

**Loudon County Library Board  
Meeting Minutes  
March 6, 2025  
Loudon Public Library**

**Call to Order:** 5:00 PM by Chair Ruth McQueen

Thanks to Kate for change of venue due to facility issues at Lenoir City

**Present:**

Trustees: Pauline Barbour, Cindy Benefield, Eileen Connolly, Eileen Reed, Brenda Lutz, Diane Strever

Absent (Excused): Beth Waldmann, Brandy Styer

Directors: Kate Brewster, Susan Dorsey, Gina Geremia, Martha Guldan, Mark Williams

Ocoee Regional Library Representative: Nikki Snyder

**Public Comment:** None

**Introductions:** Ruth McQueen introduced Eileen Reed, the new Lenoir City Trustee, and asked each in attendance to share a favorite book.

**Approval of Agenda:** Barbour moved to approve the agenda; Connolly seconded.

**Approval of Minutes:** Summarized by McQueen. Lutz moved to approve; Connolly seconded.

**Ocoee River Regional Report:** Nikki highlighted training opportunities for trustees and directors.

**County Liaison:** No report.

**Library Director's Reports:** Attached. Each director shared briefly.

**Loudon:** Kate announced her retirement at the end of June. She shared about her service to Seniors especially with technology issues and how she recently helped a patron avoid a \$40K scam. Commissioner Waller introduced himself to Kate by saying he isn't spending a dollar on libraries. An educational opportunity exists for all our commissioners to know the importance of our work and the broad variety of services provided. In many cases the library fills multiple social service needs.

**Lenoir City:** Susan shared that logistical issues still exist, but the diagnostics for repair have been completed and hopes they are made soon. She thanked Ruth and Robin McNabb for

work with warming centers.

**Philadelphia:** Mark still has Thorndike issues. He went to the elementary school twice for Read Across America.

**Greenback:** Martha reported that there will be an increase in her MOE. For 2024 there was an increase of 68 families requesting library cards and in the first 3 months of 2025 there have been 62 additional signups.

**Tellico Village:** Gina shared they have had 12 presenters thus far in 2025 with an Appalachian Trail hiker coming in next. They are gearing up for the boating license testing. She has moved collections to maximize space and provide a more enjoyable experience.

**Standing Committee Reports:** None.

With Kate's impending retirement a nominating committee needs to be formed. The chair serves as an ex-officio member.

**Board Members Update:**

Both Pauline Barbour's and Cindy Benefield's terms expire June 2025. Replacements need to be found.

**National Library Week and National Volunteer Week:**

Ruth pointed out that National Library Week (April 6- April 12, 2025) and National Volunteer Week (April 20- April 26) are approaching and requested photographs and stories to highlight both so we can request media publicity.

**Library Needs:**

McQueen addressed the funding issues and plans to go back to the budget committee meeting in April to advocate for more funding. She asked directors for specific needs for each of the libraries. While Loudon County is the second fastest growing Tennessee County and has the fourth highest income, it sadly ranks 95th in per capita spending on libraries. Neighboring Roane County ranks 41st.

**Director Evaluations:**

Benefield confirmed with trustees an evaluation schedule for director evaluations.

Evaluations are meant to be painless, positive, and productive. The evaluations are intended to highlight director strengths and provide opportunity for growth. Visits will be completed by March 28.

**Other Business:**

Imagination Library turns 20 this year. Although the Dolly Parton Foundation pays half the cost, it is up to counties to provide the rest of the funding. The actual cost to provide these books from birth to age 5 is \$25 per year. The Loudon County Education Foundation has been paying approximately \$2200 for this resource to be provided. Michelle Lewis has spearheaded the Angel Tree concept with locations in 10 local businesses. Envelopes are provided for residents to help sponsor this early literacy effort.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.