

**James L. Hamner Public Library**

**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**July 15th, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 by president Jennifer Harris. Members present were Joi Worsham, Ruth Ashton, Jody Hall, Callie Walker, Jennifer Harris, and Gail Geraghty. Also present were Board of Supervisors liaison Benjy Morris, and staff members Lauren, Noah, and Tanya, and library director Keith McFarlane.

**New Board Member** Jody Hall was sworn in by Jennifer in accordance with VA Code §49-1. The board welcomed her.

**Approval of Minutes** - Jennifer asked for any questions or comments about the minutes from the May 2025 meeting. None were made. Callie moved that the minutes be approved, and Ruth seconded. Motion carried.

**Friends Report** - Friends of the Library representative Wendy Audley reported that membership has grown recently to 108 members, including four new lifetime members. On Saturday, August 2, a 'Bring a Book to Trade' event will be held at the Friendly Bookshop to increase traffic. The Friends will be participating in National Night Out in the courthouse square on August 5 by passing out books to people of all ages.

Wendy also reported that Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has so far enrolled 141 children, and will be doing further enrollment at the elementary school's trunk-or-treat event in October.

**Officers' Reports** - none.

**Committee Reports** - Discussion, led by Jennifer, was held about the library director's evaluation, which will be done in January - February of 2026. Tom Hayghe will chair the evaluation committee.

**Library Director's Report** - Director Keith McFarlane shared that he is currently trying to rework the library schedule to begin opening on Mondays. He will inform the board when that has been worked out.

He said that a partnership is in the works with Head Start, and programming librarian Tanya has been finalizing details.

Keith said that he found out about a grant, the day before the deadline, for furniture from T-Mobile and applied for it.

Keith shared that he has been looking into the library's vendor contracts, and found that a refund of taxes paid is forthcoming.

Keith and Jennifer said the playground awning has not yet been installed, although \$33,000 is in a county fund to cover the costs. Darryl will need to be contacted about proceeding. Jennifer said that any remaining funds from the project could be used to address drainage issues on the grounds.

**Old Business** - Callie asked if there was enough money in the budget to pay for security. Jennifer said that the library cannot use salary money to pay for this, and Wren said that a security guard was never budgeted for. Jennifer suggested that Keith speak with the county to get this clarified and straightened out.

When asked about potentially processing more passports, Noah said that limited space has been the primary factor in the passport numbers. Keith asked about who to contact concerning library expansion. Jennifer said that the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors handle those requests, although it's unlikely we'll get approval for expansion any time soon. There is still \$30,000 in a county building fund for the library.

Tanya said that the Summer Reading Program has been going incredibly well. 239 people have signed up. Several upcoming activities include a magic show, Bricks for Kids, painting, etc. Chair Yoga is especially popular. Tanya also said that she has requested the library's participation in National Night Out.

**New Business** - Keith asked for clarification about the organizational hierarchy, and if library managers were to report directly to the director. Jennifer said that the director was free to manage staff as he sees fit, and that the board typically isn't involved with staffing concerns, although it may be appropriate in some circumstances.

Keith said that he'd like to get Crystal more hours to be able to open on Mondays. Jennifer added that staff shouldn't feel obligated to stay after hours to manage the meeting room in the evenings, and to consider not offering availability after 7 PM. Joi asked about why we'd been closed on Mondays, and Jennifer and Gail said it was a past decision in response to limited staff and restricted Covid hours. Wren said that perhaps we could offer a shorter day initially and see how it goes.

Jennifer spoke to Keith about attending Board of Supervisors meetings, saying he shouldn't feel obligated to attend every one, but it's helpful if he can occasionally.

Gail asked about a training session previously discussed for new staff and board members. Jennifer said that the training would be led by VLA staff and would address board procedure and responsibilities. She will see if the previous trainer may be available to return sometime this fall, perhaps on a Saturday.

Lauren shared that she's ordered several VOX Books for the children's section, which are print books with integrated audio playback. She shared some sample titles with the board.

Jennifer said that, looking ahead, a budget meeting needs to be planned for December, to meet the county's budget schedule for next year. The next board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 16 at 6:00 PM. She adjourned the meeting at 6:54 PM.

A reception for new Library Director Keith McFarlane and new board member Jody Hall was held immediately afterward.