



# Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Minutes 10 May 2023

**Commissioners Present:** Paul Coyer; Candace Baracat-Donohue; Scott Billigmeier; James H Hershman, Jr. Chair; Adrian Dias-Mattina; Elizabeth Scheib, Vice Chair; Russ Woolard

**Commissioners Absent:** none.

**Others Present:** Patrick Wilt Councilmanic; Don Cooper, President FTBL; Sydney Aquilina and two guests

**Staff Present:** Alexandra S. Gressitt, Library Director

**Meeting convened** by Hershman in lower-level meeting room, Thomas Balch Library, at 7:00 PM.

**Electronic Recording Statement:** It is the practice of the Town of Leesburg to record meetings of the Town's standing boards and commissions.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the regular commission meeting of 12 April 2023 were approved on a motion by Dias-Mattina and a second by Billigmeier

**Library Director:** Report attached.

**Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.:**

- Next Board meeting is 16 May 2023

**Thomas Balch Library Endowment Foundation:** Gressitt, Secretary/Treasurer reporting

- Next meeting of the Foundation is 18 July 2023 @ 12 noon at Thomas Balch Library.
- 2022 Taxes have been prepared and will be signed and submitted on 12 May 2023.

**Old Business:**

- Gressitt reported on the Catalog Project is progressing on target for a June completion date. Maddie found a slight technical issue with several thousand records not being converted and uploaded by OCLC which is now being corrected. Staff continue to make corrections to catalog records that cannot be converted by OCLC and are printing call number labels. Staff and volunteers are placing the new call number labels on books. Despite the unanticipated glitch the project is progressing.
- Hershman reported on the Leesburg's Potter's Field memorial dedication on May 4, 2023 @ 6PM. There was a nice turnout and a lovely ceremony.

- Memorial tree for Martha Schonberger: Gressitt reported on the status.

**New Business:**

- Introduction of Commission members and Councilmanic Patrick Wilt.
- Sydney Aquilina made a power point/video presentation seeking the support of the TBLAC for a land acknowledgement landmark in Leesburg. Noting that of all the recognition markers in Leesburg, not recognized the Indigenous people. She further noted having already spoken with Mayor Burk and Gressitt and that she is scheduled to speak at COPA on June 6. Following discussion on a motion by Woolard that the Commission supports endorsing in principal construction of a land acknowledgement landmark in Leesburg.
- Gressitt noted that Linda Harris Sittig will be talking about her new book *Opening Closed Doors: The Story of Josie Murray* on Sunday, 25 June 2023, 2PM. *Opening Closed Doors*, a book for children ages 9-11, is about the desegregation of the Purcellville Library in 1957 and how Josie Murray of Purcellville played a pivotal part in the early Civil Rights Movement of Loudoun County. Books will be available for purchase at the event.

**Councilmanic remarks:** Glad to finally attend a meeting and looking forward to future meetings.

**Commission Comments:**

- Woolard is glad to be able to go on records in support of a land acknowledgement landmark and looking forward to learning about what more the Commission can do in this endeavor.
- Scheib expressed appreciation for projects wrapping up and new projects starting.
- Hershman noted he and Scheib had attended the Boards & Commission event and as outreach he attended Virginia Forum.
- Baracat-Donovan expressed support for the landmark and noted she would be unable to attend the June meeting.
- Hershman noted that UVA Press had alerted him that a book in which he has an article, *After Emancipation*, has gone to the printer.

On a motion by Scheib and a second by Coyer the meeting adjourned at 8:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra S. Gressitt  
Library Director  
11 May 2023