UNICOI COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

September 26th, 2024

The Board of Trustees of the Unicoi County Public Library met on September 26th, 2024, at the Unicoi County Public Library in Erwin, TN. Members present at the meeting were President, Cathy Griffith, Vice President, Jan Bowden, Secretary, Andy Frazier, and members Jenna Lafever and Gail Snodgrass. Treasurer, Shane O’Hare and member Stana Donnelly were absent.

Also present were UCPL Director Morgan Olson and Holston River Regional Library Director Jennifer Breuer

1. Call of meeting to order. Ms. Griffith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Public comment. None
3. Approval of August 22nd, 2024 meeting minutes.
   1. Upon the motion of Ms. Snodgrass, seconded by Ms. Bowden, the minutes of the August 22nd, 2024, meeting were unanimously approved.
4. Treasurer’s report. Ms. Olson shared that despite some issues with recent reports, these should all be correct now. She noted that the August report had a larger than usual expense which was the final amount paid for the shelving in the children’s room.  
   1. Approval of the July 2024 financial report. Upon the motion of Ms. Bowden, seconded by Mr. Frazier, the July 2024 financial report was approved unanimously.
   2. Approval of the August 2024 financial report. Upon the motion of Ms. Snodgrass, seconded by Ms. Bowden, the August 2024 financial report was approved unanimously.
5. Director’s report. Ms. Olson reported that more volunteers are still needed for the upcoming Apple Festival fundraising opportunities, especially to help with parking. There has been some response, but more help is needed.   
     
   Ms. Olson and Ms. Griffith recently attended the annual Trustee Workshop in Jefferson City, which went very well. UCPL staff are making plans for training opportunities to participate in for the upcoming year.  
     
   Programs are going great and October is shaping up to be a very busy month with things like the Apple Festival, pumpkin painting, Spooktacular, Downtown Erwin Halloween – Movie Night, and the Teen Halloween Party. Homeschool programs are going great with very high attendance lately. Around 90 people participated in the program on 9/18 at one of the two scheduled times. Storytimes have also resumed for all ages.
6. Holston River Regional Library Report. Ms. Breuer shared that the public library survey is due on Monday. Ms. Olson reported that she has completed it and turned it in recently. The UCPL annual Maintenance of Effort documentation is back and approved. Trainings in October include sessions regarding the LSTA Tech Grant, the Talk Amongst Your Shelves on 10/4, Intentional Goal Setting and Strategic Planning on 10/15 & 10/16. Further ahead in November will be a training on book mending on 11/7.
7. President’s Report. Ms. Griffth shared the Mr. O’Hare has expressed difficulty in being available to serve on our Board. He is considering stepping down from his role and has reached out to Terry Wise, the owner of Erwin Outdoor Supply and Uncle Johnny’s Hostel, as a potential candidate to replace him. Terry has some financial experience and may also be willing to take on the role of Treasurer if approved to join the Board and fill Mr. O’Hare’s remaining term. Ms. Griffith will continue to follow up on this and report back to the Board.

Ms. Griffith also mentioned that there are some changes coming in the near future to the minimum salary threshold that will need to be considered for Director Olson. The new minimum salary threshold is expected to be raised to about $58,000 per year, and Ms. Olson’s current salary is below that amount.

1. Toney Foundation report. Ms. Griffith shared that the Toney Foundation still has only $1,872.98 in the bank. Ms. Griffith, Ms. Olson, and Mr. Mark Lafever have been talking to a Mr. Jack Bishop about some potential grant funding which could potentially result in between $20,000-$50,000 in annual funding for that Board to use for the building. Mr. Bishop has requested some additional information which has been provided and he plans to attend the next Toney Board meeting.
2. Unicoi County Public Library Foundation report. Ms. Griffith shared that the investment account balance is about $300,000 in the investment account and $17,045.18 in the bank. Work is continuing to happen behind the scenes by the foundation to solicit funds from local people and organizations who may be interested in supporting the library.
3. Old Business. None.
4. New Business.
5. Employee Handbook. Ms. Olson shared that this new document is loosely based on a previous version that was outdated and incomplete. The newly updated version includes more relevant information to give employees more clear expectations and information.

Ms. Griffith suggested that when we present this handbook to employees, we ask them to sign an acknowledgement of having read through it but understanding the handbook is not a contract and does not cover everything that may be expected of them. She also suggested that we add our values along with the section that has our mission statement.

* 1. Approval of the Employee Handbook. Tabled until next month.

1. Pay Increase Request. Ms. Olson submitted a formal request for the Board to consider a pay increase for herself that is in line with the increases offered to all staff. The average increase for all employees was 5% so that is the amount Ms. Olson requested.

Multiple Board members expressed their support of this request and appreciation for the great job that Ms. Olson has done leading the library through a challenging time.

* 1. Approval of the Pay Increase Request. Upon the motion of Ms. Snodgrass, seconded by Ms. Lafever, the Pay Increase Request was unanimously approved as submitted.

1. Board comments.   
     
   A question was raised regarding the now approved pay increase for Ms. Olson, and whether that would start with her next paycheck or could be made retroactive to include the weeks she has worked since the new fiscal year started in July. That is when other staff members started receiving their updated payment amounts. The Board members present all agreed they would like to see that happen if possible.

Mr. Frazier briefly commented on attending the United Way breakfast on 9/24. He complimented staff member Ms. Kyker on representing UCPL well to those in attendance. He also mentioned that all the battery backups on essential network equipment and computers have been installed.

1. Adjournment. Upon the motion of Ms. Lafever, seconded by Ms. Bowden, all agree to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 pm. The next meeting will be Thursday, October 24th, 2024 at 6:00pm at UCPL.

Respectfully submitted,

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Andy Frazier, Secretary