

Organizational meeting
Bedford Public Library System Board of Trustees
Minutes for July 11, 2023
Bedford Central Library, Bedford Room

Members present: Debra Bahouth, Randy Cox, Hope Cupit, Olivia Madison, Pamela Palmer, Tracy Reichard

Members not present: Anna Stevens

Staff present: Jenny Novalis, Library Director

Mrs. Bahouth called the meeting to order at 5:09pm. Mrs. Cupit motioned to approve the agenda, Mrs. Palmer seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Bahouth opened the floor for nominations for officers for the Library Board for the new year. Mrs. Bahouth asked for nominations for chairman. Mrs. Bahouth nominated Mrs. Pamela Palmer for chairman. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Palmer accepted and all agreed.

Mrs. Bahouth turned the meeting over to the new chairman, Mrs. Palmer. Mrs. Palmer asked for nominations for the vice-chairman. Mrs. Bahouth nominated Mrs. Tracey Reichard for vice-chairman. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Reichard accepted and all agreed.

Mrs. Palmer asked for nominations for treasurer. Mrs. Palmer nominated Mrs. Hope Cupit for treasurer. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Cupit accepted and all agreed.

Mrs. Novalis stated the long range plan is a requirement to receive state grants in aid in Virginia and also noted that the plan does not expire until 2025. Mrs. Reichard asked if the Library has reached the goals in the plan. Mrs. Novalis stated the plan is a living document and the library is on track with the plan and the tangible outcomes such as stats and surveys will be available at the August meeting. Mr. Cox motioned to re-adopt the long range plan, Mrs. Bahouth seconded, all agreed. The Board reviewed the draft calendar of meetings for FY24. Mrs. Cupit motioned to approve the meeting calendar as presented, Mrs. Madison seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Palmer asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes from the previous meeting. There were none. Mr. Cox motioned to approve the minutes, Mrs. Reichard seconded, all agreed.

No public comments

Mrs. Novalis presented revisions to the public comment policy. The Board reviewed the revisions, looked at other public library's public comment policies and discussed additional changes with the purpose of clarifying what the public comment period is for and setting basic protocols. The Board directed staff to make the edits discussed. This policy will be on the agenda for further discussion/revision or for final approval at the August 1, 2023 regular meeting.

The Board discussed ongoing parking and traffic congestion problems at the Forest Library. Mrs. Novalis proposed including parking lot expansion, as a stand-alone project, with the County's CIP requests in FY24. In years past this item and a request for a turnout lane from 221 into the parking lot were bundled with the forest library expansion project. The Board agreed it was a good idea to separate the requests and a brief discussion regarding the layout of the property, the increased usage of the park behind the library and the needs of this community ensued. It was noted that although there is a Bedford County Parks master plan in the works, Mr. Woody indicated there were no improvements planned for the Forest park except maybe a walking bridge to link the back of the park to the athletic fields on Rt. 811. Mr. Smedley also indicated the planned VDOT improvements to the 221 corridor further down the road would not include the area in front of the library.

In other parking lot updates, Bedford County has looked into the drainage issues at the south end of the Parking lot maintenance at Bedford and hopefully solved the standing water and pothole problems. Mrs. Novalis also noted that the Leland Cyprus trees on the border of the parking lot at Central need some maintenance. She suggested writing a letter to the Avenel Ave neighbors informing them of the work, to be good neighbors and avoid any misunderstandings. Estimated costs for this project are still being calculated.

The Friends of the Library have generously paid for the new exterior meeting room door construction at Bedford Central. There is a need for 'walk-off' carpet to be installed. Mrs. Novalis requested the project be funded from the building maintenance fund account, for \$850. Mr. Kirby has worked with the same carpet/flooring company for the bathroom floor replacement already. Mrs. Cupit motioned to use the building maintenance funds for the walk-off carpet. Mr. Cox seconded, all agreed.

Two E-rate reimbursements were received in June 2023 – \$13,930 & \$4,199.56 – to close out the FY23 E-rate cycle. Mrs. Novalis reviewed the current balances in the fund accounts and noted that there will be a \$6,956.80 IT project coming up in this fiscal year. The Board discussed where to move these funds and what other large expenses were upcoming. Mrs. Bahouth motioned to transfer \$13,930 into the IT fund and \$4199.56 into the vehicle fund. Mr. Cox seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Novalis requested the next E-rate eligible project equipment costs be paid from the IT fund, instead of the operating budget. This project was bid on last fall and contract approved at the December 2022 meeting. The project will replace several pieces of network equipment throughout the system that the IT department is recommending to

upgrade, including switches, routers, UPS and cabling. Cost to the library is \$6,956.80 and the library will be receiving 70% of that back in Federal awards, after the FY24 E-rate cycle concludes. Mr. Cox motioned to use the IT fund for the \$6,956.80 expense. Mrs. Reichard seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Novalis reviewed the total amount spent on the libraries newspaper subscriptions in FY23 and it was very high. All of the local papers had major rate increases and there were several long-standing delivery issues throughout the year. Overall the BPLS spent just over \$6,000 on newspaper subscriptions in FY23. The renewal notice for the Roanoke Times at the Forest Library, alone, was going to be \$1075.00. Staff have been researching online alternatives and staff noted that the library would like to support local journalism in our area, but it has become cost prohibitive to continue with these papers in print format. Instead the BPLS has purchased an online subscription to Newsbank. Newsbank contains all the local papers and over 10,000 other VA and nationwide papers, college papers, major network news affiliate web resources and more Mrs. Novalis demonstrated the product and discussed marketing.

The yearend expense report was reviewed and there were no questions. Mrs. Novalis noted that the yearend revenue report should be available shortly, the library still had a few outstanding deposits that were not yet posted.

Board Member Comments

Mrs. Cupit would like to thank those that came out to the Broadband needs assessment meeting that SERCAP hosted in July. She would also like to thank Debbie Bahouth for all her years of leadership for the Library Board, as its Chairman and appreciates the manner in which she handled all the Library business.

No new business

Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Cupit motioned to adjourn, Mr. Cox seconded, all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted, Jenny Novalis