



**Thomas Balch Library  
Advisory Commission  
Agenda  
7PM – 9 October 2024**

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes – 11 September 2024
- Library Director's Report – October 2024 (September 2024 activity)
  - Friends of TBL, Inc. Report – Don Cooper, President of the Friends
  - TBL Foundation Report – Laura Christiansen, Secretary/Treasurer, TBL Foundation Board
- Old/Continuing Business:
  - St. James' Cemetery
  - Commission on Performing Arts – Baracat-Donovan
- New Business:
  - History Awards
- Comments from Councilmanic/Commissioners

***Next Advisory Commission meeting, Sunday, 03 November 2024 @ 2 PM 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 Laura Christiansen, Library Director at 703-737-7195 or [Balchlib@leesburgva.gov](mailto:Balchlib@leesburgva.gov). Three days advance notice is requested.*

**Town of Leesburg  
Boards & Commissions  
Attendance  
Calendar Year 2024**

**Legend:**

	MTG	WS
Present		
E = Present via Electronic Participation	E	E
P = No Quorum but Member was present	P	P
Absent		
Present Rescheduled Meeting		
Absent Rescheduled Meeting	/	/
Not on / No Longer on Commission		
Recused from Meeting		
No Meeting		

<b>Thomas Balch Library Commission</b>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baracat-Donovan, Candy												
Barnard, Anthony												
Billigmeier, Scott									E			
Coyer, Paul												
Hershman, James												
Mattina, Adrian												
Woolard, Russ												



# Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Minutes 11 September 2024

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

**Commissioners Present Virtually:** Scott Billigmeier

**Commissioners Absent:** Tony Barnard (Resigned)

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

**Staff Present:** Laura Christiansen, Library Director

**Meeting convened** by Hershman in lower-level meeting room, Thomas Balch Library, at 7:07 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 July 2024 were approved on a motion by Baracat-Donovan seconded by Dias-Mattina.

**Library Director:** Report attached. Christiansen highlighted the arrival of new staff including Curator of Manuscripts and Archives Tammy Linh Tran and hiring of two new flexible part-time reference staff, Eliza Vegas and Morgan Dunwoody. She also noted the busy schedule of programs and events, and increasing attendance at events. In addition, she mentioned continuing efforts to updated statistics created at the library with the aim of generating meaningful data.

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

- A new edition of The Chronicle for fall is at the printer and should be available by or before 9/20.
- The next Friends board meeting will be held on 9/17 at 9:30 am.
- The Fall fundraiser for Friends will be held on 6 October from 4-7pm at the Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum. Ann Marie Chirieleison will speak about the Tenant's Revolt of 1775/1776 in Loudoun. The cost of tickets to the event is lower than previous years. This and the location hopefully will draw more new attendees as well as more attendees from Eastern Loudoun. Tickets can be purchased online through the new FTBL website.

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

- Noted that the accountants review of the Balch Trust account at Wells Fargo had been completed. No additional updates as to status of transfer of the account.

- The next meeting of the Endowment Foundation Board will be held on Tuesday September 17 at noon. At the following meeting on November 19, TD Bank will provide an investment policy update to the TBLEF Board.

**Old Business:**

- Library Director transition Hershman suggested that the transition was covered in the Director's Report.
- St James' Cemetery committee – Billigmeier had no updates on the project.
- Commission on Performing Arts - Baracat-Donovan provided updated information regarding creation of a Performing Arts Council, noting that the Council voted to move forward and detailing the next steps in the process. Commission members agreed that once formed it would be worthwhile for TBLAC to explore shared interests with both the new Commission as well as with the Commission on Public Arts.

**New Business:**

- Hershman noted that the Annual report (memo for council) was filed with the Town Council on August 12. He highlighted library statistics and the recovery of use of the library as well as the continuing need for additional space.
- History Awards – Christiansen report on the call for nominations and response. Commissioners Dias-Mattina and Coyer will review the nominations. Procedures and planning for the November 3 award ceremony were discussed.

**Councilmanic remarks:** None

**Commission Comments:**

- Woolard noted an upcoming George Marshall International Center "Off Duty" event that will be held September 18 at St. James' Episcopal Church. The talk will feature Dr. Robert Holcomb and John H. Cook IV speaking on Two Selfless Loudoun Leaders: Dr. Claude Moore and George C. Marshall.
- Hershman commented on the renaming of the Loudoun County Court House as the Charles Hamilton Houston Courthouse on September 9. He provided insight into Houston's connection to Loudoun.

On a motion by Dias-Mattina seconded by Baracat-Donovan, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Christiansen  
Library Director  
11 September 2024

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

- Approved the minutes of the July meeting
- Received the library director's report—new staff, a manuscripts curator is on board as are some new flex time staff, allowing for better coverage during library hours—the pace of activities, talks, classes, exhibits, outreach efforts, has increased—attendance at events in the Donaldson Cabin on First Fridays has increased, First Friday in September saw 78 visitors to the cabin—a number of interesting new collections, some needing special processing, have come in—a roof leak in the library's front section was promptly repaired by town maintenance staff
- Don Cooper gave the Friends report—their newsletter should be out in the next few days—their fundraiser will be at the Heritage Farm Museum at the Claude Moore Park—the charge this year is \$50 per person and the date and time are: 6 October, 4-7 p.m.
- Laura Christensen gave the report from the TBL Foundation board—their next meeting will be on 17 September at noon at Balch—there will be discussion of an update the transfer of the Balch Fund to the Foundation—the November meeting will feature an update on endowment investment policy
- Under Old Business—discussion of the transition in Balch leadership was covered in the library director's report—there was no new information on the St. James Cemetery project, it was carried over to the next meeting—the commission discussed the formation of the new Performing Arts Commission and commissioner Baracat-Donovan will note any areas of shared interest with that the new commission
- New Business—the chair reported that the annual report had been filed with the town in July—discussion followed on progress on the History Awards and commissioner Coyer was appointed to review nominees
- In commissioners comments—commissioner Woolward noted an upcoming program sponsored by Dodona Manor on the local and national leadership

of George Marshall and Claude Moore to be held at St. James church on 18  
Sept. from 5:30 -7:00 p.m.—Chair Hershman discussed the renaming of the  
Historic Loudoun for Charles Hamilton Houston  
Adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

**Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission**  
**October 9,2024**  
**Library Director's Report**

**Outreach:**

*Exhibits:*

"Faces of Ball's Bluff," from the Friends of Ball's Bluff is on display in the Mercer room at Thomas Balch Library during the month of October. This display was assembled to commemorate the 163rd anniversary of the Battle of Ball's Bluff. Its sole intention is to place a human face to the carnage that occurred here, just outside the Town of Leesburg. These stories are being told through battlefield relics, personal artifacts, and images.

*Donaldson Cabin:*

- September 6 Pop-up Exhibit featuring the History of the Cabin drew 78 visitors
- On September 8, the cabin hosted Diane Helentjaris for a book signing and exhibit of her new book *I Ain't Afraid — The World of Lulu Bell Parr, Wild West Cowgirl* with 45 people in attendance.

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

- Heritage Dulles Presentation with Gibran Parvez on 9/8, 13 attendees
- Using Maps in Historical Research workshop with Charlie Grymes on 9/5, 28 attendees
- On Sunday 9/22 TBL hosted the Black History Committee's program, "The Quanders: Since 1684, an Enduring African American Legacy" presented by Rohulamin Quander. The program well attended (33 people) and was recorded and is available: <https://youtu.be/XMpTqh7TRXg>
- First Explorer on 9/29 with Peter Micheal, 6 attendees

*Educational Outreach*

- On 9/6 Virginia Piedmont Heritage Association brought 34 Home School students to the library for a tour and to see materials from the collection as part of a Civil War Tour of Downtown.
- TBL staff met with librarians from Riverside High School and Loudoun County High School to plan future school visits and tours of the library.

**Community Collaboration:**

- 9/13 Maddie Russell and Laura Christiansen attended LCPL's annual staff development day conference. Maddie staffed an information table with some "Rockstar" items from TBL's collections and Laura offered an information session about Balch's collections and programs.. Overall, they engaged with over 140 LCPL staff members.

**Collections:**

*Accessions*

In September 6 accessions were received.

*Donations of interest:*

- On Monday 9/16 TBL staff visited the John Janney House on Cornwall Street to pick up a new acquisition including papers related to the Rust, Cox, Lee, Janney and related families. Items of note include Ida Lee Rust's Diaries which cover from 1901 – 1920s and are full of amazing details about Leesburg during this time. Also picked up were some items which the library will digitize and return to the donor including a letter written by President James Monroe, correspondence from Robert E. Lee, and more.
- On September 27, TBL acquired a rolled map of Union Cemetery. The undated Map appears to be of early lots sold in Union with the names of lot purchasers written in ink on most lots. The map was one of several items from the estate of Billy Whitmore, a lifelong Leesburg Resident, sold at Auction by Damewood Auctioneers. Curator Tammy skillfully placed bids for the library in the online auction and won this item for a very reasonable price. The map will need cleaning and conservation work to repair some water damage and rust stains but will be an excellent addition to the collection.

*Collections Use:* 51 archival collections were requested and used during September.

***Catalog Project:***

In September Maddie created 12 original catalog records, replaced 28 incorrect records, and improved 89 local holdings records. Newly cataloged items included the following newspapers not previously cataloged:

- *The Piedmont Virginian*
- *Loudoun Business Journal*
- *The Loudoun Independent*
- *The indie*

The Following Archival collections were also cataloged and made available:

- Schooley Collection 1894- c. 1967
- Elizabeth Shoemaker Owen and Eugene D. Owen Papers
- Russell Collection 1854-1950

**Operations:**

**Building and Grounds:**

Facilities will move forward with repairing the plaster and painting the ceiling in the Clark Room, although this has not yet been scheduled.

**Volunteers:** We are currently accepting applications for new volunteers.

. September: 60 hours contributed

**Reference services:**

**Total Library Visitors (door)**

**September: 1007**

**Geographic break down**



Leesburg	Loudoun Co	Other Virginia	Other States
83	40	14	16

**Total In Person Use count (reference desk)**  
**September 382**

**Remote questions logged**  
**September: 43**

**Origin**

**Town of Leesburg / Internal Requests**  
**September: 3**

**Action Items:**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura E. Christiansen