

McMinn County Library Board  
1289 Ingleside Avenue  
Athens, Tennessee 37303

Called Board Meeting Minutes  
AUGUST 28, 2023 at 6:00 PM

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

I. Call to Order, Establish Quorum, and Acknowledgments

Chairman Forrest called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and welcomed guests.

Chairman Forrest reminded everyone of the Public Comments Policy, and read directly from the policy as written.

II. Public Comments

Keith Patterson - He expressed his gratitude to the MCLB for all the work they do despite the many other responsibilities in their lives. He expressed his hope that the board will appoint a director that will "protect kids from harmful literature."

III. New Business

i. Appointment of Elizabeth (Beth) Jackson to serve as EGFPL Interim Director -

Chairman Forrest discussed the MCLB's desire to appoint an interim director with a background in running a library. He also noted that the board's desire to find a director that did not have a "particularly strong opinion" on the Rainbow Book Month display that caused controversy in the community. He said that after speaking to nearly a dozen candidates, Beth Jackson stood out as the "obvious choice" to serve as the interim director. He read Mrs. Jackson's bio, which includes serving over three decades as the librarian at Westside Elementary School in Athens. He also noted that Mrs. Jackson shared her desire to "keep everything afloat" at the library until a permanent director is hired.

Beth Jackson said she was "happy and surprised" when informed of the board's desire to appoint her as Interim Director. She discussed her extensive background in libraries and said "libraries are in my blood." She expressed

her confidence in the board and staff to guide her as she learns and said she is “excited to serve in a type of library that is new to me.”

Chairman Forrest asked if any board members had any questions for Mrs. Jackson.

John Duggan asked “What struggles have you seen in your career as a librarian?” Mrs. Jackson responded that a lack of adequate funding for the library was a common struggle. John Duggan also asked “What can you bring to the library and continue from EGFPL Director Peyton Eastman’s tenure?” Mrs. Jackson responded that she will “Learn the five or six things that a library director needs to do and then do it.” She also noted her love of reading and literature as an asset she will bring to her role as interim director.

Everett Gillespie asked Mrs. Jackson how long she would be able to serve as interim director. Chairman Forrest noted that she has agreed to serve until January 1, 2024 when it is hoped that a permanent director will be appointed.

Tim Womac referenced the Merle Haggard song “If We Make It Through December” in reference to the board’s desire to keep the library functioning while we look for a permanent director.

Tyler Boyd expressed his delight in learning that Mrs. Jackson had agreed to serve as Interim Director. He discussed his connection to Mrs. Jackson through his being in the same daycare and high school graduating class as her daughter.

Chairman Forrest discussed the appointment letter for Mrs. Jackson, which included her salary and compensation for her work with Director Eastman to ensure a smooth transition. Tim Womac made a motion to approve the appointment letter. Tyler Boyd seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Set Compensation for EGFPL Interim Director -

Chairman Forrest discussed the proposed compensation of \$4,000 monthly for Mrs. Jackson. John Duggan made a motion to set her compensation. Everett Gillespie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

iii. Authorize EGFPL Interim Director to be authorized signatory on bank accounts -

Everett Gillespie made a motion to authorize Mrs. Jackson to be an authorized signatory on the library's bank accounts. John Duggan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Forrest thanked Peyton Eastman for her service to the library and Beth Jackson for her willingness to serve the library. He reminded everyone of the next regular MCLB meeting on Monday September 25, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Forrest adjourned the meeting at 6:18 PM.