

Eastern Shore Regional Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2023 11:30 am
Talbot County Free Library - Easton, MD

In Attendance: John Venditta, Amanda Watson, Sarah Dahl, Linda Prochaska, Maida Finch, Seth Hershberger, Jennifer Ranck, Vicki O'Mara, Janet Salazar, Ed Goyda, Debby Bennett, Arnessa Dowell, Gloria Urban, Erin Counihan, Dana Newman, Irene Padilla, Kathleen Lyons, Susan Sherman, Sarah Guy

Call to Order: Jennifer Ranck called the meeting to order at 11:39 am.

June 12, 2023 Minutes: Susan Sherman made motion to approve the June 12th meeting minutes. All were in favor. The June 12, 2023 minutes were approved.

Adoption of New By-Laws: The board reviewed the by-laws. There are some pieces that are in state law, like term limits, that haven't been included in these. John would like to vote on the current by-laws as they stand and he will give 60 days' notice of the new changes that he would like to include. These can be voted on at our next meeting. Ed Goyda made motion to accept the By-Laws. Arnessa Dowell seconded the motion. All were in favor. The current By-Laws were accepted.

New Board Election of Officers: We would like to adjourn this meeting and call to order a new meeting with the New Board, including the approved By-Laws and new Officers. We will need a President and Vice President on a voluntary basis. ESRL's new board President will be Maida Finch. The new board Vice President will be Kathleen Lyons. Gloria Urban made motion to accept the new board officers. Vicki O'Mara seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jennifer Ranck adjourned the meeting of the Current Board at 11:49 am.

Call to Order: Maida Finch called the meeting of the New Board to order at 11:50 am.

Financial Report (John Venditta): John showed the board a Balance Sheet, which gives a snapshot of where we are currently. This is generated by QuickBooks; which is kept by our accountant at Wigglesworth, Layton, Moyer & Chance. Everything in the budget is balanced. John also gave out our Budget Comparative. We have received our second payment of State funding so far this year, but it is not reflected in the Comparative since it just happened yesterday. There are some higher than usual numbers in the Consulting account (8030) due to our architect payments coming out of that. Once construction starts, our fees will be coming out of the CIP account (2060). Once we get all of our bids back, John will be able to create the CIP budget.

Sarah Dahl made motion to file the Financial Report for audit. Gloria Urban seconded the motion. The Financial Report will be filed for audit.

Administrator's Report (John Venditta): Annual Plan: Since this is the first meeting of the fiscal year, John presented the board with our Annual Plan. This is based on our FY-20 through FY-24 Strategic Priorities. The board will want to think about what we want our new Strategic Plan to look like and put that together. It tends to be fairly simple because we don't deal with the public; we only support our eight library systems. These are the things that we do: Information and Material Services, Advocacy and Public Awareness, Technology, Programming and Training. We also have something we call Over-arching Priorities, which are special projects, grant opportunities and working with the Maryland State Library Agency.

Kathleen Lyons made motion to approve the Annual Plan. Erin Counihan seconded the motion. All were in favor. ESRL's Annual Plan was approved.

Library Services Report (Amanda Watson):

- Introduction to Library Services: ESRL's library services focus directly toward our public libraries. Our two main departments are Information Technology and Information Services. We have two staff members who work with Polaris, the ILS, collections, databases and kits. We have four staff members in materials, delivery and fleet services who are responsible for transiting materials to the county library systems. We have six staff members who focus entirely on Information Technology - our internal infrastructure and networking at all of the libraries.
- Amanda went over database statistics and introduced Udemy and Gale Courses updates.
- We recently introduced a Helpdesk ticketing system. We don't have all of the counties on it officially, but a hybrid with some counties still emailing in for support.
- Current Projects at ESRL:
 - -Windows 11 audits at public libraries. We currently have staff going around to check the ages of machines and their operability for the Windows upgrade.
 - -Microsoft 365 migration for staff and public computers. This is currently slated to happen by the end of the month.
 - -Infrastructure Upgrades/Replacement cycles for the counties; both networking equipment and computers.
 - -ESRL Internal Documentation Wiki. Most recently we have worked on our own internal documentation process, trying to document historical knowledge and technical pieces for the future.
 - -ESRL Website Redesign. We are working to modernize our website. This is still in the early stages, but hope to have something done by next quarter.
 - -Ongoing Construction (Kent Island, Denton, ESRL, St. Michaels). We just added St. Michaels to our list. We have Kent Island finishing up. Our own renovation, which hasn't started physically yet.
 - -Computer Acquisitions. This is ongoing, where we spec out computers for our different accounts (Dell, Apple, etc), quote them out, order them and arrange to have them deployed at the county libraries.

Maryland State Library Association (Irene Padilla): We are still putting together our budget. We have submitted everything for our Capital Budget and have already had our meeting with DBM on that. For Capital projects, we are allocated \$7.5 million a year. We always ask for more than that, so we make up two budgets to show what we can do with each requested amount. For the upcoming Legislative session and the Regional Bill, one issue was having two members of the public on the regional board. Having 2 members will go forward in this next session. Another bill we are working on is to enact Fine Free for Minors. Everyone is following this, but the statute isn't as clear as it needs to be. We are putting together a Freedom to Read Bill that would outlaw bans on books. We have finished the draft on this bill and having ALA look at it. After that we will have the Attorney General's office look at it. The plan is to pre-file that by November 1st.

Old Business: The ESRL Renovation. We currently lease space from the Tri-County Council building in Salisbury. We moved from the basement of the Wicomico County library around 8 years ago. At that time, Wicomico was planning a branch east of the city and we were going to join them there. The space at the Tri-County building is small but was going to be temporary. The plans for Wicomico fell through and we needed some more room. There is a vacant space across from our office that is available for rent, so we have decided to expand. Tri-County Council will be taking advantage of our construction to do some improvements of their own, including HVAC work and a shared emergency generator. The delay in our renovation right now is due to the engineering for the generator and HVAC work. When that is settled in a couple of weeks, the architect will provide the bid documents to Tri-County, who will file them. Our space will be a full renovation, so we may need to vacate the office temporarily.

New Business:

- Finance Committee: This is the only standing committee of the board. We need at least three members, who will serve for one year. Responsibilities include reviewing the annual budget, overseeing audits done annually and previewing financial statements provided by John to present to the board. Volunteers: Gloria Urban, Susan Sherman and Sarah Dahl.
- Time to Care Act – ESRL Response: This is Maryland's version of FMLA, and insurance plan that we pay into to protect employees. There is currently a consortium to buy into or organizations can go in alone. John would like ESRL to go on our own with this. We have done it with FMLA and the main focus would be on record keeping that is acceptable to the state. Our insurance provider, Avery Hall, is willing to work with us if we come across any issues.
- Personnel – John Venditta CEO: John submitted his resignation letter to the board (attached). His last day will be June 28, 2024.

FY-24 Meetings: December 2023 and ongoing – Our next meeting will be December 12th. For the year, meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm via zoom.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm



October 5, 2023

John C Venditta
16 Gatehouse Trail
Berlin, MD 21811

President, Board of Trustees
Eastern Shore Regional Library, Inc
31901 Tri-County Way, Ste 116-B
Salisbury, MD 21804

It is with a heavy heart that I submit my resignation as CEO of the Eastern Shore Regional Library, Inc. The 13 years that I've spent at ESRL have provided me with a contentment and gratitude that I've been able to work with an amazing and gifted staff as well as my friends and colleagues - the Directors and staffs of the eight County library systems that we serve.

My last day at ESRL will be June 28, 2024. I will be happy to work with the Board on a succession plan and the transition of my duties to my successor.

I wish ESRL and its member libraries many, many years of working together to improve and enhance library services in the region.

Sincerely,

John C Venditta