



**CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
Minutes of November 9th, 2021**

The Catawba County Library Advisory Board met on Tuesday, November 9th, 2021, 12 noon, in the Community Room of the Main Library in Newton.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Honey Estrada-Chair, Mary Canrobert, Carol Preston, Carmen Isenhour, Morgan Williams, Siobhan Loendorf, Library Director, Jenny Gerami-Markham, Assistant Library Director and Candi Dula, Business Manager.

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Greg Kain, Tamara Shavers-Vice Chair

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Honey Estrada, called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No members of the public attended.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were sent to members prior to this meeting. No objections were made.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Staffing Update**

Digital Services Librarian: Chandra Platania

Conover Librarian - reclassified to a Librarian II – hired Alexa Stewart

Community Engagement Specialist: Lindsay Robins

Library Services Specialist II at Sherrills Ford-Terrell Branch Library – this position currently open

**Strategic Planning**

2021-2025 Strategic Plan was approved and we have moved forward with re-defining the library system in to more structured system with Main library in Newton, Regional locations at St. Stephens, Southwest and Sherrills Ford-Terrell and Neighborhood locations at Conover, Claremont, and Maiden. We have a draft of a system-wide work plan of specific goals that we want to achieve in support of the overall strategic goals. We will work to refine this work plan with specific implementation dates and turn the work plan into a combination work plan/dash board so we can track our success.

**Programming**

**Beanstack Challenges –**

We currently have several online challenges for folks of all ages.

1. The yearlong adult reading challenge- choose a book a month that meets the challenge for example: Read a book that takes place in your home state, a book based on a true story, or a book that has been translated from a different language.

2. The Self-Care Project - Choose one repeatable activity to do each day for a month.

Then choose one or two other activities to do during each month. Accumulate points and create positive habits!

3. The Dinovember reading challenge – read a book about dinosaurs, attend an event, find a dinosaur egg (hidden at each branch), and make a dinosaur.

**Arts in the Library**

In October, to celebrate Latinx Heritage Month, the Southwest Branch Library hosted Monica Pagnini-Ibarra, local painter, who lead a flower painting adventure.



The library is working with the Hickory Museum of Art to host programming and activities that complement the Museums exhibits. Current the museum has THE IMPROVISATIONAL QUILTS OF SUSANA ALLEN HUNTER. The library has recorded a few bilingual stories being read from the exhibit and these videos will be segments during the live story times on Zoom. We will host a quilt drive for memory care, a quilt inspired collage project, and a Zoom presentation of art quilts from an artist in Swannanoa.

This month the library will be hosting two **Folk Art PopUp** sales to provide those artists that were selected to participate in the Folk Art Festival to still have a location to sell their art. On Saturday Nov 13th we will host a pop up sale here at the Main library – out in the garden. That is the same day as the Downtown Newton Christmas Crawl and the library will also have local author and illustrator here to speak at 11am about a new children’s book. This book is featured in a new program that Downtown Newton is doing called Lap It Up – where businesses are buying dog water bowls to have out in Downtown Newton for people out walking their pet. The bowls are created by Connections Clubhouse and people will be able to order a dog bowl at the author visit.

We are looking forward to **February 2022** when the Hickory Museum will welcome the Mo Willems Piggie and Elephant exhibit. The first two weeks in March the museum will be getting Disney quality costumes for the Pig and Elephant characters and we will be coordinating character visits to all of the libraries.

### **Closing the Book on Fines**

This has been a huge success.

- A mother shared with us that her kids were so excited. Her son is a tween and she never let him or his older sister take any Young Adult books out because we charged fines on them and she limited their options to only the children's section. He was super excited to be able to browse YA and took out a bunch of My Hero Academia manga.
- We gave a woman the fine free bag and reminded her that we had gone fine free to which she responded: "I know, that's why I came in today. I had a \$5 fine on my account from years ago, which I know isn't much money, but I was embarrassed to come back in and pay it. I'm so excited that I can use the library again."
- The patron stated she is a "bibliophile" and sometimes would check out 13-14 books. If they were late, she felt like it was overwhelming and she "would hide out" and not use the library for a while. She was delighted to hear about our new initiative.
- Yesterday morning we had a patron stop by St. Stephens to ask about our new Fine Free initiative. She said she hadn't been into the library in over 3 years because she had fines on her account and was worried that we wouldn't allow her to use the library anymore. I explained to her that everyone gets a fresh start and that we will no longer issue fines for late items going forward. She was so excited and said she couldn't wait to surprise her children with a visit to the library after they were done with school. I told her we could make the surprise even better by issuing them each their own cards. We issued cards for her 5 children, and later that afternoon when she brought them in they were ECSTATIC that they were allowed to take books home with them. It was so nice to know that we were able to make someone feel more welcomed here at the library than they had previously felt.

### **Grants**

#### **Library Outpost in Long View—**

The Library to Go has been conducting visits to the Long View community

The Library locker system is set to deliver to the Port of Charleston in December – not eta on actual installation date. We are working on designs for the wrap that will go onto the machine

### **Broadband Internet Access and Technology Lending**

- The library continues to provide free internet at seven locations. Hickory Soup Kitchen, 2 locations of Nu Dimensions (aka Hickory Housing), Centro Latino, Plaza Latina, Central Rec Center in Newton, and the Town of Catawba, Town Hall. This is free internet available to anyone from these parking lots. This past week there were 473 unique devices using this internet access.
- Part two of the Wi-Fi for All project included the purchase of 53 Samsung Tab A 8” Wi-Fi enabled tablets that will be circulated by the library.
- We have 30 hotspots through TechSoup where we pay \$120 a year for unlimited service through Sprint.



- We are waiting to hear back from Federal government grant that will allow us to update the laptops that we lend out to our patrons with Chromebooks with the goal of improving their experience and ease of use.

#### **Gale Analytics-**

Laundromat Literacy Grant - we will be submitting an application to purchase early literacy items for the Long View Laundromat. Potentially a little reading center, shelves, books, and interactive learning toys.

#### **Advocacy Focus**

- Governor's budget included \$1 million in recurring funds for state aid.
- Senate budget included no additional funding for public libraries.
- House budget included \$20 million in non-recurring for the biennium (\$10 million each year) and \$300,000 recurring funding for NC Kids Digital Library.

\*NC Kids does not currently receive recurring funding and has been operating the past year primarily on COVID response funding.

#### **Library Endowment**

- The current NC Community Foundation balance is \$84,692.
- This endowment was started in August 2016 in and in 5 years has grown 743%.
- The library will be doing some social media posts leading up to the holidays encouraging donations to the endowment as gifts that will be recognized with a Holiday Card.

Board members are encouraged to make an annual contribution, of any amount, to the Library Endowment, in order for the library to best continue to advocate for community donations.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Next Regular Scheduled Library Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 8th, 2022 at the Newton Library at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Candi Dula, Business Manager