacountyfol@gmail.com to donate books. The Friends of the Library assisted with the installation of Plexiglas protective screens for staff desks.

7. Report of Western Watauga Branch –Cheryl Angel

Cheryl Angel reported that a brainstorming/ideas meeting was called on Monday, July 11, which was productive. The patio furniture purchased and installed recently is being used frequently. There are plans to source a retractable awning; coordination with Watauga County, who owns the building, will be necessary. The Book Club continues to meet on the third Wednesday of the month. A new van is needed for reaching under-served communities. Jane Blackburn suggested that perhaps an LSTA grant could be written, or donations sourced from CCRC. As part of the Summer Learning Program, we gave out STEM make and take bags sponsored by ASU. The library has been busy with “Reading and Rolling” service, a drop-off/pick-up service whereby volunteers take books to children in rural areas of the county every two weeks. Dementia project memory kits are very popular, and there is a demand for more kits. Booths will be staffed at the Watauga County Farmers Market and the Sugar Grove Music Festival. A question arose regarding sales tax on book sale books.

8. Old Business –

Officers are needed for the 2022-2023 board. Sandi Basel agreed to continue as president and Margaret Love agreed to continue as secretary. Max Ruthless agreed to serve as Vice-President (yay, Max!) Patti Swartzbaugh agreed to serve on the Appalachian Regional Library Board as a Watauga representative.

9. New Business – None to report.

10. Adjournment

Margaret Love motioned to adjourn the meeting. Cheryl Angel seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Love