



Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Minutes 09 August 2023

Commissioners Present: Scott Billigmeier; Candace Baracat-Donovan; James H Hershman, Jr. Chair; Adrian Dias-Mattina; Russ Woolard

Commissioners Present Virtually: Paul Coyer

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Don Cooper, President FTBL, Deborah Hershman

Staff Present: Alexandra S. Gressitt, Library Director

Meeting convened by Hershman in lower-level meeting room, Thomas Balch Library, at 7:02 PM.

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

Virtual Participation: Coyer requested to attend the meeting virtually, a motion in favor was moved by Woolard, seconded by Baracat-Donovan and unanimously approved.

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

Library Director: Report attached.

Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.:

- Fall issue (Vol 28 #2) of the Chronicle out and copies were distributed to Commissioners. The issue includes coverage of the Douglass High School reopening, the upcoming Friends event September 10, and an article on the Library's new catalog.
- Invitations to the Sept 10 event were sent and Commissioners were encouraged to attend.

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

- At the last meeting various expenditures, including final payment to OCLC for the catalog transition and first year fees were approved.
- Next meeting of the Foundation is 19 September 2023 @ 12 noon at Thomas Balch Library.

Old Business:

- Gressitt reporting on the Catalog Project noted the public was pleased with the new catalog, finding it easy to use. The Library is now in alignment with like

institutions such as the Library of Virginia and George Mason University. George Mason has already approached the Library about shared grant opportunities.

- Land Acknowledgement landmark was briefly discussed and carried forward for further discussion as information arises.
- St James' Cemetery. Billigmeier and Gressitt reported on topics addressed at the initial meeting 26 July): 1) recommendation that a mapping and ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the St James Cemetery lot on Church Street be conducted (RFP subsequently issued); 2) history markers including investigation of a state marker; 3) landscaping of site; and 4) Town County, private funding. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed to carry the item forward for further discussion as information arises.
- Gressitt reported that Carl Rush, Loudoun County Equity Officer and a research team from UVA met at TBL, July 24. Members of the Black History Committee and TBL staff were in attendance. The researchers will be utilizing Library and BHC resources to establish a better understand the impact of school segregation/desegregation had on members of the African American community in Loudoun County.
- History Awards - Baracat-Donovan, Woolard, and Gressitt were reaffirmed as reviewers of submissions followed by a brief discussion on process. Gressitt reminded everyone that the History Awards on November 5 was the official Commission meeting that month and pictures would be taken for use on the website.

New Business: None.

Councilmanic remarks: None.

Commission Comments: None.

- Woolard is once again volunteering at the George C. Marshall House (Dodona Manor). He shared with the Commission information on an Off Duty lecture series starting September 21 @ 5:30 PM with David Robarge, Chief Historian of the Central Intelligence Agency, speaking on George C. Marshall in the Secret World.
- Hershman noted his disappointment at not being able to attend the last Foundation Board meeting nor the Douglass School opening. He was pleased that Carl Rush and UVA were working together on the segregation/desegregation issue.

On a motion by Woolard, seconded by Dias-Mattina the meeting adjourned at 7:46PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra S. Gressitt
Library Director
10 August 2023