

**Thomas Balch Library  
Advisory Commission  
Agenda  
7PM – 10 January 2024**

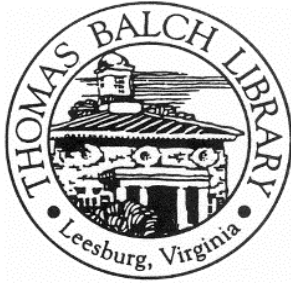
- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes – 13 December 2023
- Library Director's Report – January 2024 (December 2023 activity)
- Friends of TBL, Inc. Report – Don Cooper, President of the Friends
- TBL Foundation Report – Alexandra Gressitt, Secretary/Treasurer, TBL  
Foundation Board
- Old/Continuing Business:
  - St James' Cemetery Committee
  - Land Acknowledgement landmark for Leesburg
- New Business:
  - Set schedule of meetings for 2024
- Comments from Councilmanic/Commissioners

***Next Advisory Commission meeting, Wednesday, 14 February 2024 @ 7PM  
Thomas Balch Library meeting room.***

*All Town Council, Board and Commission meetings are recorded and may be found on the Town's Web site at [www.leesburgva.gov](http://www.leesburgva.gov).*

*If you require any type of reasonable accommodation, as a result of a physical, sensory, or mental disability, to attend and/or participate in this meeting, please contact Alexandra Gressitt, Library Director at 703-737-7195 or [Balchlib@leesburgva.gov](mailto:Balchlib@leesburgva.gov). Three days advance notice is requested.*

TBL ADVISORY COMMISSION ATTENDANCE SHEET CY2023												
	JAN	FEB*	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN*	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
<b>NAME:</b>												
Baracat-Donovan, Candace (2026) appointed 1/2023 [Cimino-Johnson]	P	A	P	P	P	V*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Barnard, Tony (2026) appointed 10/2023 [Wilt]	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P
Billigmeier, Scott (2024) appointed 9/2022 [Bagdasarian]	P	A	P	P	P	A	V	P	P	P	P	V
Hershman, James H Jr Chair (2026) appointed 7/1994 [Martinez; 1/2023 [Steinberg]	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Coyer, Paul, (2024) 7/1/2022 [Nacy]	P	A	P	A	P	P	A	V	P	P	P	P
Dias-Mattina, Adrian (2024) appointed 1/2021 [Cummings]	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Scheib, Elizabeth, Vice Chair 10/2022-7/2023 (2026) appointed 4/12/2022 [Fox]; 1/2023 [Wilt] removed 7/2023	A	P	P	A	P	A	A	X	X	X	X	X
Woolard, Russ, Vice Chair from 10/11/2023 (2024); appointed 1/2017 [Burk]	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Wilt, Patrick, Council Manic as of 1/2023					P	P						
Umstattd, Kristen C., Board of Supervisors from 1/2016												
P = Present												
A = Absent												
N = No Meeting												
V= Virtually present (Teams/telephone)												
X = Not Member												
* No Quorum												
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>												
Alexandra S Gressitt, Library Director	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Don Cooper, FTBL President	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P		P
Maddie Russell, Cataloger - TBL staff			P									
Sydney Aquilina, guest speaker					P							
Deb Hershman								P				
Chang Liu, Library Director, LCPL												P
Public						2						47
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>



# Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Minutes 13 December 2023

**Commissioners Present:** Tony Barnard; Paul Coyer; Candace Baracat-Donovan; James H Hershman, Jr. Chair; Adrian Dias-Mattina; Russ Woolard, Vice chair

**Commissioners Present Virtually:** Scott Billigmeier

**Commissioners Absent:** none

**Others Present:** Don Cooper, President FTBL; Chang Liu, Library Director, LCPL

**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 Attendance Request:** A motion in favor of Billigmeier, in transit from a business meeting, attending the meeting virtually by Coyer, seconded by Woolard was unanimously approved (6 – 0- 1)

**Minutes:** Minutes of the regular commission meeting of 11 October and 5 November 2023 were approved on a motion by Coyer and a second by Woolard.

**Guest:** Chang Liu, Library Director, Loudoun County Public Library system, explained the wide range of services available at the county's libraries and discussed future plans for the library system.

**Library Director:** Report attached.

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

- The winter 2023/spring 2024 issue (Vol 26 #3) of *The Chronicle* has been published and distributed.
- Invitations to the annual meeting of the Friends have been sent. The meeting will be held at 2PM on Sunday, 7 January 2024 in the Thomas Balch Library meeting room. Following election of officers, a video oral history with Betty and Bobby Lowenbach will be presented.

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

- The Town of Leesburg and the TBL Endowment Foundation are working together with Wells Fargo to complete transfer of remaining funds in the Balch Upkeep

Trust Fund. A review of the finances is being conducted by the Foundations accounting firm.

**Old Business:**

- Land Acknowledgement landmark was briefly discussed and carried forward for further discussion as information arises.
- St James' Cemetery was briefly discussed, Gressitt indicated the next meeting is to be held in the Thomas Balch Library meeting room 30 January 1PM. It will be hybrid to allow more people to attend. Barnard expressed interest in attending.
- History Awards – On a motion to have the Library Director update the history awards brochure and plaque by Woolard and seconded by Dias-Mattina, unanimously passed.

**New Business:**

- Baracat-Donovan inquired about the inclement weather policy as it relates to attendance and suggested that the date for the February meeting be reviewed as it falls on Feb 14.

**Councilmanic remarks:** None.

**Commission Comments:**

General holiday greetings were shared.

On a motion by Coyer seconded by Woolard, the meeting adjourned at 8:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra S. Gressitt  
Library Director  
14 December 2023

## **Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission** (13 December 2023)

- Unanimous vote to allow Commissioner Scott Billigmeier to attend virtually
- Approval of the minutes of the 11 October and 5 November meetings
- Chang Liu, Director of the Loudoun County Public Library system, explained the wide range of services available at the county's libraries and discussed the future plans for the LCPS system
- Library Director's Report—the director noted the staff changes that occurred this fall, including a new replacement on staff—the First Friday exhibit programs, which have proved very successful, are expected to resume at the Donaldson Cabin in March—the director called attention to the Town Council's recently passed scheduling and attendance requirements for boards and commissions—the library commission is to set its meeting schedule at the upcoming January meeting
- Don Cooper, President of the Friends of TBL, reported that the Friends fall newsletter is available—the annual meeting is planned for 7 January at Balch and commission members were invited to come, especially to view the film to be shown following election of TBL's new board and officers
- Alexandra Gressitt reported the TBL Foundation Board was moving ahead with the transfer of funds from the original Balch family bequest into the foundation's current endowment fund
- Under Old/Continuing business the commission unanimously voted to provide funds from the commission's budget to update the History Awards brochure and plaque to include the 2023 awards—also, the commission will be represented at the St. James Cemetery meeting planned for late January and expressed the commission's interest in participating in this project on Leesburg/Loudoun history
- Under new business, commissioners were reminded to give thought to setting the 2024 meeting schedule
- In commissioners comments all were wished a happy holiday season  
Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

**Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission**  
**13 December 2023**  
**Library Director's Report**

**Activities:**

**Exhibits:** Town press releases and postings to social media are issued for events.

- November-December 2023: Thomas Balch Library Selections from Rust Archives
- October-December 2023: Art Exhibit Art by Sabina Puppo.
- January-February 2024: African American Architectural Survey- Black History Committee
- January-March 2024: From the Time of Kings Photo Exhibit – Diane Helentjaris

**Grants:**

- The Library applied for a small grant from the Loudoun Library Foundation
- The Library will be applying for a rapid grant (\$5,000) from Virginia Humanities to assist with exhibit materials at the Donaldson Cabin.

**Lectures and Author Talks, Classes, Tours & Other Activities:**

Check the fall *Balch Column* on-line for details on our events. The Spring issue of the *Balch Column* is in progress. Events have been scheduled for Spring 2024 with some events already scheduled for Fall 2024. Pre-registration is required for all events to prevent confusion for hybrid or virtual presentations. Unless there is no room to accommodate those who don't pre-register, no one will be turned away.

**Building and Grounds:**

- Nothing major to report.

**Disaster and Emergency Preparedness:**

- Nothing new to report.

**Outreach:** Outreach for November included Laura installing an exhibit featuring new and interesting additions to TBL collections, assisting with the Historic Finances Workshop and hosting a pop-up Exhibit focused on Leesburg's Cemeteries at the Donaldson Cabin. Alexandra and Laura presented a brief overview of the library to students attending TOL's Job for a Day event and both also virtually participated in a MAP assessment Partner Meeting for the Loudoun Museum. Laura provided a talk about the history of the Lansdowne Area to 200+ NASA employees at their annual Ignite conference. Throughout the month Laura and Alexandra continued to work with interns Lauren Stupak and Ethan Ohngemach and welcomed new library Volunteer Sara Wolfey. TBL staff collaborated or provided assistance to Town of Leesburg staff from PIO and Planning and Historic Preservation divisions in November, including participating in a Town Thanksgiving PSA video.

**Collections: November 2023 Activity:**

**Accessions:** 3 gifts were accessioned.

Acquisitions of note accessioned in November included additions to existing collections including additions to Leesburg Garden Club Collection, 1920 (M 044) and Loudoun Sketch Club, 1946-2006 (M 040), as well as to Town of Leesburg Records.

**Digital Collections, Computers, and Microfilm: 0**

**Manuscript and Visual Collections:** 2 Manuscript collections were processed, Mott-Bentley Correspondence, 1835-1900, n.d. (M 0116) and Old Stone Methodist Church Cemetery Letters (SC 0169); 5 collections are in progress; 2 collection guides were added to the TBL Website: Leesburg Airport Commission (SC 0165) and Timothy Taylor Letter, 1813 (SC 0167); 0 Collection Guides were updated: 97 photographs are in process; 77 records were uploaded to Past Perfect, the online version of Past Perfect currently holds 7,270 images.

**Printed Collections:** 926 items were cataloged; 871 items were added to the Centennial catalog and 55 newspapers/periodicals were received and inventoried.

**Vertical Files (VF):** Additions/updates to the microform index (0) ephemera files (1), vertical files (0) unpublished papers (0); family files (0) and maps (0).

**Catalog Project:** Staff has completed adding to the maps and is now working on the microfilm collection. Other collections still to be added include law books in Town Hall newspapers, and rare books. We continue to have positive feedback on our new catalog.

**Personnel:**

**Interns/Student Researchers:** Lauren Stupak (University of Tennessee) and Ethan Ohngemach (VCU) completed their internships.

**Staff:** Tamsyn Knight, who holds a PhD from Oxford University, a master's degree in English from Massey University, New Zealand, and an undergraduate degree in History and English from Massey University. You will find her most regularly Tuesdays and Thursdays at the reference desk.

Interviews are on going to fill Helen Vettori's position.

**News of Former Staff:**

**Volunteers:** Work on a variety of projects such as scanning and numbering photographs, rehousing collection materials and prepping collections for processing.

**Donaldson Cabin:**

- Taylor Ruzinsky is processing collections at the cabin using grant funds.
- Laura managed the Library's participation in First Fridays through December. After a brief winter hiatus, she will resume First Friday activities in the spring. Participation in Donaldson Cabin events is being recorded separately in our statistics to evaluate public interest.

**Action Items:** None

Respectfully submitted,  
Alexandra S. Gressitt

FY END 2024 TBL Summary Statistics																		
Employee	Reference Questions								Other Work								Social Media	
	Genealogy	History	Maps/ Location	Images/ Media	Tech	Admin	Directional	General	Phone	E mail	Mail	Town of Lbg	Website / Media	Visitors	Closings	Counter		
Alexandra	22	290	7	22	200	1207	539	637	277	9785	20	58	4	76	21	7780		
Alyssa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Instagram	86
Anna	21	30	11	14	5	7	0	196	244	2475	1	0	81	0	0	0	Twitter	27
Bryan	59	59	14	30	4	0	53	139	45	570	0	0	0	0	0	0	Facebook	86
Echo	4	17	2	3	65	303	1	215	0	580	1	2	0	0	0	0	Google	0
Tamsyn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	Youtube	20
Helen	3	2	0	7	0	4	0	10	24	503	17	0	0	0	0	0	Balch Column	7311
Joanna	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>Total</b>	<b>7530</b>
Laura	81	888	0	352	931	1829	561	725	262	5140	28	142	86	12	0	0		<b>202353</b>
Madison	80	56	6	0	16	5	2	77	247	153	130	0	0	0	0	0		
Maria	7	1	4	0	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Mary Pender	17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Michelle	9	48	2	13	5	0	2	7	4	626	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Sara	14	23	15	7	0	0	0	2	0	696	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Taylor	42	22	9	17	1	91	2	7	13	855	2	0	1	0	0	0		
Travis	19	11	0	0	0	0	0	5	14	8	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
<b>General Lib</b>	159	293	60	34	115	70	147	350	125	3329	10	12	0	1554	0	0		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>1742</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>1342</b>	<b>3516</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>2376</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>24785</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>1642</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7780</b>		

Location	Visitors
Leesburg	510
Loudoun Co.	293
VA	133
Other US	146
All USA	1082
Int'l	5

Volunteer Hours			
Ann Geiger	56.5	Kate Nau	15.5
Becky	10.5	Kathy	1.75
Deb Hershman	3	Morgan D	10
Gabby P	19.5	Sam W	39.15
Gloria	1	Sue	33
John F	3	Wynne	17
Judy K	30.75	Sara	12
	0		0
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>252.65</b>		
Total # of Active Volunteers:			

Intern Hours
276
# of Active Interns
2

Attendance Stats	# of Meetings	# of Attendees
Rental Meetings	17	294
TBL Internal Meetings	74	830
TBL Offsite Events	7	701
Donaldson Cabin	6	205
<b>Totals</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>2030</b>

Public Service	
New Wifi Usage	144
<b>Total Reference Questions</b>	<b>37922</b>
ILLs requested	12
ILLs filled	11
Photograph reproduction orders	53
Photographs reproduced for orders	320
Archive Collections Used*	351
Income	\$ 5,308.32
Pro Bono TOL	\$ 2,015.00

Collection Mgmt	
Items added to catalog	2524
Newspapers received and inventoried	457
Accessions	71
Total items added to Catalog	2981
Archive Collections in process	34
Archive Collections processed	14
Photographs Processed	453
Images added to Past Perfect	3
ARVAS (VIVA) entries	1
Guides posted to TBL Site	1
Books sent to bindery	0
Books returned from bindery	0
	0
	0

\*incl. USGS, Lewis File, Cemetery maps, hard copy newspapers, manuscripts and photos



**DECEMBER 2023 TBL Summary Statistics**

Employee	Reference Questions								Other Work							Social Media			
	Genealogy	History	Maps/ Location	Images/ Media	Tech	Admin	Directional	General	Phone	E mail	Mail	Town of Lbg	Website /Media	Visitors	Closings				Counter
Alexandra	5	34			33	199	77	86	56	1533	2	6		11	7	1163		Postings	Viewers
Alyssa																	Instagram	11	1732
Anna	8	4	6	2				22	29	413			16				Twitter	0	70
Bryan																	Facebook	12	4900
Echo																	Google		2052
Tamsyn										28							Youtube	1	3175
Helen/																	Balch Column		
Joanna		1						2	1	27							<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11929</b>
Laura	5	95		70	150	242	73	108	21	722		12	14	2					
Madison	13	6	1			2	1	7	26	29									
Maria																			
Mary Pender	2								2										
Michelle				2			1	4		83									
Sara	2	4	4	1						105									
Taylor	3			8		20				133									
Travis	4	3							1	6									
<b>General Lib</b>										409									
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>3488</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1163</b>			

Location	Visitors
Leesburg	56
Loudoun Co.	39
VA	11
Other US	11
All USA	117
Int'l	0

Volunteer Hours			
Ann Geiger	5	Kate Nau	5.25
Becky		Kathy	
Deb Hershman		Morgan D	2
Gabby P		Sam W	3
Gloria		Sue	5.5
John F		Wynne	
Judy K		Sara	2
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>22.75</b>		
Total # of Active Volunteers:			

Intern Hours
1
<b># of Active Interns</b>
17

Attendance Stats	# of Meetings	# of Attendees
Rental Meetings	3	66
TBL Internal Meetings	9	81
TBL Offsite Events	0	0
Donaldson Cabin	1	15
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>162</b>

Public Service	
New Wifi Usage	9
<b>Total Reference Questions</b>	<b>4954</b>
ILLs requested	3
ILLs filled	2
Photograph reproduction orders	17
Photographs reproduced for orders	23
Archive Collections Used*	28
Income	\$ 975.01
Pro Bono TOL	\$ 120.00

\*incl. USGS, Lewis File, Cemetery maps, hard copy newspapers, manuscripts and photos

Collection Mgmt	
Items added to catalog	888
Newspapers received and inventoried	63
Accessions	19
Total items added to Catalog	951
Archive Collections in process	4
Archive Collections processed	3
Photographs Processed	24
Images added to Past Perfect	0
ARVAS (VIVA) entries	0
Guides posted to TBL Site	0
Books sent to bindery	0
Books returned from bindery	0