

# WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

## Minutes

Thursday, July 11, 2024

1:30 pm

**Present:** Cheryl Angel (ex-officio), Patricia Swartzbaugh, Sandra Basel (Chair)

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

**Absent:** Candice Trexler, Braxton Eggers, Laura Johnson, Margaret Love, Roberta Jackson, Natalie Harkey, Claire Olander (ex-officio)

### 1. Call to Order & Welcome

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

### 2. Approval of Minutes – May 7, 2024

We did not have a quorum to approve the minutes so we will do so at the next meeting. No one present had any corrections. At the next meeting we will approve the March, May and called meeting minutes.

### 3. Correspondence and Communication – None to report

### 4. Report of the Watauga County Library/Five Year Plan Progress –Monica Caruso

- 500 Summer reading registrations; Western Watauga's attendance has been high
- Youth Services has been short-staffed
- We have a staff member who will be starting a master's program at UNC-G in the fall. Two hours weekly for classes is allowed on work time.
- HVAC installation is complete
- Final report for outreach van grant is due August 31.
- The outreach van was in the Town of Boone Independence Day parade
- The new expansion web page is up.
- July 19<sup>th</sup> is the next Capital Campaign meeting and we expect to hear a renovation proposal by John Renaud
- The Watauga Democrat had an article about the Digital Champion grant dated June 26 and it was passed around
- Monica will attend the Chamber's Business After Hours this evening to promote expansion with a small postcard-sized flier

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

- Jacob reported that Watauga and Ashe will receive a 5% salary increase and Wilkes a 1% increase in the new fiscal year.
- ARL and NW Regional have officially merged their collections and are promoting the e-collection as Appalachian & NW Regional Libraries. We save some money and will have \$9,000 for content credit.
- Regarding the MyLIBRO app, we have seen an increase in usage.

- The Digital Champion grant is \$402,000 and does not require a match. We must complete activities by December, 2026. The grant involves visiting technology outposts such as Dollar General using Digital Navigators.
- The LSTA Adult Literacy Grant we were awarded is for \$79,000 and requires an \$8800 match. We would need to hire a Literacy Coordinator to manage activities. We are actively seeking matching funds.
- We are looking into a fun activity, possibly in August for all staff.
- Wilkes' s renovation will be starting in Oct/Nov
- Ashe is on hold
- Watauga will hear about the renovation proposal at the next Capital Campaign meeting and needs to talk with the county.
- The Department of Commerce has a grant that's due in August and requires a 30% match

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

- Tammy closed the books for FY 24
- Watauga is receiving the amount requested for FY 25
- All libraries received \$15000 in state aid
- Our E-rate reimbursement will increase to 90% next year
- We plan to give \$250 bonuses to all staff once we receive the balance of the Covid State Fiscal Recovery Funds

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

- The Friends of the Library met last week
- Membership is currently at about 265
- The membership fees mentioned in our previous meeting will take effect in October
- The Friends have a new Instagram page as well as updates to the Friends website.
- The June book sale yielded \$4300 and they were very pleased about this.
- The next sale will be December 5-7
- A reminder that the Sept. 21 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary party will be from 11-4 and the library will be closed.
- Ron Rash will be here on August 7 and will begin his talk at 6 pm at the Appalachian Theatre of the High Country. A meet and greet will be from 5-6 pm
- Monica asked the Friends if they would provide up to \$4400 toward the match for an LSTA Adult Literacy grant. The Board has received the grant and is pondering this.

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

- Western Watauga celebrated 3 new members (2 lifetime and 1 annual)
- Cheryl mentioned that 5 big baskets will be raffled for a fundraiser. Tickets will be sold throughout the fall and winners will be drawn in December.
- 3 sets of dulcimer books were donated (to WCL, Western Watauga, and Bethel School) as a follow-up to the successful dulcimer education program.
- The Arts Council is applying for funds to continue the grass roots dulcimer grant which will include the branch as a partner
- Attendance at summer reading programs has been huge, at times 90-100 people.
- We approved \$1000 for supplies and professional services
- The holiday drive-thru is slated for December 11
- Another Inter-Mountain program is being planned with Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties

- Reading & Rolling served 23 children
- A new, additional Dementia group will start in the fall
- The regular Care Café project will hire someone in the fall
- The next Friends meeting will be on September 27
- Cheryl expressed an interest in being a regular board member (rather than ex-officio) so Monica will send her the application

**9. Old Business – Monica Caruso**

- Since we did not have a quorum to approve our new board members recommended by the nominating committee, Monica will need to arrange a called zoom meeting as soon as possible

**9. New Business – Monica Caruso**

- A proposed early closing so staff can work the Ron Rash event will need to be approved at the next regional board meeting. Monica will need to have a plan in place for when and where staff will be.

**10. Adjournment – Sandi adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Caruso