

Botetourt County Library Board of Trustees

Minutes February 16, 2022

Public Meeting - 2:00-3:00 pm

Blue Ridge

Present: Mary Lynne Leffel, Julie Phillips, Julia Patterson, Rob Poyner, Marlene Preston

Unable to attend: Steve Clinton, Barbara Hawkins

Call to order: 2:02

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

<https://www.botetourtva.gov/AgendaCenter/Library-Board-of-Trustees-2>

Introduction to Blue Ridge Branch Manager – Julie Phillips

Julie Phillips introduced Amanda Taylor, who described herself as an "outreach and people" person. She has worked for twelve years in libraries with seven years as a branch manager. Because she grew up in Blue Ridge, she's familiar with the community and eager to meet patron needs. Those patrons include local users and also those from Roanoke County and Bedford. She described the library branch as having lots of circulation, but not much patron time spent in library.

Director's update – Julie Phillips

Julie offered highlights from the many library initiatives in progress, including the following:

- Delegate Austin has proposed bill to allow us to be an advisory board; the bill was passed after its third reading.
- The new website for the library and Botetourt County as a whole has launched. Some updates are still underway. Patrons may notice a slightly edited library logo to match County standards.
- Jackie Howarth, children's librarian at Fincastle, has announced her retirement. She is a long-time employee; we'll miss her and her many contributions to the library. To balance the staff, that full-time position moves to Blue Ridge with a part-time position at Fincastle.
- Computer classes, offered by Virginia Career Works, have been offered at Fincastle. Some successful students have moved on to make use of job-seeking services too.
- The presentation by Heather Dune Macadam, who wrote *Women at Auschwitz*, was well received. A participant wrote a letter to the editor of the *Fincastle Herald*, praising the program as a way to promote truthful narratives and increase respect and tolerance in our community.
- The library has launched a campaign on social media – #LoveYourLibrary – which coincides with the County's campaign--#LoveBoCoVA.
- This month's reading challenge is "10 to Try," encouraging people to read outside their normal spheres and try something new.
- Fincastle's automatic doors should be installed by the end of the week, as part of an initiative to have such doors at every branch.
- Thanks to Mary Lynne for helping with "Soup for Seniors," which was a successful drive for the Botetourt Resource Center.
- New branch managers are settling in and doing a fantastic job. With this new leadership team, the staff is starting fresh with some projects and internal processes, so that's taking up time behind the scenes.
- Spring and summer programs are in the works. Staff members are using an outcomes-based, intentional approach to ensure that the programs directly correspond with community needs/interests and positive results. The goal is quality over quantity, as well as an increased emphasis on community partners and guest presenters.

Materials Reconsideration Process -- Julie Phillips

- The trustees reviewed this draft before the meeting and then discussed its importance during the meeting. A document of this type is crucial for the library as is noted in the *Handbook for Advisory Boards*, p. 40.
- Julie explained that the formal process may not be necessary once a concerned patron discusses concerns with a librarian.
- The process encourages patrons to describe the specific concern and to demonstrate true consideration of the issues involved.
- The trustees noted the merits of the policy and preferred being the second line of approach in an appeals process.

Community Connections – Marlene Preston

The trustees have been discussing ways to get feedback from non-profit groups and agencies in the County. Such feedback is described in the *Handbook for Advisory Boards*, p. 31. Two trustees reported on their conversations.

- Rob Poyner discussed the needs of home schoolers , which included more STEM/STEAM classes and social outreach, with classes allowing students to work with others and build creativity. Because they might like to work in one place as opposed to moving from home to home, groups can also reserve meeting spaces for their own programming.
- Marlene contacted the Botetourt Food Pantry and The Glebe. Both organizations may be representative of other food pantries and senior homes in the County. The Food Pantry needs volunteers and drop-off boxes in each library. As inflation rises and the covid-related financial supports end, there may be increased need in the community. At Fincastle, the drop-off and pick-up was interrupted when the libraries were closed, but the donations are continuing.
- The activities director at the Glebe reported being well served by the library in terms of the residents’ book club and library resources. The residents would enjoy speakers who might come to the Glebe after being scheduled to speak at one of the branches.
- Julie suggested that we might review a list of organizations in the community and decide on a routine check-in to exchange info and questions.
- More reports will be given at the next meeting.

Adjournment -- 3:02

Next Meeting:
March 9, 2022, 2:00 at Greenfield