

**Botetourt County Library Board of Trustees**  
**Minutes October 13, 2021**  
Public Meeting - 2:00-3:00pm  
Greenfield County Administrative Offices

**Present:** Barbara Hawkins, Julie Phillips, Rob Poyner, Marlene Preston

**Unable to attend:** Steve Clinton, Mary Lynne Leffell, Linda Steger

**Call to order:** 1:56

**Minutes:** June minutes were approved electronically and posted on the Library website:

<https://web.botetourtva.gov/library/about/board-of-trustees/>

**Public Comment**

Ann Davis, Blue Ridge, addressed the trustees concerning several suggestions. She noted the following:

- Ms. Davis appreciates the trustees' service and that of Julie Phillips.
- She suggests a more diverse library board that might include a person of color, younger members, a homeschooler, a low-income earner, and/or a disabled person.
- She also suggests that the long-range plan should include an addition to the Blue Ridge branch or a new library in Daleville. A building committee might include a grant writer and a fundraiser. Surveys could be employed to determine patrons' needs.
- She also asked about sufficient funding, indicating that the library should be on par with other departments.

Regarding the final comment, Julie indicated that the library is well funded compared to peers.

**Bylaws – Marlene Preston**

The trustees discussed issues regarding membership and officers. No other changes were made to the draft that had been distributed before the meeting. The trustees voted unanimously to approve the revised bylaws. (Please see attached.)

**Director's Update – Julie Phillips**

Julie noted the following highlights regarding library renovations, staffing, and programming:

- Automatic doors have been installed at Blue Ridge with half the cost paid by Friends. The doors have also been installed at Buchanan, one year ahead of schedule. Fincastle is next on the list.
- Buchanan's renovation is on hold until an outside architectural firm provides advice. The timeframe is still to be determined.
- The vacancy on the Library Board has been posted.
- In response to an earlier question from the trustees, Julie sought information about the best way for the Board to provide annual input on the Director's performance. The Board can provide a letter to the County by early December.
- Personnel changes:
  - Retirements: Diana (Kay) Ryder – Buchanan part-time Library Assistant (end of Sep); Sharon Armour – Blue Ridge part-time Library Assistant (end of Sep); Sharon Porter – Blue Ridge full-time Library Assistant (Oct 30)
  - New hires: Cheryl Wagner – Buchanan Branch Manager (Oct 25); Gina Wiese, part-time Library Assistant at Buchanan (Nov 3)
  - Position change: Janet Buttram – Library Floater based at Blue Ridge (Oct 25), former Buchanan branch manager

In response to a question about the bookmobile, Julie explained that it had been retired because of poor condition and Covid. The cost of replacement might be better spent in other ways. For now, the staff is meeting patrons' needs as they arise.

The Nov/Dec programming list is attached. A key theme will be "BoCoGrateful" and will focus on local history. The libraries will also feature holidays around the world, including traditions of people in the County. In December the telescope and mobile star lab will launch; the Roanoke Valley Astronomical Society will set up at the sports complex. Patrons can also get consumer tips for holiday shopping online and can participate in the introduction to ancestry.com. A *Polar Express* reading will be held at Troutville Park.

Forensics programming continuing as well as bullying prevention. Patrons can participate in literary pumpkin decorating in October. The Local Office on Aging will offer counseling all day on October 22 at Eagle Rock.

**Trustee Training -- "Working with Friends"-- Rob Poyner**

Rob discussed strategies for enhancing the Board's connection with the Friends groups. He is the president of the Blue Ridge Library Friends and also a trustee. Both groups are volunteers and advocates, while the Friends focus on a particular library branch and the trustees have a broader focus on the whole system.

Rob explained that Botetourt County has an umbrella group for Friends and also specific groups at each branch. The umbrella group tries to encourage coordination among the groups. The Blue Ridge group has the most members, and that group has contributed significantly to the funding of that branch, including cost-sharing for computer classes and new doors. They are exploring ways to build membership.

Possibilities for engaging the groups with the Board might involve the designation by the trustees of a liaison for Friends' groups, a contact person who could share information both ways. The trustees might schedule a meeting once a year to combine both groups or an open house for Friends and the public. The libraries can continue to acknowledge "Friends Week" each year.

Comments from the trustees: Friends membership might be encouraged more. Activities might be advertised better. The libraries need support for computer classes.

**Adjourned** – 3:02 pm

***Next Meeting:***  
**Nov. 10, 2021, 2:00 at Buchanan**