

WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

Minutes

Thursday, March 2, 2023

1:30 pm

Present: Sandra Basel, Braxton Eggers, Natalie Harkey (via Zoom), Margaret Love, Patricia Swartzbaugh, Melony Winkelmann

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

Absent: Cheryl Angel, Carol Deal, Dr. Scott Elliott, Roberta Jackson, Laura Johnson, Max Ruthless

1. Call to Order & Welcome

President Sandra Basel called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

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

Given a lack of a quorum, final approval for the [minutes from January 5, 2023](#) will be postponed until the next meeting.

3. Correspondence and Communication

Monica Caruso mentioned an email to Ingrid Hayes, Adult Services Manager, praising Adult Services Specialist Justin Daly for assisting the patron with deciphering an online fillable document.

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

Monica reported that the WCL will be celebrating National Library Week beginning April 23 with several displays and events. A lunch for employees will be offered on April 24; an open house with emphasis on the expansion project will be held on April 28 at 11:30 a.m.

Events in March and April include a wreath-making workshop with Donna Breitenstein on March 8 at 3:00 p.m. (suggested donation \$10, participation limited to 15). On April 18, the WCL will host a document shredding truck.

All appointments have been filled for tax assistance.

In expansion project news, the Building Committee could still benefit from additional local business representatives. The Friends of the Library will meet on March 10 at 10:30 am to define the role of the Friends as a fundraising arm for the expansion project. Sandi mentioned that the Endowment Committee will add expansion to their upcoming meeting agenda.

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

There are two Library Assistant/Circulation Assistant positions open in Wilkes County. Staff evaluations and work plans are complete. The WCL has received two donations of \$500 and \$3,200, which will be applied to programming for the “Reviving Appalachian Heritage through Music” grant.

Income and expenses are steady and on schedule for the year. The LSTA grant line item appears to be under, but it is a new grant not submitted for reimbursement yet. That grant will be used for the new van grant request for Western Watauga. Ashe County has received a grant of \$25,000 for the purchase of a lactation pod. Wilkes County is purchasing a library locker in partnership with the Town of Wilkes.

Through Tammy, Regional Technology Manager Kilby Spencer reports that e-rate forms have been submitted to recoup 80% of broadband costs. Free replacement hardware is being explored as an option through the company TechSoup.

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

The Friends of the Library has refreshed its web and social media presence thanks to the work of Martha Gray and Taylor Murano. In-house sales of books continue to be successful, exceeding profits of the meeting room book sales and averaging \$1,000/month. Praise was offered again for book donation sorter Doris Isaacs, and Melony mentioned that puzzles are an increasingly popular item.

Melony expressed the Friends' approval of the concept plan with expansion elevations provided by Bill Dixon, local architect, especially the above-ground basement area dedicated to the Friends' book sales.

Melony reported that as of the meeting, the Friends held approximately \$26,000 in the bank account and \$23,000 in the building fund.

The Friends annual meeting is planned for April 29 from 10:00 – 12:00 p.m. The summer book sale will be held June 1-3.

7. Report of Western Watauga Branch – Patti Swartzbaugh on behalf of Cheryl Angel

Funding received from the Watauga Arts Council will be used for dulcimer workshops with [Mary Greene](#) from March 17 through May 31. The goal of the workshops is to develop an appreciation for Appalachian instruments and musical heritage. 15 fifth graders from Bethel Elementary School will participate, with six visits to the school planned. The school has also asked for grant funding for books related to the subject.

The dementia awareness support group still meets twice a month. Project CARE Family Consultant Karen Phoenix will be a guest speaker, and a CARE Café will be starting soon.

The State Library EZ Grant request has been submitted to purchase a new van for both the Western Watauga branch and the WCL to share.

8. Old Business

Monica reported that the Endowment Fund committee still needs two representatives. The recruits can be from outside the WCL Board.

9. New Business – none to report.

10. Adjournment –

Sandi Basel adjourned the meeting at 2:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Love