

**James L. Hamner Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
November 18, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by President Jennifer Harris. Members present were Ruth Ashton, Karen Freas, Gail Geraghty, Jody Hall, Tom Hayghe, Carol Hix, Jennifer Harris, Callie Walker, and Keith McFarlane, Library Director. Others present were staff members Lauren Donati, and Laura Rogers, Friends' liaison Wendy Audley, and Board of Supervisors liaison Benjy Morris,

Approval of Minutes - Jennifer asked if there were any questions or comments about the minutes from the September Meeting. There were none; Carol moved that the minutes be approved, and Callie seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments - None

Friends of the Library - Wendy Audley reported that the Friends now have 68 Lifetime members and 58 Friend or Good Friend members. The Friends will be getting the doors of the bookshop repaired and repainted soon. One unit in the building is vacant, but all others are being rented. She also reported that there was no quorum at their last meeting, so no official business was conducted.

Wendy also shared information about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, saying that 219 children are now enrolled. A Christmas Tea fundraiser scheduled for December has been sold out. Gift baskets will continue to be raffled off through December.

Officers' Reports - None

Committee Reports -

Evaluation: Jennifer asked Tom if he was planning to begin the library director's evaluation in December, as is usually done. Tom said yes, and that he would send out evaluation forms to the same parties as before. It will be delivered most likely in February. Jennifer asked if the board needed to form a committee to help him out, but he said he could manage it himself.

Budget: Jennifer and Keith said they haven't yet received notification from the county about next year's budget. Jennifer reminded us that last year the budget process went into January. If necessary, she will call a budget meeting in December. Callie asked if members could vote remotely if needed, but Wren and Jennifer said that LVA regulations don't allow for it in this case.

Director's Report -

Playground: Keith said that the playground pavilion (formerly the playground awning) will be completed by county staff, with installation scheduled for March. Estimates he received for the awning would cost between \$7,000 to \$20,000, while a full pavilion would cost around \$15,000. The concrete pad is already in place.

Grants: 1. The Walmart Spark grant is awaiting approval. 2. The LTC ALA ADA Grant application is in progress. This grant would finance handicapped accessible furniture or technology. 3. The Pizza Hut Grant - the library does not qualify for this, as we are not a 501(c)3.

Vendor Contract Management: Keith said he is considering discontinuing the contract with Orion Services for tech support, after next year's fiscal year of contract, and look for other options. He said he also would like to discontinue use of Kinex, as there are ongoing internet issues, and he would like a more secure option.

Department Head Meetings: Keith shared that he has been attending the meetings of several county departments in order to become familiar with them and to make connections.

State Aid Audit Report: This is done annually, and is currently being worked on. The deadline has been moved up from December 14th, to December 1st. Keith and Wren both shared that the collapse of Baker and Taylor, the book vendor the library has used, has created challenges. Wren has been looking for options and asked for board approval to open a \$10,000 line of credit to set up with a new vendor. Callie moved that we approve, Ruth seconded, and motion carried for her to proceed.

Community Outreach: Keith said that he has joined the Ruritans to continue community outreach and partnership.

Facilities Improvement/CIP Planning: Keith was told by Daryl from the county that the library will need a new roof soon, and he is addressing the issue. Jennifer told Benjy that if the board needs to be involved with the new roof to let us know. Keith said we could use CIP funding money to piecemeal items, like the roof and flooring. Jennifer said that the old CIP request, which is still standing, will need to be reworked in that case.

Professional Development: Keith and staff spoke of attending the VLA Conference, saying that the training was informative, and included info on disaster planning. Keith said that the library could play a role in disaster situations, and will speak with Kent Emerson.

Old Business - The training session for the board of trustees that was discussed at the previous meeting has been finalized and will be held on Saturday, January 17th beginning at 10:00 AM. The Library of Virginia will provide the training. Jennifer encouraged all members to attend.

New Business -

Budgeting: Jennifer said that hopefully work on the budget will go more smoothly this year, adding that we don't have a lot of wiggle room with it. Keith said the library's utility usage is unclear - power and water are budgeted for, although we never see the bills. Last year we never saw a finalized version of the library budget from the county.

James L. Hamner / Historical Society Alignment: Keith shared that the Amelia Historical Society voted unanimously to explore a potential merger, and are preparing a memorandum of understanding. He said he will let the board know when that happens. Two members, Michael Whitaker and Glen Wilkerson, will serve as representatives. He met recently with them and said that he will be assisting with their IT needs after the holidays.

Website and Network Security Improvements: Keith said that the website will be updated, adding pictures of the board and a staff directory and photos. He also said updates are being

implemented to improve network security, as we are currently without a firewall. The \$3,000 funding needed is an issue. He is working on a few options, and he may have to band-aid it in the meantime.

Jennifer asked for any other business. Someone asked about events at the library and Laura shared that Staff members went to an event at Sandy Creek Baptist Church to talk about library resources to a senior group. Crystal and Tanya took a legal course and are now qualified to offer legal resources to patrons. A surprise dinner was held for Friends members recently. A 4-H camp is also upcoming.

Benjy Morris asked members for opinions about length of service for committee and board members in the county. The board provided some feedback.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM. The next board meeting is scheduled for January 20th at 6:00 PM.