

## **THE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING**

Library of Virginia

June 28, 2021

The Library Board met electronically on Monday, June 28, 2021, via Zoom Internet Conferencing and the LVA YouTube channel live broadcast.

### **I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/QUORUM**

L. Preston Bryant Jr., chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and confirmed that a quorum of Board members were present after taking attendance.

The following members were in attendance:

L. Preston Bryant Jr., *Chair*

Robert Aguirre

Laura L. L. Blevins

Paul Brockwell Jr.

Robert L. Canida II

Maya Castillo

Mohammed Esslami

R. Chambliss Light Jr.

Barbara Vines Little

Mark Miller

Shelley Viola Murphy

Lana Real

Blythe Ann Scott

Marcy Sims

Leonard C. Tengco

Mr. Bryant welcomed the Board members, Board Counsel Audrey Burges, Librarian of Virginia Sandra Treadway, Library staff, and Pia Trigiani, president of the Library of Virginia Foundation Board, to the Zoom internet conferencing meeting.

### **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Bryant asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion to approve the Board meeting agenda was made by Marcy Sims, seconded by Blythe Ann Scott, and was approved unanimously by roll call vote. Mr. Bryant then welcomed two new Board members, Lana Real, a library media specialist with the King William Public School system and a member of the Upper Mattaponi Indian tribe, and Robert L. Canida II, vice president for inclusive excellence at the University of Lynchburg. He invited Ms. Real and Dr. Canida to say a few words about themselves.

### **III. APPROVAL OF THE LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES OF APRIL 12, 2021 BOARD MEETING.**

Mr. Bryant asked if there were any amendments to the minutes from the April 12, 2021, Board meeting. As none were offered, Mr. Bryant asked for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Paul Brockwell, Jr. moved to approve the minutes, and Laura L. L. Blevins seconded the motion. The April 12, 2021 Library Board meeting minutes were approved unanimously following a roll call vote.

### **IV. COMMITTEE AND DIVISION REPORTS**

- **Archival, Collections, and Records Management Services Committee**

Archival, Collections, and Records Management Services Committee Chair Barbara Vines Little reported that she had attended a meeting with Library staff to learn more about the situation with the diseased microfilm in the Library's collection. She indicated that she felt better after her conversation with the staff but expressed the opinion that the eight to ten year timeline currently projected for the reformatting project needed to be cut in half to be certain of saving all affected records. This would necessitate increasing the number of staff dedicated to the project from two to four. Ms. Little inquired about the process for seeking additional funding to support the project. Librarian of Virginia Sandra Treadway explained that this fall we would have an opportunity to ask the Governor to include this funding in his 2022-2024 budget. If the Governor's Office did not include funding in the Executive budget, it would be up to the Library Board to decide if it wished to seek support in the General Assembly for a budget amendment. Dr. Treadway expects to have more information about this for the Board's consideration at the September Board meeting. There being no questions for Ms. Little, Mr. Bryant affirmed the Board's support for this important project and for seeking funding from the General Assembly if that was needed.

- **Education, Outreach, and Research Services Committee**

Committee chair Marcy Sims invited Public Services and Outreach Division Director Gregg Kimball to provide an update on the division's activities. Dr. Kimball referred the Board to the Executive Summary in the Board packet and highlighted some of the key accomplishments over this past quarter. Of particular note he shared that 9,612 visitors viewed the *We Demand: Women's Suffrage in Virginia* exhibit between January 2020 and May 2021, when the exhibition closed, which was heartening given the Library was not open to the public for four months during 2020. He also highlighted the Library's travelling exhibitions noting they are covering a wide geographical area in Virginia and help us reach out to communities that we have not served in the past. Dr. Kimball also mentioned several genealogical offerings, which are always in high demand. The Library participated in the National Genealogical Society 2021 Family History Conference, which was held virtually again this year due to Covid-19. The Library provided a virtual booth, one-on-one sessions with Library staff and Community Outreach Specialist Ashley Ramey gave a presentation on genealogical resources available through Virginia

Memory. In April, Ms. Ramey also presented virtually to the Genealogical Research Institute of Virginia (GRIVA) on remote genealogical resources available on Virginia Memory and through the Library's catalog. Kimball also noted that the Library would be resuming in-person programming soon, most notably with the Anne and Ryland Brown Teacher Institute on August 2-3, 2021 and that staff were considering how to balance the virtual programs with the in-person offerings in the coming year. In closing he shared that the Library would be expanding operating hours as of July 6, 2021, to 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday and beginning in October would be offering selected Saturday hours. Ms. Sims thanked and commended Dr. Kimball and Library staff for their flexibility and innovation in meeting the challenges posed by the pandemic.

- **Legislative and Finance Committee**

Legislative and Finance Committee Chair R. Chambliss Light, Jr., welcomed Director of Administration and Finance Connie Warne. Ms. Warne reviewed the financial reports provided to the Board in the meeting packet and stated that the Library's spending was on track with where the Library historically is at this point in the fiscal year.

Mr. Light asked for any legislative updates. Mr. Bryant shared that the General Assembly would be going into session August 2, 2021, primarily to respond to and take action on \$4.3 billion in American Rescue Act Funds that the legislature will have to formally accept and add to the state budget to expend. Dr. Treadway clarified that the Library is already in the process of assisting Virginia public library systems in planning how they might use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds coming through IMLS, which are separate from and have a different time frame from the ARPA funds allocated to Virginia as a whole. The ARPA funds allocated through IMLS are focused specifically on libraries and must be spent by September 2022, while the larger pool of ARPA funding can be spent through 2024. Mr. Bryant also commented that federal relief funds aside, the Commonwealth will likely have more than \$1.75 billion in surplus funds available when developing the state budget, which may make securing funding for the diseased microfilm project more likely.

- **Public Library Development Committee**

Mark Miller, chair of the Public Library Development Committee, began by indicating that there were several action items before the Board today but first invited Library Development and Networking Director Nan Carmack to update the Board on the revisions to the *Planning for Library Excellence* (PFLE) standards document, which had been tabled from the April 2021 Board meeting. Dr. Carmack explained what the document was and described the updates that were recently made in the document to insure that the language and guidance was inclusive and sensitive to the needs of historically excluded groups. She stated that the Virginia Public Library directors reviewed and endorsed this document back in March 2021. There being no questions put forward, Mr. Bryant asked for an indication of consensus by the Board to adopt the updated *Planning for Library Excellence* document. He directed the minutes to reflect that there was a consensus of the Board members for adoption.

Mr. Miller next invited Public Library Consultant Kim Armentrout to review with the Board the State Aid Waiver requests. She explained the two categories of Waivers, Non-Technical and Technical. There were forty Technical Waivers and two Non-Technical Waivers needing Board approval. The Technical Waivers would be voted on as a group by the Board. She referred Board members to the details for each of the Technical Waivers included in the Board packet, and selected several localities to illustrate the causes of the reduced expenditures, with most of the reductions associated with reduced activity and the closing of libraries during the pandemic. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve all State Aid Technical Waiver Requests, which was seconded by Shelley Viola Murphy. Mr. Bryant then took a roll call vote of the Board, which unanimously approved all the State Aid Technical Waivers.

Ms. Armentrout then explained the two Non-Technical Waivers submitted by Massanutten Regional Library and J. Robert Jamerson Memorial Library. Massanutten Regional Library was on a five-year plan because of their ongoing failure to meet the fifty-percent of the median requirement, which after five years has not improved significantly enough. Ms. Armentrout explained that normally after five years the staff recommendation to the Board would be not to grant State Aid, however, there are a number of mitigating factors that staff feels may warrant giving Massanutten some additional time. Massanutten has been making progress with their plan, but their library director left, and they have not yet been able to hire a replacement. The library was closed during the last quarter of 2020 due to the pandemic, which is why their expenditures dropped. The staff recommendation is that the Board approve Massanutten's waiver request. A revised three-year plan for meeting the fifty-percent of the median requirement should be a condition of the waiver, with a letter sent to the library emphasizing the need to comply at the end of that period. After brief discussion of the staffing challenges experienced by libraries in Virginia and across the nation, Mr. Miller moved to approve the Non-Technical Waiver with a three year revised plan for Massanutten Regional Library as outlined by Ms. Armentrout. This motion was seconded by Laura Blevins. Mr. Bryant took a roll call vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Armentrout next explained the waiver request for the J. Robert Jamerson Memorial Library in Appomattox County. This library had faced similar challenges, with a very new director who has been working with the county to make them aware of their status with State Aid. The Library's recommendation is to grant the waiver to the Jamerson Memorial Library with a new three-year plan for meeting the requirement along with a letter indicating an urgent need for improved local funding. Mr. Miller moved that the Board approve the staff's recommendation, and Robert L. Candia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously through a roll call vote taken by Mr. Bryant.

Ms. Armentrout next explained the draft of the State Aid Allocations for 2022 showing the individual allotments to each public library system. Mr. Miller moved that the Board approve the State Aid Allotments as presented. Ms. Sims seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was then taken by Mr. Bryant, which passed unanimously.

In closing Mr. Miller summarized the conversation and discussion from the committee's meeting on May 10. After considering whether the Board should seek a JLARC study to update and revise the State Aid formula, the consensus of the committee was that the formula is not the problem but that the funding to support the formula is. State Aid is currently funded at about 60 percent of what the formula allows. The committee feels that the Board should work to pursue full funding of the State Aid formula by the General Assembly in the fall.

- **Report of the Foundation**

Mr. Bryant asked Library Foundation Board President Pia Trigiani and Foundation Executive Director Scott Dodson to report for the Foundation. Ms. Trigiani made some introductory comments giving a brief overview of the role which the Foundation plays in supporting the Library of Virginia. She also shared the retirement from the Foundation Board of long time President Steve Rogers, as well as the appointments of four new members. At its May meeting, the Foundation adopted a new strategic plan intended to complement the Library's efforts, and offered to send a copy to Library Board members upon request. Ms. Trigiani praised the consultant company, Spark Mill of Richmond, and Chris Bennett who facilitated the Foundation's strategic planning process. Ms. Trigiani concluded her comments reminding everyone of the program at the Library on July 1 commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Virginia's current Constitution, a collaboration between the Foundation, the Library, and a group of educators and attorneys, including Library Board Chair Preston Bryant.

Mr. Dodson welcomed the new Library Board members and shared that the Foundation had made progress during the past fiscal year in fundraising and donor expansion. The Foundation is currently about 17 percent ahead in unrestricted giving for the year and about 190 percent ahead in restricted giving. The Foundation's endowment currently stands at about \$4.5 million, which reflects positive market conditions over the last few months as well as the expert advice in managing those funds provided by Blue Edge Capital. Mr. Dodson shared some highlights on the success with several fund raising projects, raising \$50,000 for a digital studio for the Library, \$50,000 for conservation efforts for specific projects, and \$140,000 for Library programs. He was also pleased to share that they have funded two diversity internships whose recipients had begun their fellowships the previous week. He looks forward to expanding that initiative. He asked that all mark their calendars for October 16, 2021, for the annual Literary Awards and that it would be both an in-person and virtual event. He encouraged the Board to keep an eye out for invitations to more in-person events as the Library begins to expand those offerings. The Virginia Shop still was operating a little behind as most retail was currently, and the Capital Shop would open after Labor Day. Mr. Dodson briefly reviewed recent offerings of the Weinstein Author Speaker Series and then noted two upcoming in-person events in the Fall.

Ms. Scott shared that the Library Board had achieved 100 percent participation in the Foundation's annual appeal, and Mr. Brockwell reminded all that as of July 1st it would begin the next fiscal year and another opportunity to make contributions.

- **Report of the Librarian**

Dr. Treadway expressed the hope that this would be the last virtual meeting the Board would need to have and stated that the September Board meeting would be held in-person unless conditions changed. There would also finally be in-person Orientation scheduled in the next month or two for new Board members who have joined the Library Board during the pandemic. She announced that a new exhibit that would be opening near the end of August would be a photographic one focused on Columbia Pike in northern Virginia. This major thoroughfare has a rich and vibrant history reaching back two hundred years and its story captures the transformation of Virginia's population over time. She anticipates that it will draw visitors to the Library. Dr. Treadway added a few additional acknowledgements and details on the previously announced upcoming celebration of Virginia's 50th Anniversary of the 1971 Constitution on July 1, 2021. It is hoped that the event will raise awareness of the importance of that constitution to all Virginians and foster a better understanding of the 1902 Constitution that it replaced, which was one of the most discriminatory and regressive ones in the nation. In addition to a panel discussion on various aspects of the 1971 Constitution, on July 1 the Library will display four of Virginia's seven constitutions held in the state archives for guests and the public to view.

Dr. Treadway also shared that the Library had been designated the staff support organization for the new state Commission to Study Slavery and Subsequent Du Jure and De Facto Racial and Economic Discrimination Against African Americans, which had its first meeting earlier in June. The Library is partnering with the Division of Legislative Services, which administers the funding that supports the Commission. At its first organizational meeting, the Commission agreed to the Library's proposal to hire a project manager who would work for the Commission but be based here at the Library.

Dr. Treadway announced that she would update the Library Board at its fall meeting on our internal planning for the Library's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023. Also at the fall meeting she will plan a tour for Board members who can stay a bit longer after lunch of the State Records Center in Henrico County. Seeing the facility will help Board members visualize better the planning that is underway for expanding that building. The Department of General Services is in the process of purchasing the land adjacent to the current State Records Center. They are also finalizing selection of an architectural firm to design the building, and it is hoped that by the fall we will begin working with architects to move the design process forward.

Since this is the Library Board's annual meeting marking a transition to a new fiscal and Board year, we normally conclude with a special luncheon that allows us the opportunity to thank Board members and other in government who have helped us during the previous year. That is not possible this year, but Dr. Treadway concluded her report by expressing her gratitude to Library Board Chair Preston Bryant, who served as chair during the particularly challenging times of the pandemic. He was always ready to provide support and advice, and to advocate on the Library's behalf, especially with

regard to securing additional resources for processing gubernatorial records. She expressed her appreciation to the entire Board for their perseverance and support of the Library and especially to the new Board members for the engagement even before they have had the opportunity to experience the Library in person. Dr. Treadway thanked the Library's counsel, Assistant Attorney General Audrey Burges, for her prompt and gracious response to every request for advice and guidance and for her commitment to ensuring that the Library operates always on the right side of the law. She also thanked the Executive Management Team and Library staff for their tireless efforts to keep momentum going during the many challenges the pandemic presented. Their work has positioned us to spring back strong as more and more people are returning to visit and use the Library.

#### **V. Report of the Executive Committee**

Mr. Bryant identified the members of the Executive Committee: Blythe Scott, R. Chambliss Light, Shelley Murphy, and Kathy Johnson Bowles (who is no longer able to serve as she was not reappointed to a second term on the Board). He reported that the committee had reviewed the performance and the contract of the Librarian of Virginia, Sandra Treadway. It was the unanimous consensus of the Executive Committee to recommend extending Dr. Treadway's contract for an additional year. The Librarian's current contract allows for two successive one-year extensions, and this would be the second extension beginning on July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2022. Mr. Bryant then put forth and read the following resolution:

***Extension of Librarian of Virginia's Executive Employment Agreement June 28, 2021***  
*Resolved by the Board of Trustees of the Library of Virginia that the Executive Employment Agreement of the Librarian of Virginia shall be extended for a one-year period commencing July 1, 2021 and terminating June 30, 2022.*

Mr. Bryant then asked for questions and discussion; there being none he then moved that the recommendation of the Committee be approved. Mr. Aguirre seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken by Mr. Bryant, and the resolution passed unanimously. (Board member Maya Castillo had left the meeting prior to the vote.)

#### **VI. Report of the Nominating Committee**

Nominating Committee Chair Marcy Sims reported that the Committee had arrived at unanimous consensus on the following proposed slate of officers for 2021-2022:

Blythe Ann Scott, *Chair*  
Paul Brockwell, Jr., *Vice Chair*  
L. Preston Bryant, Jr., *past Chair*  
R. Chambliss Light, Jr.  
Shelley Viola Murphy

Ms. Sims moved that this slate of officers be approved; Mr. Esslami seconded the motion. Mr. Bryant opened the floor for any additional nominations. None being put forward, he closed the nominations and took a roll call vote. The proposed slate of officer was approved unanimously.

## **VII. Report of the Chair**

Mr. Bryant asked the Board to consider the draft Revised Electronic Meetings Policy in their packet, stating that the revision had been prompted by a change in the Code of Virginia. There were no questions or discussion, and Mr. Bryant asked for a motion to approve the Revised Electronic Meetings Policy. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Esslami and seconded by Ms. Sims. Mr. Bryant then took a roll call vote and the policy passed unanimously.

Mr. Bryant then asked for a motion to approve the Proposed Meeting Dates of the Board for 2021-2022. Mr. Brockwell moved to approve and Mr. Light seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

The next Action Item was the approval of two resolutions of acknowledgement for Library Board Service for two Board members: Kathy Johnson Bowles who had already rotated off the Board and the other for Mohammed Esslami who was attending his last meeting. Mr. Bryant briefly reviewed their service on the Board and asked Mr. Esslami to say a few words. Mr. Esslami expressed his appreciation for serving on the Board and wished the new Board members all future success. Mr. Bryant then asked for a motion to approve two resolutions before them. Ms. Sims moved to approved the resolutions and and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Mr. Brockwell asked if Ms. Bowles's resolution could be amended to note her two years of service as Vice Chair of the Library Board. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Mr. Bryant directed Dr. Treadway to make that official correction in the resolution and then took a roll call vote to approve the two resolutions, which passed unanimously.

### ***The Commonwealth of Virginia A Resolution of the Library Board***

*WHEREAS Kathy Johnson Bowles was appointed in October 2015 by Governor Terry McAuliffe to a five-year term on the Library Board; and*

*WHEREAS she served faithfully as a member of the Board during her term and provided the Board and Library staff with sound advice based on her extensive experience working with many cultural and community organizations as well as in the field of higher education; and*

*WHEREAS during her tenure on the Board, she was an active member of the Education, Outreach, and Research Services Committee, the Archival, Collections, and Records Management Services Committee, and the Legislative and Finance Committee, and served ably as chair of the Education, Outreach, and Research Services Committee from July 1, 2017 through May 2021; and*

*WHEREAS she served conscientiously as vice chair of the Library Board from July 2018 through May 2021; and*



*WHEREAS she has been a strong advocate for the mission of the Library of Virginia and a supporter of its many programs and educational initiatives, now therefore*

*BE IT RESOLVED by the Library Board on this 28th day of June 2021 that the Library Board recognize Kathy Johnson Bowles for her leadership and service; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting, and that a copy of it be given to Kathy Johnson Bowles as a token of the Board's appreciation of her service to the Library and to the Commonwealth of Virginia.*

***The Commonwealth of Virginia  
A Resolution of the Library Board***

*WHEREAS Mohammed Esslami was appointed in December 2015 by Governor Terry McAuliffe to fill the final months of an unexpired term on the Library Board; and*

*WHEREAS he was reappointed by Governor McAuliffe in September 2016 to a full five-year term, expiring on June 30, 2021; and*

*WHEREAS he served faithfully as a member of the Board during this period and provided the Board and Library staff with sound advice based on his more than twenty years experience in public libraries in northern Virginia; and*

*WHEREAS during his tenure on the Board, he was an active member of the Education, Outreach, and Research Services Committee, serving as the committee's vice chair from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019, and the Public Library Development Committee, serving as the committee's vice chair from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, and as a member of the Nominating Committee, July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; and*

*WHEREAS he has been a strong advocate for public libraries and the important role they play in the educational life of the Commonwealth; now therefore*

*BE IT RESOLVED by the Library Board on this 28th day of June 2021 that the Library Board recognize Mohammed Esslami for his leadership and service; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting, and that a copy of it be given to Mohammed Esslami as a token of the Board's appreciation of his service to the Library and to the Commonwealth of Virginia.*

**VIII. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS**

No old or new business was offered. In closing Mr. Bryant invited the new Board Chair Blythe Scott and Vice Chair Paul Brockwell to provide brief comments. Both Ms. Scott and Mr. Brockwell stated their excitement in assuming these leadership roles on the Board and looked forward to the work they would be accomplishing together.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Bryant adjourned the meeting at 11:38 a.m.