

Eastern Shore Regional Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2025 4:30pm
Zoom

In Attendance: Erin Counihan, Sarah Dahl, Maida Finch, Sarah Guy, Kathleen Lyons, Linda Prochaska, Susan Sherman, Ann Smith, Patricia Tomasovic, Gloria Urban, Dana Newman, Lori Milach, Amanda Watson

Call to Order: Maida called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

March 11, 2025 Minutes: Gloria Urban made motion to approve the March 11th board meeting minutes as written. Ann Smith seconded the motion. The March 11, 2025 meeting minutes were approved.

Financial Report (Lori Milach):

- A Balance and Profit/Loss sheet was given out to the board. There are a few areas that are over-expended: 7180 (Internet Access), 9540.02 (Equipment Maintenance), 9710 (Professional Salaries), and 9750.03 (Mileage). These were due to unexpected vehicle maintenance, expenses due to continuation of the renovation and incorrect budgeting. In other areas, we are under-expended, so it looks like we will wrap up the fiscal year in budget.
- We still have some other expenditures that need to go through; including our Grants to Libraries getting finished up. Libraries can request these funds at any time up until June 30th.
- Account 7180 (Internet Access) was very over budget. Lori looked into this and \$13,833.00 of this should have been allocated to 2060 (Construction), which was server room technology. We have \$6,373.91 that should have been allocated to 9750.01 (Phone Reimbursement). This last was anticipated because we switched from reimbursing staff for personal cell phones to supplying ESRL cell phones, which will save money in the long run and enhance security.
- 9510 (Bookkeeping Services) has been incorrectly calculated on the budget. This needs to be changed.
- Some of the budget line items had gotten jumbled on the sheet. Lori will be sending out a clean, accurate copy to the board for their records.

CEO's Report (Lori Milach):

- The three items focused on the most for this last quarter were the Strategic Plan, HR Policy Handbook and the FY-26 Budget. Lori has also been working to restore our UEI and Cage Code number, which would allow us to receive federal funding. The UEI is the "Unique Entity Identifier" and Cage Code is the "Commercial and Government Entity" Code. We now have these updated and have communicated that to the State.
- After speaking to the directors at length, the majority have voted to apply their own chosen amount of grant funds to continue to support Hoopla to the end of this fiscal year. Moving forward, we have reduced checkouts from eight to six and instituted a daily cap, so that we can stay within budget for

FY-25. For next year, we have a daily cap in place. For FY-26, we will be spending \$200,00.00 for Hoopla. We will keep looking at patron impact and discuss what the best step is, going forward.

Library Services (Amanda Watson):

- **Operations Report:** Amanda included a copy of her report in the board handout. She went over some highlights; Hoopla stats were included, which showed patron turn-aways due to the daily caps. In April, there was a total of 705 instances. In May, there were 7,741 instances of patron turn-aways. We will see this continue to grow as we make our decision in the coming year on what to do about Hoopla.
- **Staff Update:** The IT team recently finished a major network upgrade project that has been years in the making. Based upon each branch's space, some had racks all the way up to servers replaced and in newer places, just swapping equipment.

Director Liaison Report (Dana Newman):

- One Maryland One Book: Comes to us from Carol Boston Weatherford, "Kin: Rooted in Hope", which includes stories and poems about enslavement and freedom. Talbot is planning to have the author, if the application is accepted, at Chesapeake College on October 7th or 8th. Five of the library systems on the eastern shore are coming together to apply for the author to come, along with her son, who does the illustrations in the book. Dana urged everyone to check the book out and come out the program in October. Talbot has had the duo in their library several times before, and they really do a great talk.
- The Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled have updated a lot of their resources and their application. Encourage people who may have a disability related to reading to look into this service.
- We have had a lot of libraries throughout the state approached by different unions and there is a movement to unionize libraries. Dana wanted to make everyone aware of this movement.
- Dr. Carla Hayden, the 14th Librarian of Congress, recently did an interview. It was really interesting, with a lot of good things to say, so please check that out if you can.
- Seth Hershberger, Director of Wicomico Public Library, plans to appoint Pattie Tingle, who is their board secretary, to the ESRL board of Trustees at its June 24th meeting.

Old Business (Lori Milach):

- **FY-26 Budget:** The completed FY-26 Budget was given out to the board for approval. As mentioned before, this year the directors have agreed to reduce the Hoopla allocation from \$250,000 to \$200,000 for FY-26. Under our Capital expenses, a large part of the budget has been taken up to create a redundant server for \$60,000, which is in line with our Strategic Plan and will also assist with continuity and security. In addition, we budgeted \$60,000 for a new Delivery Vehicle, which was not in our previous budget due to the purchase cycle we are in. If any revision is needed, Lori will present it to the board at our next meeting.

Sarah Dahl made motion to approve the FY-26 Budget as is. Kathleen Lyons seconded the motion. All were in favor. The FY-26 budget was approved.

- **HR Policy Handbook:** ESRL's completed HR Policy Handbook was given to the board for approval. We had given it to our attorney for review. Their one recommendation was to strengthen the statement that we are an At-will employer. This statement was put both in the introduction and on the staff agreement page where they need to sign. We made some other minor adjustments to the handbook. Under Bereavement Leave, we added in that the decision for leave is to be made in consultation with the CAO to ensure continuity. For Emergency Closures we wrote in the staff would receive emergency pay if the building is closed. Previously, staff had to use their PTO if they had already planned to be out before an emergency closure was declared. We removed some of the vague language under Dress Code, which had stated "political and offensive attire" could not be worn. We decided that this is subjective and took it out. Under Time and Attendance, we added that supervisors can adjust a staff member's time. We did this because our attendance software is set up so that staff cannot add to or edit their time after a timesheet is submitted. We are working on creating a Procedural manual to go alongside this handbook. Both of these are living documents and can be revised as needed, with board approval.

Ann Smith made motion to approve the HR Policy Handbook. Susan Sherman seconded the motion. All were in favor. The HR Policy Handbook was approved.

- **Strategic Plan:** The completed Strategic Plan was given to the board for approval. We are excited to have finalized our Strategic Plan and now have our Vision and Core Values. Our headlines are Advocacy and Funding, Strengthening Regional Collaboration and Communication, Enhancing Technology and Cybersecurity, Building a Responsive and Collaborative Framework for Disaster Response, and Expanding Training and Professional Development. This is a living document, and we want to remain flexible and responsive to emerging challenges. Goals and timelines will be reviewed annually in our September meetings. Currently we are creating action plans to meet these goals.

Sarah Dahl made motion to approve the Strategic Plan as written. Gloria Urban seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Strategic Plan was approved.

- **ESRL Renovation:** Lori updated the board on renovation expenditures so far. We have our Permanent Certificate of Occupancy and are now at significant completion, with the last of the expenditures coming in. We are still waiting for the generator to be installed so that we can have our servers running on site with backup. This recently went out to bid, which is being taken care of by TCC. Right now, we do not have a timeline on this. Until all of this is complete, we will continue to run our servers from Wicomico Public Library.

New Business (Maida Finch):

- **FY-26 Board (Members and Elections):** This is the last meeting with the original board of trustees. Maida will be stepping down from the board and Kathleen Lyons will be taking over as President for FY-26, with Susan Sherman as Vice President.

Sarah Guy made motion to accept Kathleen Lyons as President and Susan Sherman as Vice President. Ann Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor.



- This year Maida Finch, Erin Counihan and Pat Tomasovic will be leaving the board. Maida and Pat's term will end on June 30, 2025, and Erin's will end on December 31, 2025. Maida shared a handout with proposed 5-year staggered terms for trustee rotation, according to the by-laws. The board discussed the rotation and decided to table the topic as tentative. Lori Milach will check with Legislation on guidelines.

Next Meeting: TBD September 2025 at Talbot County Free Library

Susan Sherman made motion to adjourn the meeting and move into Closed Session. Kathleen Lyons seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm.

