

Rockbridge Regional Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting – September 29, 2022
First Baptist Church 103 N. Main St., Lexington, VA 24450
4:15 PM

The Board of Trustees met in the Sanctuary of First Baptist Church, Lexington, Virginia, on September 29, 2022.

Members present included Alexandra Brown, Tom Goodale, Bob Kramer, McKinley Williams, Bret Kampf, Melanie Forde, Margaret Kirkby, Jessica Whipple, and Gail Heslep. Staff members present were Julie Goyette, Library Director, and Beverly Slaydon, Recording Secretary.

Ms. Brown, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:20 PM.

Ms. Brown thanked Pastor Williams for allowing us to meet in his church this afternoon.

The minutes of the June 30, 2022 meeting were approved as presented.

Foundation Update

Foundation President Bruce McWilliams, announced the Foundation Board is tasked with Fundraising. Last year the Foundation reached the \$75,000.00 goal set. A letter will go out before November 29th, *Giving Tuesday*, for our Fundraising event this year.

Questions regarding board packet

Mrs. Goyette asked if there were any questions from the board packet for this meeting. The board had none.

Discussion

Goshen update

Mrs. Goyette read the following statement:

I want to thank those individuals who have contacted me or a member of our Board of Trustees directly to share their concerns about the Goshen Library over the past few months.

First and foremost, the library is not leaving Goshen. We are leaving a privately owned building.

I am reminded of the words of Eloise Roadcap, whose family bequeathed \$249,500 to Goshen Public Library. Eloise wrote a letter to her friend, Clarice, dated January 6, 1997. In it, she mentions the plaque placed at the Goshen Public Library in her name as founder of the Goshen Public Library – 1998.

Many people helped me with that venture, she wrote. Wish the clock could be rolled back and we could go after a building fund and, in time, have our own library building in Goshen.

I agree with Eloise. With the Roadcap gifts, we have the start of a building fund. Working with the Town of Goshen and Rockbridge County, the way the library and community did to build the Glasgow Library, we can help to make the Goshen Library in the Goshen Community Center a reality.

It is important to note the Rockbridge Regional Library Board of Trustees' decision to vacate the premises at 1124 Virginia Avenue in Goshen was a tough one, and it has been the most difficult decision of my career.

Long before this decision was made, my predecessors, the Board of Trustees, and I sought alternative locations for the library. We looked at other buildings in Goshen: churches, residences, and even mobile classrooms. None of us wanted to spend the Roadcap gifts, given specifically for Goshen Public Library, to make repairs to someone else's building or property, or to purchase mobile classrooms, a temporary solution at best.

While it is true that library use has decreased with the pandemic and general population decline in Goshen, our decision did not rest on library visits. Like every library in the system, the Goshen Library saw reduced hours during the pandemic. In checking with the current and previous branch managers, there was never a time when the library was open over the spread of hours stated at the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors meeting on September 12.

Our principle concerns were and are with the building itself.

The Board of Trustees' decision to vacate the building was addressed by our Board Chair, Alexandra Brown, in a letter to the editor of the News-Gazette published on August 31st and in the September edition of the Rockbridge Advocate.

We have no intention of leaving Goshen. Our goal is to continue to serve the community until we can invest in a safe and secure, and multipurpose community center. Indeed, we see the library as integral to that space and as an important draw for the fundraising to achieve it.

Private funds have been donated for Goshen Library and will be used to outfit the space the library will have in the center.

Please contact me with questions. I can be reached at the library at 540-463-4324, extension 100 or at jgoyette@rplib.net.

Julie Goyette
Director, Rockbridge Regional Library System

Public Comment Policy

The Policy Committee met and recommended to the Board that the same guidelines used to conduct this meeting, and read aloud by Ms. Brown, would become part of the Public Comment Policy. Since this was recommended by the Committee to the Board a motion was not needed. A vote to approve this new Public Comment Policy was taken and passed unanimously by the Board.

Electronic Meeting Policy

This policy is still being reviewed and the Policy Committee will bring policy back to the Board at a later date.

Action items

Approval of Public Comment Policy

Public Comment Policy approved during discussion above.

Public Comment

Ms. Brown thanked everyone for coming and for those that have signed up to speak. 10 people signed up to speak.

The portion of the meeting agenda dedicated to public comment is for citizens to address the Rockbridge Regional Library System Board of Trustees on library matters. Topics must be relevant and appropriate. Ms. Brown read the following guidelines for the public and members of the board of trustees regarding public comment at board meetings:

1. There is a public comment period stated on the agenda at each regularly scheduled board of trustees meeting. The designated public comment period is the only time citizens are invited to speak to the board of trustees.
2. Only one person may speak at a time.
3. Speakers are requested to register their names with the secretary at the meeting.
4. Speakers are asked to state their names and addresses.
5. Speakers may speak one time during the comment period.
6. Each speaker has a maximum of three minutes for their comments.
7. Speakers may not yield their time to another speaker.
8. Those who wish to share comments but who do not wish to speak, may email their comments to admin@rrlib.net or call the library and ask to speak to the director. The chair will read the names and their comments to the board of trustees at the board meeting.
9. Board members listen to the speakers. They do not question or respond to speakers.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on the appropriateness of speakers' presentations. The RRLS Code of Conduct is followed as a benchmark for decorum during the meeting

Tom McCraw, Mayor of the Town of Goshen asked the board of trustees to leave the Goshen Library in the same building.

Stephen Bickley, Member of Goshen Town Council, stated the Town of Goshen and Rockbridge County were working together to keep library in the same building. He presented the board of trustees with a petition to that effect with 500 signatures.

Jan Lowery, member of the Lexington Woman's Club since 2010, said the Goshen Library needed to be promoted more and that more than alternative days in another building were needed.

Sharon Littley worked on Constitution Week at the Goshen Library. It was great for the children of Goshen.

Anita James, member of the Lexington Woman's Club, suggested the board of trustees make a clear statement and go point by point to help alleviate concerns and confusion surrounding the issue. She expressed concerns about the appearance of a "hidden agenda."

Ann Hopkins, member of the Lexington Woman's Club, stated the Goshen Library was a noble cause, to think of the welfare of children in Goshen and look for the simple solution. "Do the right thing".

Sandra Shaffer, member of Goshen Town Council, stated she was at the meeting representing herself and three other members of Goshen Town Council, Lisa Landrum, Debbie Bowden, and Chris Robertson. She heard that that the board of trustees was pulling out of Goshen to open a new branch in Fairfield. She has a business behind the Goshen Library and the tenants in the back of the building use foul language and have caused a problem for her business. She and the other three members of Goshen Council will support library's decision if they have to move to another location.

Rosanne Fasciolo, member of the Lexington Woman's Club, said she appreciated speaking with Mrs. Goyette and the letter from Ms. Brown. She asked the board if they would stay in building if the issues with the building were addressed.

Doug Horan, former chair of the board of trustees. He served on Library Board for 11 years and as chair of the Board for 8 years. The board's decision was not a knee jerk decision. It has been a long time coming. The board has spent years trying to work out the problems in Goshen with our landlord.

Don Henke wanted to know if the board had reviewed his proposal that he had delivered to library staff after the board packet went out.

Spencer Suter, Rockbridge County Administrator, said he and the county are willing to work with anyone for a long term solution supporting a brick and mortar building for the library. He was concerned with timing of library moving out because of preschool being able to find a suitable space.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 27, 2022, at 4:15 PM.

Meeting was adjourned 5:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Slaydon
Recording Secretary