

Eastern Shore Regional Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
December 12, 2023 4:30 pm  
Zoom

**In Attendance:** John Venditta, Amanda Watson, Maida Finch, Gloria Urban, Erin Counihan, Sarah Dahl, Patricia Tomasovic, Sarah Guy, Tamar Sarnoff, Ann Smith, Seth Hershberger

**Call to Order:** Maida Finch called the meeting to order at 4:34 pm.

**October 5, 2023 Minutes:** Ann Smith made motion to approve the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Gloria Urban seconded the motion. All were in favor. The October 5, 2023 minutes were approved.

**Audit Review (Audrey McKendrick):** Audrey shared a copy of the Audit Report and Financial Statement. ESRL's FY-23 audit was given a clean, un-modified opinion, which is the best result.

**Adoption of Revised By-Laws (Maida Finch):** In the last meeting, we passed the By-Laws that were required to change this board to what it is supposed to be. It was brought to our attention that parts of it weren't in line with the law and so, we have the revised version now for approval from the board.

**Gloria Urban made motion to accept the revised By-Laws. Ann Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor. The revised By-Laws were accepted.**

**New and Revised Policies (John Venditta):**

- ACH Policy (new) – The CEO is solely responsible for any ACH agreements.
- Telecommuting (revised) – This does not mean “Teleworking”, which is a full-time work from home. Telecommuting is something that we want to allow. Each staff member gets one telecommuting day per week.
- Grants to Libraries (revised)– This was an agreement between ESRL and the County Directors to control our grants to libraries. John is turning this into a policy. He has improved the language to include:
  - ESRL will not reimburse outside of the Fiscal Year that the money was spent later than July 15<sup>th</sup> of that year.
  - If you have not requested funds by the end of the year, you will not get them. The funds do not roll over.
  - Each reimbursement request must include a breakdown of expenses into our categories (Collection Development, Programming, Staff Development and Service Enhancement).
  - Requests must include supporting documentation from the Library's financial software.

**Sarah Dahl made motion to accept ESRL's new and revised policies as written. Gloria Urban seconded the motion. All were in favor. The new and revised policies were accepted.**

**Financial Report (John Venditta):**

- John handed out a Balance Sheet. Everything is balanced currently.
- John also handed out a Budget Comparative. John puts the Comparative together himself from our Quickbooks records. This illustrates that we are where we need to be at this point in the fiscal year.

**The Financial Report was accepted and filed for audit.**

**CEO's Report (John Venditta):**

- John wanted to explain what a regional library was and why and how they developed. Maryland is very committed to libraries. It shares fiscal responsibility with the counties. Rural counties are less able to meet the funding requirements that the wealthier, more populated counties can. Around 1960, Wicomico and Worcester County asked for a grant to establish a shared book collection between both counties. Over the next five years, the other six counties that make up our consortium joined in that shared book collection. The funding at that time came from federal funds, the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Library Development and Service (which is now The Maryland State Library Agency). In 1973, the Maryland code established three Regional Resource Centers (Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland and Western Maryland) and funding was assigned to the Governor's budget. In the mid 1990's, funding for regional libraries was mandated by the state. ESRL's funding is calculated straight per capita, based on estimation of the population of the region served. In FY-24, we received \$9.39 per capita on an estimated population of 355,265 people. One hundred percent of our operating funding comes from the state. We do get Staff Development funding through the state from federal funds. As codified in the law, Maryland's regional libraries have five primary charges: Inter-library loans of books and materials, supply collections and exhibits of specialized materials, provide consultant services, organize in-service training for library staff and we develop and operate cooperative services among libraries.

**Library Services (Amanda Watson):**

- We have been looking at ourselves, as a department and an organization to see how we can do things better. Where before we have been operating in silos for a long time, we are trying to work with the libraries to better be on top of what their needs are. We have a rebuilt staff and are ready look at what has gone wrong in the past and see how we can improve.
- Some recent projects that we have done in the last quarter - all libraries are now compliant with the latest Microsoft 365 offerings, analyzing computer audits in preparation of the Windows 11 end of support, working towards automatic updates, inventory management, started implementing the Microsoft Teams product, and continuing with the procurement of the libraries' equipment.
- Amanda shared statistics covering the months of October and November.

**Old Business (John Venditta):**

- ESRL Renovation – This is an upgrade of our lease hold at the Tri-County building. We are going to be adding an additional 1,300 square feet to our existing space and completely renovating the entire space. We have been working with the Tri-County Council, who owns the building, and GMB Architects for the planning and design phase. We are now moving into the next phase. Bid documents were published on November 27<sup>th</sup> and we have a pre-bid meeting scheduled for next

Monday. We have a project award date of February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Our pre-construction meeting is scheduled for February 26<sup>th</sup> and construction dates will be determined at that time.

**New Business (Maida Finch):**

- CEO Search - John and Maida met with Karen Miller from Bradbury Miller & Associates in November to go over what services they could offer for our upcoming CEO search for Eastern Shore Regional Library. They will work with us to develop a job description, job posting and work with us on the recruiting. They will post in several places, as well as reach out to their pool of candidates. They will then come up with a candidate group for us to review. They will make sure all the documents are submitted and do an initial conversation with each candidate. From this they will prepare a list of best fit candidates for the search committee. Bradbury Miller will also meet with the search committee to discuss and select 6-9 semifinalists for a round of interviews. From these interviews we will select three finalists. Bradbury Miller will handle the logistics of bringing the three finalists to Eastern Shore Regional Library to interview with the full board and with the staff of ESRL. Bradbury Miller will conduct the background and reference checks for us. They will also assist us with forming an offer and the initial onboarding. They have a flat fee of \$2,800.00, which includes everything listed above. The board search committee will consist of Maida Finch, Kathleen Lyons, Linda Prochaska, Susan Sherman and Gloria Urban.

**Patricia Tomasovic made motion to contract with Bradbury Miller & Associates for our CEO search. Sarah Dahl seconded the motion. All were in favor. Maida will respond to BMA's proposal.**

**Director Liaison Report (Seth Hershberger):**

- The directors continue to have their weekly meetings, hosted and organized by John.
- We are excited to be moving to Outlook as our email service.
- There was a MACo last week in Cambridge. Directors from Kent, Talbot and Dorchester Counties came to work the booth.
- The Inter-Governmental Relations Taskforce, a division of MAPLA, has begun it's work for the upcoming Legislative session with meetings every other week. Seth is on the Taskforce, as is the director from Somerset County. One of the major legislative goals that we are working towards for this session is a "Freedom to Read" bill that would regulate local government's ability to censor or ban library materials from public library collections.
- Seth is also on MAPLA's board and the current chair on this board is the director from Talbot County. This is helping the Eastern Shore stay well represented.

**Maryland State Library Agency (Tamar Sarnoff):**

- We have hired three positions in the past few months, including a procurement officer, a staff member to support the Maryland Accessible Textbook Program and a communications manager.
- We have launched a new website for the agency.
- Library Legislative Day is February 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline and Frederick Counties all have Capital Projects going on currently.
- We will be interviewing in the next couple of weeks for a new position for the Youth Readers Program.




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- The Statewide Blueprint – we have pulled together a community of people from around the state to identify what we believe the trends that are going to be impacting libraries in the next 5-10 years will be. We want to work collaboratively to prepare libraries for some key themes. When we have the final approved blueprint, we will be sharing that out.

**Next meeting:** March 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm via Zoom.

**Maida adjourned the meeting at 5:40 pm.**

 410.742.1537

 [www.esrl.org](http://www.esrl.org)

 31901 Tri-County Way, Ste 116-B  
Salisbury, MD 21804