



**Trustees Attending:** Greg Brakebill - Board Chair, Shawn Graham, Dexter Stewart, Robert White, Kyle Anderson, Dawn Reagan

**Staff Attending:** Dustin Goforth - BCPL Director, Anjanae Brueland - Deputy Director, Summer Dale

**Visitors:** Vandy Kemp - Friends of the Blount County Public Library, Robert McClelland - Foundation for the Blount County Public Library, Liz Schreck- Ocoee River Regional Library

**Call to Order:** Greg Brakebill called the Blount County Public Library Board to order on 13 January 2026 at 5:30 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:** Kyle Anderson made a motion to approve the 18 November 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

- The board heard comments from one member of the public.

**Report of the Board of Trustees Chair by Greg Brakebill:**

- Greg shared that he will be attending the semi-annual Regional Board Chair meeting this Thursday, January 15th, at 1pm.
- Greg expressed his appreciation for the library staff.
- He also shared that the parking lot has been striped, and it looks really good.
  - Dustin echoed Greg's praise and commended the Maintenance team for their hard work and the crew that re-striped it over the Christmas holiday.

**Report of the Blount County Public Library Director by Dustin:**

- Currently, the elevator is inoperable. A vendor has been contacted, and new parts have been ordered.
  - We are taking steps to handle the typically 3,000 donations the Friends receive per week.
  - Dustin thanked the Friends, specifically Vandy Kemp and the entire Ops team, for their patience.
- Dustin shared his excitement about being in Blount County for the holidays for the first time.
  - He shared some of BCPL's holiday highlights:
    - Santa was a huge success. About 300-400 people attended.
    - 245 people participated and voted in our Gingerbread House contest.
    - Extra chairs were needed for our String Quartet and Opera musicals.
    - BCPL was gifted an additional \$3,500 to spend on Overdrive/Libby.
    - The Blount County public and patrons were so generous during the holidays. The Salvation Army established the giving tree and had to refill it 3 to 5 times.
    - Our PR team put out old Santa letters, and one from 1926 was discovered by the author's grandson, who was excited and requested a copy.
- Summer Dale has been appointed by the Chamber of Commerce to serve on the Fine Arts Committee as the Library representative.
  - The Committee wants to explore new and invigorating ways to highlight local art in the community.
- The Jennifer Moorman event was hugely successful and popular.



- Jennifer is a USA Today bestselling author who launched a national book tour, and we were her first stop. 32 people attended the event.
- Dustin thanked Lisa Misosky for connecting us with Jennifer's publicist.
- AARP tax preppers will begin scheduling appointments in the coming week or two.
- We are in the process of some staff changes.
  - Alicia Peery has left the Library for new ventures, and we wish her all the best.
  - Polly Taylor, one of our Youth Services librarians who worked with our Teens, has been promoted to Reference Librarian and will be taking Alicia's vacated position.

#### **Financial Report, Anjanae Brueland:**

- Anjanae passed out the new budget visualization charts.
  - The chart illustrates the narrative and the month-by-month spreadsheet.
  - Anjanae explained that we are keeping right in line with the trend.
- As a reminder, last year's and this year's monies, which are usually reserved for General Services support in our budget, were moved to the Capital budget as a contingency plan for the book return construction project.
- There have been many changes in County Finance, and discussions will be held to determine whether that money can be reallocated to Operations.
  - Whether it's in Capital or Operations implies a specific usage, so we want to make sure we are communicating clearly. This is an ongoing conversation between Dustin and Finance, and we will continue to keep the Board updated.
- Anjanae shared that we are doing very well with our Revenues and are tracking our spend on food supplies, which is a line item we are moving through quickly. We have strategies to make sure it lasts us the year.
  - Shawn Graham asked some follow-up questions about the offsetting amount spent on supplies.
  - Dustin shared that, due to the consumer price index, we will have to raise prices at the Cafe, and Anjanae explained that we are exploring all options to maximize both the dollars we spend and how we communicate that to our patrons.
  - Dustin expressed his gratitude for the hard work of Anjanae, Tisha Chauncey, and Chelsea Mathenia.

#### **Report of Foundation Board, Robert McClelland:**

- Robert McClelland is the Foundation's Secretary this year and the liaison to the Board of Trustees.
- Robert shared that the Foundation elected new officers this year:
  - Alexa Johns - President
  - Troy Galyon - Vice President
  - Robert McClelland - Secretary
  - Grant Daughtery - Treasurer
- There are also three new members to the Foundation:
  - Ken Wells
  - Regina Jennings
  - Rachel Litrell
- The Foundation has been discussing the criteria and parameters for determining which projects they would like to help fund and how to communicate that to others.
- They are also talking about coherence with the Friends and the Board of Trustees, as well as how they are and continue to be advocates for the library.



● The next Library Leadership meeting between the Board Chair, Friends President, and Foundation President will be on January 23rd.

#### **Report of Friends of the Library, Vandy Kemp:**

- The Friends are looking forward to creative solutions for the Elevator being down.
- Currently, they have stopped all large donations.
- December book sales almost broke another record.
- eBay sales could break all Friends records.
  - Kudos to Dee Barham for all of her work making eBay great.
- The Friends have updated their Mission, which was approved last Spring.
  - Now they are focusing on their Vision.
- The next Friends Board meeting will be on January 27th.

#### **Report of Ocoee River Regional Library, Liz Schreck:**

- The Ocoee River Regional Library Report and the READS FY 2025-26 Data Statistics were distributed by email prior to the meeting.
- Liz Schreck shared updates from the Regional Library, highlighting training opportunities.
  - Liz discussed staff Continuing Education (CE).
  - The region will be providing new AI webinars
  - On February 3rd, Kathy Dooley Smith, President of the Friends of the Tennessee Libraries, will be speaking about falling in love with your Friends group.
- The Tennessee semi-quincentennial is this year.
- ORRL is piloting digitization equipment.
- Kudos to Karen Vyskocil and Maria Rodriguez for completing their Core Competencies.

#### **Old Business:**

- The **Code of Ethics and Expectations policy for the Board of Trustees** was discussed.

**Kyle Anderson made a motion to approve the new Code of Ethics and Expectations policy for the Board of Trustees. Dawn Reagan seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

- The **Bookmark Cafe Employee Health policy** was discussed.
  - Transmission of food-borne illnesses and communicable disease symptoms were added back in per the State guidelines.

**Dawn Reagan made a motion to approve the Bookmark Cafe Employee Health policy. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

#### **New Business:**

- The **Gift policy** was presented and discussed.
- The **Book Review Project Recommendation** was discussed.
  - The Board met for an Ad Hoc meeting at 4pm and determined that, in agreement with BCPL staff recommendation, BCPL is in compliance with the State.
  - The Book Review Project report will be submitted to the State by 19 January 2026.



**Dawn Reagan made a motion to accept the Book Review Recommendation from Library Staff that the Library is in compliance with the State. Robert White seconded the motion. The motion carried with 5 votes in favor and 1 against.**

- The **Bibliotheca Service and Maintenance/Extended Warranty for the AMH** was discussed.
  - Dustin shared that when the Automatic Materials Handler (AMH) was first installed, it came with a one-year warranty. We would like to extend the warranty for no more than two years at this time.
  - The negotiated rate is a reduction of the original request of \$17,000 per year, plus a CPA increase of about 8%. This has been negotiated down to \$11,500 for the first year, with a 5% increase for CPA.
  - Bibliotheca agreed to honor a 5% year-over-year increase if we choose to extend the warranty for years three through six.
  - The Board discussed the types of issues the AMH is experiencing and the training staff received for when issues arise.
    - Kudos were given to Rebecca Melvin and her Patron Services department for how they've continually handled the AMH.
  - Even with its issues, Dustin feels the AMH was and is money well spent.
  - The Board requested data on issues the AMH is experiencing.
  - There was discussion on current and future signage.
    - It was suggested that a QR code be posted for people to scan as they drive up to the Bookie Monster/AMH, with instructions on how to use the machine.

**Shawn Graham made a motion to approve sending the proposed Bibliotheca Service and Maintenance/Extended Warranty to the Commission for their vote. Kyle Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

- **FY27 BCPL Budget Proposal**
  - Dustin thanked Anjanae for her effort and hard work on the budget. It was a team effort.
  - He shared that the Library has no control over the Salary and Benefits portion.
  - Dustin explained some upcoming staffing changes that will allow for an additional Temporary Library Page position (specifically during the summer).
    - Due to the vacancy savings, this temporary position will only cost us about \$600 in total.
    - The Blount County Mayor has already given his verbal approval on this.
  - Dustin shared the requested budget increases.
    - Contracted Services will rise because of the Consumer Price Index.
    - Databases will increase.
    - More people want to read ebooks. One third of all books checked out are electronic. So we will be requesting an increase to our ebook amount and a reduction to our physical collection.
    - Would also like to reduce the Capital budget.
      - If the Maintenance Agreement is approved by the Budget Committ then we won't need the large amount in Capital.
    - Bookmark Cafe prices will need to be increased while reducing the cost of goods.



- If the Board has any questions regarding the FY27 Budget, please reach out to Dustin.
- Dustin requests that the February Board meeting be moved to February 10th to allow adequate time to discuss the FY27 budget before it is submitted to the Commission.

Shawn Graham made a motion to reschedule the February 17th Board of Trustees meeting to February 10th at 5:30pm. Dexter Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### **Funding Requests:**

- There were no funding requests.

#### **Additional Closing Comments:**

- Discussed upcoming meetings.
- Dustin discussed Semiquincentennial Library programming ideas:
  - The Blount County Genealogical and Historical Society brought up partnerships with historic organizations in Blount County.
    - Possibly like a festival.
  - Greg McClain's presentation on the history of Maryville.
  - A timecapsule was brought up by a staff member, Polly Taylor.
    - This summer's reading theme is "Unearth a Story."

#### **Important Dates:**

- Other Library Meetings
  - Blount County Commission Meeting – 15 January 2026, 6:00 pm – BC Courthouse
  - Blount County Friends of the Library – 27 January 2026, 4:00 pm – BCPL
  - Foundation for the Blount County Public Library – 16 January 2026, 8:00 am – BCPL
  - Maryville City Council - 3 February 2026, 7:00 pm – Maryville Municipal Bldg
  - Alcoa Board of Commissioners - 10 February 2026, 7:00 pm – Alcoa Municipal Bldg
- Next Library Board Meeting – 10 February 2026, 5:30 pm, Sharon Lawson Room

#### **Motion to Adjourn:**

**Dexter Stewart made a motion to adjourn. Dawn Reagan seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

The next Library Board meeting will be held on 10 February 2026 at 5:30 pm, in the Sharon Lawson Room

Respectfully submitted,  
Summer Dale