



January 18, 2022 Minutes

The Newport News Public Library Board of Trustees met on January 18, 2022, in the James Room conference room of the City Center Administrative Offices.

Attending: R. Tench, B. Dahlen, P. Mercier, D. Thomas, K. Akins, L. Atkins, C. Samuels, D. Dangerfield, W. Driscoll, D. Butler; A. Jennings, K. Schell, and C. Skeen representing the Library; youth members' guests Deborah Braxton, Mary Jessuph, and Peter Driscoll

Absent: W. Barbour, M. Frantz, and T. Wright

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. The meeting did meet quorum.

Approval of November 16, 2021 Minutes

P. Mercier motioned to approve the minutes. B. Dahlen seconded. Minutes were approved.

New Business

Anita Jennings, who has been in the Acting Director role for approximately one year, was named the new Director of Libraries and Information Services. The Board welcomed two new youth members and members of their family who were present. Deshara Butler is a 10th grade student of Warwick High School. William Driscoll, who also goes by Billy, is a 10th grade student of Peninsula Catholic High School. They both expressed their excitement to be there and the board chair congratulated them on being selected.

NNPL Outreach Overview – Karen Schell, Senior Librarian Community Outreach
Ms. Schell leads the newly added Outreach team consisting of Jennifer Minter, Senior Library Programming Specialist and Sonya Scott, Early Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Some outreach efforts have been hampered by COVID but we are working to develop new partnerships and hope to offer more outdoor options in the spring. Libraries also just recently received official approval for our Outreach van. We are also working to build our collection using materials from our former South Morrison branch. Our focus right

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now is on early literacy picture books so we can start getting literature out to preschools.

Each month we will create a newsletter to be sent out to the NNPS Elementary and Middle/High School Media Specialists. The purpose is to let them know about Newport News Public Libraries activities that the students, families and school staff may not be aware of. The newsletters are emailed to each school and also include very helpful quick links to locations on our website. Highlights from this month's newsletter includes student Connect card memberships, Storytime Online, and Peterson's Career Prep. Question from B. Dahlen: Are you willing to partner with the Friends of the Library to help with children's books needs? Yes, if the Friends are able to share their donations. Mrs. Dahlen also shared that through the book clubs held at Senior Living Centers, there may be additional copies available. She also suggested our outreach team might be able to partner with the Lifelong Learner program offered by CNU. Question was asked by R. Tench if CDL is required for Library Outreach van and the answer is no.

Librarian's Report – November and December Monthly Roundup

NNPL held a STEM community event outdoors at Brooks Crossing for middle school students with Ozobots and coding. Many families were unaware that Libraries offered STEM programs.

In December we held our Career Online High School graduation. There were a total of 4 graduates and 1 could not attend. One of the graduates was the guest speaker. She shared her experience with battling COVID while in the program and continuing on to finish.

We collected a total of 611 pounds of non-perishable food during Can Your Fines for the Virginia Peninsula Food Bank. The Jingtowntown event was held outside at Main Street and had a very high attendance. There was a community tree decorating activity, smores and cider, and children had the opportunity to take a photo with Santa while sitting in a chair next to him so we could stay socially distanced.

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The Programs and Services committee will need to meet this quarter. Anita can let Wendy and Cynthia know so they can meet with committee members at their next scheduled meeting. Our two new youth members will join this committee. The Budget committee was already included in the budget planning. The PR and Advocacy committee won't need to meet until it is time to start preparing for the annual report.

There was a question regarding going remote with our meetings. If we have a quorum in person we can also offer a virtual component. We can look at doing that when we are in person at Main Street in February because we have staff there to help with setup. We could also consider skipping meeting in February, if necessary, depending on the case numbers. The reason we have to meet in person is because the meeting has to be open to the public. We would need a governor's executive order to go virtual.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anita Jennings", is written over a horizontal line.

Anita Jennings, Director
Secretary, ex-officio

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