



Eastern Shore Regional Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2024 4:30pm
Zoom

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

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

December 10, 2024 Minutes: Sarah Dahl made motion to approve the September 10th board meeting minutes as written. Susan Sherman seconded the motion. The September 10, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

ESRL Audit Report (Audrey McKenrick): Audrey presented ESRL's FY-24 audit results to the Board. We were given a clear and unmodified opinion for all financial activity; there were no issues, and this is the best opinion that we can get. Ann Smith made motion to accept and file the ESRL Audit Report. Gloria Urban seconded the motion. All were in favor. The FY-24 Audit was accepted.

Financial Report (Lori Milach):

- Renovation Update – This year, we have spent about \$480,000.00 to Willow Construction, GMB Architects, National Business Furniture and Bates Moving Company. This brings the total in at a little over \$900,000.00 for the project so far. Lori will have actual numbers to bring to the next board meeting for more detail.
- Finance – There were two challenges faced over the last week. Our PNC operating account was overdrawn due to money not being transferred from our MLGIP investment account in time to cover two of our AP checks. Also, we had missed three rent invoices from the Tri-County building, where we are housed, due to invoices being routed to a spam email folder. We have fixed the issues so that incidents like these will not occur again.
- FY-25 Budget – So far, we are doing really good at keeping to our budget. Lori handed out an actual budget breakdown to explain where we are, as opposed to the half year budget given out previously. There was question about the budget account for “Children’s and Teens Programs” being on this version, but not on the budget approved in June. Lori will look into this potentially erroneous addition with our accountant. Also verified was that ESRL has insurance coverage for the Board.

Lori will let the Finance Committee (made up of Susan, Sarah and Gloria) know what she finds out about the FY-25 Budget, so that they can make recommendation to the Board. The Board will then vote via email to file the Financial Report for audit.

CEO's Report (Lori Milach):

- Our State Report was sent in during November, which included a Library Data survey along with the written report.
- Lori is still visiting Shore library locations in order to get to know the libraries and the services that they offer.
- Lori met with our CPA and Hoopla to get a better understanding of the expenditures for Hoopla, as well as ESRL's financial process.
- We have started the process for our Strategic Plan by doing a preliminary look at what we already have in place. To start we identified our Strategic Partners, which include our Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, our Administrative staff, County Library staff and ESRL's staff. These are the groups that we will want to get input from as we continue the process. Lori looked into our Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities. While these will remain the same, she wants to make sure that we expand on these to create an organization of innovation and creativity. We want our Strategic Plan to reflect our ability to make changes as the libraries are changing. Some themes identified so far are that we want to be on top of industry trends; better documentation internally, which is why we have started revising our Employee Handbook, as well as our internal procedures. Also, we want better communication and transparency with ourselves and our board and library partners. Next steps are a SWOT analysis and Needs Assessment.
- Current areas of focus for us will be Hoopla, Polaris, ESRL's Employee Handbook and Time & Attendance with BambooHR.
- State Librarian Morgan Miller will no longer be coming to each of our meetings. Instead, she will attend once a year at our September meeting, which is our first meeting of the fiscal year. Lori will make sure that she has updates from the State to pass on to the board at each meeting.

Library Services (Amanda Watson):

- **Sailor Power Outage** – In October, Baltimore City experienced an underground fire. This caused Comcast's fiber line to burn and so did the Sailor fiber connection. Sailor provides statewide internet access to libraries, schools and other government agencies. Because of the significant damage, Comcast had to come in first and then Sailor could evaluate how much they had lost. Fortunately for us, it was just internet connection, instead of services being lost; but there were libraries that were heavily impacted due to the redundant equipment that ran on the Sailor network. This effected phones and security cameras, among other things, which caused some libraries to close for a day. There was nothing that ESRL could do, other than put the communication out to directors and library staff as to what was happening and when it could be resolved. Once Sailor made their repairs, we were able to go to our sites and bring the equipment back up. We have worked to address issues going forward locally by switching our DNS server to something that is cloud hosted. There is a movement on the state level to look at Sailor operations to create redundancies there should something like this happen again. Amanda was asked to be part of the Sailor oversight committee, and their first meeting will be next week.
- **Database Updates** – We have had increases in traditional database usage as well as the Hoopla online streaming service. Amanda recently met with representatives from each of the libraries for the eGroup and they are very happy with what we can, and have been, offering.



Director Liaison Report (Dana Newman):

- Thank you to Lori, Amanda and ESRL for their focus on some very real issues, including Hoopla and Polaris... things that impact the public libraries.
- Library Legislative Day is February 11th. Dana encouraged everyone to go and encourage Friend's groups to go as well. It is helpful for Legislators to hear from different groups involved with the libraries.
- Member Library Updates:
 - Queen Anne's County is doing an Empowerment Library through LSTA funds. This means that they are purchasing materials for their local detention center, as well as doing some programming there.
 - Talbot County does a book club with men and women detainees in our detention center. This really can help with the population after they come out.
 - Talbot is looking at starting construction at the St. Michael's branch in January.
 - The Maryland State Library is working with schools and public libraries on the Freedom to Read Act.

Old Business:

- **ESRL Renovation Update:** Despite delays, things are progressing. We are still waiting on delivery of our fire suppression system, which was expected towards the second or third week of December. Once that is installed, they should be applying for inspections and then permits and certificate of occupancy. In the last month, we have moved everything out of our storage unit so that we could eliminate that cost and get a head start on staging our space. We have scheduled Bates Moving Company to deliver the rest of our old office materials that were in their warehouse on the 18th. We have our Holiday Party on the 20th, so we are excited to show staff the space and let them see what everything looks like.

New Business:

- **ESRL Employee Handbook:** Lori and some staff have been working on updating the Employee Handbook and making some changes. Maida would like to have a committee to review the previous and new versions to make sure that things are consistent and where they need to be. After the review, Lori will have the handbook looked over by an attorney to make sure everything is compliant before given to the Board for a vote. Maida and Kathleen are willing to be on the Handbook Committee and are looking for one other member to volunteer. Susan Sherman volunteered and joined the committee.

Next Meeting: March 11th at 4:30pm via Zoom

Maida made motion to adjourn the meeting. Ann Smith seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm.