

CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Minutes of May 14th, 2024

The Catawba County Library Advisory Board met on Tuesday, May 14th, 2024, 12 noon, in the conference room of the Main Library in Newton.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Morgan Williams-Board Chair, Mary Canrobert-Vice Chair, Pam Cansler, Carmen Isenhower, Katie Perkins, Siobhan Loendorf, Library Director, Jenny Gerami-Markham, Assistant Library Director Candi Dula, Business Manager

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Donna Reese, Jeanne Lebens

CALL TO ORDER

Morgan Williams at 12:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public attended.

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Staffing Update

We had filled the adult services position here at Newton with Troy Brooks. He started last week on May 6th. We are in the process of hiring a LSSII at Conover and we are adding an ½ benefitted position at Conover. For the past year or more we have been borrowing staff from other locations to cover lunches at the Conover Branch. We wanted to give Conover their own person so that person can actually do more at Conover than just man a desk. It will also allow those branches to be back up for full staff in time for Summer Learning.

At the Southwest Branch we have hired a young lady named Sarah Horton as a part time library assistant.

Programming - refer to the May Newsletter

New programs:

1. Thank you to everyone who was able to come to the Legislative Day in the District event. We had a good turnout with a little over 30 people. Everyone got to tour around and engage with library staff which I think helps demonstrate something I am always saying that our people are our best asset.
 2. The following week the library also hosted the county's Civic Leadership Academy with about 20 participants. For their session we set up similar stations and toured small groups around so they could see all the library services.
 2. Monthly spot on the Hal Rowe show - we just did the Hal Rowe show on Thursday May 9th Our focus this month was on our Summer Learning program.
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- I. Early Literacy Programming – in addition to our regular preschool programs we will be adding Pre-K STEAM stations with a grant that allowed us to purchase wind tunnels, light tables, robots, bugs and magnifying glasses, and other science related supplies. These kits will rotate between the branches. There will be designate weekly program times for STEAM stations but we will also leave the wind tunnel and light tables out for the general public to engage with. Branch managers have been trained on the equipment and stations and they will begin programming mid-June.
 - II. When we last met I talked about the author visit with Kwame Mbalis on Thursday, Feb 29th He is a middle grades author and he enjoyed a wonderful visit with River Bend Middle School in the morning and then at the Central Rec

Center that evening. From beginning to end it was a great event. Amanda Moose with Catawba County Schools worked with all of the Middle School media specialist and they arranged to have children from all of the county middle schools attend the author visit. Additionally, the PTA clubs provided a copy of one of his books to each of the kids attending the event so that they can all read the books and have them signed by the author. On top of that, they contacted a publisher to order more books for their libraries and the publisher ended up donating a complete set of the authors books to each of the middle schools.

For the event at the Central Rec Center, The Downtown Newton Development Association, they arranged for a free stay at a local Bed and Breakfast, paid for the author's mileage, and contributed cookies and water to the community supper. Gephetos gave us free pizzas and the Friends of the Library helped serve dinner and provided the \$1000 fee for the author with grant from the Corning Foundation. It was truly a community event.

- III. Teen programming
 - a. Teen Tuesdays at the Main Library in Newton
 - b. Teen Advisory Board at St Stephens and Teen game night
 - c. Teen Dungeons and Dragons club at Sherrills Ford-Terrell.
- IV. Adult programming
 - a. Interplay Learning –we have 5 licenses or seats for When last checked we had 4 library patrons logged in as users and one person really participating earning lots of points.
 - b. Adult Steam & Crafts – needle felting, knitting and crocheting
 - c. Health and Wellness – Yoga, Zumba, Kinetic meditation, healthy lunch box options—Bone Broth class taught by Melissa Falcone from True Cut Ranch.
 - d. Community Navigator –Midori Gilesby has been working hard this semester. She is here evenings and Saturdays and does a great job of connecting with people to offer her assistance.
 - e. Book Clubs- five book clubs that meet at the library, online and out in the community.
- V. Technology – we have added 11 new hotspots into the inventory

Career and Workforce Development – Goodwill Career specialist comes to Newton once a month to provide one-on-one help to people needing assistance with job search and applications. We are already partnering with NCWorks to provide online workforce development classes and we will introduce some in person career counseling this Fall.

Grants

1. 2023-24 Grant LSTA application – We were awarded the grant to add 5 soundproof office pods at the Main Library, perfect for making phone calls, video conferencing, meetings, work sessions or performing focused tasks. The office spaces have been delivered. We are still waiting on the seating that comes with the units and working out some little kinks but we have outfitted the larger units with a TV monitor, computer, and camera so the spaces can be used now for telehealth, job interviews, or continuing education. Along with this project the library purchased a new software to manage all of the library's meeting rooms to make it much more efficient. Now all library staff can see at a glance what is available and book rooms for people.
2. We were awarded \$2,200 from the Kenneth K and Suzanne G Millholland endowment to purchase a collection of STEAM interactives to be used with preschoolers. This includes little bee bots that preschoolers can use to begin learning basics of coding. Also a light table and a wind tunnel.
3. The library has applied for the Digital Champion Grant with the NC Dept. of Instruction Technology to hire two full time digital navigators to conduct outreach throughout Catawba County with a focus on teaching digital literacy to seniors, veterans, those for whom English is a second language, less advantaged people, and recently incarcerated individuals. We should hear back sometime this month.
4. We are currently working on a grant application to update the children's area at the Main library to be more inclusive for neurodivergent children and adding a special sensory story time to the regular slate of programs offered here at Newton. We are partnering with the Early Childhood Support Team at the Catawba County Partnership for Children

to help us select items for the space. Most importantly they will help train our youth services staff in how to effectively deliver a sensory storytime program. As part of this project we will be asking all staff to take some online training about how to provide the best customer service to individuals who are neurodivergent. This will help our entire system become more inclusive.

5. We were awarded nearly \$10,000 from the State Library to establish early literacy spaces out in the community. We are working with Social Services to update three of their lobby areas where children are likely to be waiting with their families. We will install educational interactives including light tables, magnetic white boards, pretend play equipment, shelving, seating and lots and lots of books that children can take home or enjoy while they are in the space.

Board Member Advocacy / Input

The 2024 State Budget includes a **\$3,817,869 Recurring increase** to State Aid bringing the annual appropriation to \$18 million. A special shout out to Representative Jason Saine who has helped to increase our funding for ten years.

Library Endowment

Current balance at NC Community Foundation \$101,179.12 in PayPal \$774.91 and in donations through the library we have \$2,484.17 for a total of \$104,438.20.

Endowment Amount: \$2484.17

Paypal Amount: \$774.91

Total: \$3259.08

Other Business

Summer Learning Registration is underway now – the theme is Adventure begins at your Library with programs geared to adults, teens, and children.

I am leaving tomorrow for a trip to Singapore for a Rotary International Conference. Jenny will be in charge in my absence but everything should go smoothly. I will return to work on June 4th.

Presentation: Angela Miller and Chanda – Summer Learning

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1pm.

Next Regular Scheduled Library Board Meeting: Tuesday, August 13th, 2024 at the Newton Library at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Candi Dula, Business Manager