



# Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Minutes 13 March 2024

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

**Commissioners Present Virtually:** None

**Commissioners Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Don Cooper, President FTBL

**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.

**Virtual Attendance Request:** None

**Minutes:** Minutes of the regular commission meeting of 10 January 2024 were approved on a motion by Billigmeier seconded by Woolard.

**Library Director:** Report attached.

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

- Reported update of website under consideration.
- Spring/Summer Newsletter has been distributed.
- Next Friends board meeting is 9:30AM, Tuesday, 19 March 2024 at TBL.

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

- Next Foundation board meeting is 12PM, Tuesday 19 March 2024 at TBL.
- Focus will be Balch Family Trust Fund and a brochure.

**Old Business:**

- St James' Cemetery committee – Gressitt/Billigmeier/Barnard reported on the 30 January 2024: General background information provided; Kathleen Hughes was appointed to seek grants for the GPR study (\$22,000). 19 people were in attendance (virtually or in person) and an additional 13 were unable to attend. Widespread interest in project. Next meeting has not been set.

**New Business:**

- Hershman and Cooper reported on their participation in the search for a new Library Director.

- General discussion on the staffing transition, strategic planning, and process for preparing an in-person presentation to the Council late fall 2024 early spring 2025.
- Gressitt reminded everyone to check their Town email for the notice of the April 29 annual boards and commissions networking event.
- Gressitt reported that the Commission representative (Hershman) has been scheduled on the Council Calendar to deliver their annual report (memo) at the Council meeting in August.
- Gressitt distributed an application form for the Spring Genealogy Seminar which although not recorded will be hybrid. Cost the same whether in person or virtual.

**Councilmanic remarks:** None

**Commission Comments:**

- Woolard noted the Marshall House is open for tours; events are being planned; and that at a recent meeting of volunteers he shared information about TBL's History Awards.
- Baracat-Donovan shared information about a recent history program at Oatlands in which the BHC participated.

On a motion by Woolard seconded by Coyer, the meeting adjourned at 8:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra S. Gressitt  
Library Director  
14 March 2024

## **Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission** (March 2024)

- Approved the minutes of the 10 January 2024 meeting
- Received the library director's report for February and March—the spring programs and book talks are well under way and well-attended, with the upcoming DNA genealogy program filling up and the upcoming tours oversubscribed—the Donaldson Cabin marked its first exhibit in 2024 on the March First Friday, 36 people toured it—the director and Town staff are working with Morven Park on an MOU for a joint program—the catalog conversion from Dewey to LOC is complete; additions are being made.
- Don Cooper, Friends President, reported that the Friends were focused on Website improvements as the current goal.
- Alexandra Gressitt reported that the TBL Foundation Board will meet on 19 March to review progress on the transfer of the Balch Trust to the TBL endowment—the board will also consider a request for funds to purchase exhibit cabinets and wall fixtures for the Donaldson Cabin.
- Under Old Business—the St. James Cemetery project is waiting on a ground penetrating radar survey (and raising funds for it) before any other actions can take place.
- Under New Business—the commission turned to the upcoming transition to a new library director and the commission's role in that process—also general consideration of planning for Balch's future figured in the discussion.
- Commission's comments—Woolard mentioned that Dodona is open for tours, he is a docent—Baracat-Donovan noted that Oatlands programs have resumed.

Adjourned at 8:03 pm