



February 15, 2022 Minutes

The Newport News Public Library Board of Trustees met on February 15, 2022, in the meeting room of the Main Street Library.

Attending: R. Tench, D. Dangerfield, K. Akins, T. Wright, W. Barbour, M. Frantz, L. Atkins, C. Samuels, W. Driscoll, D. Butler; A. Jennings, S. Henderson, J. Wagner and C. Skeen representing the Library; and guest Peter Driscoll

Absent: B. Dahlen, P. Mercier, D. Thomas

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. The meeting did meet quorum.

Approval of January 18, 2022 Minutes

K. Akins noted that she was left off of the list of the attendees. C. Skeen will update. Minutes are approved with this correction.

Say It Loud Project Presentation – J. Wagner, Senior Librarian - Virginiana Room

This project, led by staff at the Main Street Library, launched in 2018. The goal is to document and preserve historical legacy and to educate the community on the rich history of the Southeast community. So far the ongoing project has honored 36 individuals. We will induct three new names at a ceremony taking place in March. Board members are invited and should receive invitations in the mail shortly. Some of the project's highlights and accomplishments include the We Stand for Justice Black History television program, Whittaker Memorial Hospital documentary, and Until Freedom Comes, a permanent exhibit on the 2nd floor of Main Street. We have also been featured in Daily Press several times and on WVEC 13 6:00PM news. The main funding source is the Neisser Fund, but the project has also received a few grants. The future plan is to develop digital databases.

FY23 Budget Update

We had our two budget hearings and one was for our Shared Network group with the

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department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. We are requesting a Librarian I position to work with the Virginiana Room and Newsome House. We are also asking for funds to support the Passport Facility and the increased cost of postage associated with those services. We requested funding of our Outreach Department, as well as an increased collection budget and a second van. If we don't receive the van, we will use City's fleet vehicles for outreach efforts. We will need funding for our Wi-Fi Hotspot program if we are going to be able to continue with it. The City Manager will make her recommendation for the budget to City Council.

Librarian's Report - January Monthly Roundup

NNPL is offering two reading challenges this spring: a Black History Month challenge for all ages and a Snuggle Time challenge for birth to 5 years. These are being offered through the Beanstack app and prizes will be awarded for participation.

The Library partnered with the Virginia Department of Health to provide free COVID at-home test kits. We distributed 288 kits in one afternoon. We do not know if or when we will be receiving more kits in the future.

We are seeing high attendance for in-person programs and the amount of people coming into branches has increased. We are still asking people to wear masks but the guidance on that will likely be changing. People can sign up for our newsletter to be notified of upcoming programs. Some do require registration. Question was asked regarding paper tax forms and yes, we do still offer those in the branches.

We did receive a response from the architects regarding the new Grissom Library. The program requirements are being sent back to the department of Planning for space allocations.

D. Dangerfield wanted to give kudos on the Until Freedom Comes permanent wall exhibit. She also asked how the board can advocate and be of more assistance. A. Jennings stated to be sure to stay informed on what is taking place in the Libraries, ask questions and get the word out.

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The Board asked for some clarity on the main difference between the Foundation and the Friends of the Library. The Friends raise money through monthly book sales. The Foundation is a non-profit 501c3 organization and should be the group to raise the most money through campaigns for specific causes or programs. They also should be writing and submitting grants. They are looking for contacts and fundraising ideas and will meet later this month. K. Akins made a comment that some may be more likely to donate if they were to offer a free gift, such as a tote bag.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:36 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Anita Jennings, Director
Secretary, ex-officio

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