

McMinn County Library Board
1289 Ingleside Avenue
Athens, Tennessee 37303

Called Board Meeting Minutes
AUGUST 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Present - Chairman Tyler Forrest, Vice Chairman Mickey Blevins, Treasurer Tim Womac, Secretary Tyler Boyd, EGFPL Director Peyton Eastman, Ocoee Regional Library Director Liz Shreck, and MCLB members Everett Gillespie, Jan Dingess, John Duggan, and Kay Harper. Tara Carter was absent.

I. Call to Order, Establish Quorum, and Acknowledgments

Chairman Forrest called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM and welcomed guests. He welcomed new board member Kay Harper to her first meeting.

Chairman Forrest thanked Director Eastman for her service to the library. He shared the story of when the bank called to inform him that the library's payroll checks were preparing to bounce and how Eastman took quick action and prevented such a problem from occurring again.

II. Public Comments

Charlie Senn - former MCLB chairman. Said he attended the meeting primarily to thank Director Eastman for her service and claimed that hateful rhetoric led to her resignation. He stated that books are sometimes dangerous and that it is the job of all libraries to make such books available to everyone. He believes that such strong opposition to the Rainbow Book Month display is a step back for democracy. He asked the MCLB to stand up for the thousands of books in the library because he worries that complaints about certain books might happen again. He also asked the MCLB to review the qualifications of all board members and alleged that new member John Duggan was not qualified, especially in comparison to some others who were interested in the position. He closed by asking the MCLB to fight for the employees and look into increasing their pay.

Babs Patterson - She thanked Charlie Senn for supporting the U.S. Constitution and freedom of speech during his remarks preceding hers. She insisted that we all must protect children who are weak and vulnerable and that we cannot sacrifice them to the ALA. She asked the library to take a close look when ordering books in the future and to watch out for books that intend to groom children.

III. New Business

- i. Accept resignation of EGFPL Director Peyton Eastman. -
Tim Womac motioned to accept her resignation. John Duggan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- ii. Appointment of EGFPL Interim Director - Chairman Forrest stated that Shelia Rollins, who had previously agreed to serve as interim director, had withdrawn her name from consideration. He said he had been given the names of five potential candidates for interim director, but did not wish to share the names or discuss them at this time since some of them did not know they were even being considered. He asked everyone to send him the names of anyone they believe would be a good candidate for interim director.
- iii. Set Compensation for EGFPL Interim Director - skipped
- iv. Authorize EGFPL Interim Director to be authorized to be authorized signatory on bank accounts - skipped
- v. Appointment of Library Director Search Committee -

Chairman Forrest appointed Vice Chairman Mickey Blevins to chair the search committee. Additional members appointed were Tim Womac, Tyler Boyd, and Jan Dingess, with Chairman Forrest serving as an ex-officio, non-voting member. Vice Chairman Blevins asked Ocoee Regional Library Director Liz Schreck to help advertise the position of EGFPL Director.

Ocoee Regional Library Director Liz Schreck reminded the board members to complete their Trusteeship Training. Vice Chairman Blevins suggested that all members who had not done so set a date and time to meet and complete the training as a group.

Tim Womac shared the many good things EGFPL Director Peyton Eastman did and thanked her for her service. Vice Chairman Blevins thanked Director Eastman for her service and said he was sad to lose her. Blevins praised her for putting the library on strong footing after the instability he experience when first joining the MCLB before her appointment as director. Jan Dingess complimented Director Eastman for being great with kids. Tyler Boyd thanked Director Eastman for how helpful she has been to him as a board member and patron during her tenure.

Chairman Forrest adjourned the meeting at 6:27 PM.