

**THE LIBRARY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

January 8, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

Meeting Room 2m.020

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

C. Paul Brockwell Jr., *chair*, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He noted the presence of a quorum assembled on site. The following members were in attendance:

C. Paul Brockwell Jr., *chair*  
Blythe Ann Scott, *vice chair*  
Laura L.L. Blevins  
Peter E. Broadbent Jr.  
L. Preston Bryant Jr.  
Dr. Robert L. Canida II  
Suzette Denslow  
Carol Finerty (Virtual)  
Barbara Vines Little  
Dr. Shelley Viola Murphy  
Dr. Mary Prentice  
Lana Real

Maya Castillo and Leonard Tengco were absent. Due to technical issues with unmuting, Ms. Finerty did not participate in any recorded votes. The Board granted unanimous consent to approve virtual participation for two members: Lana Real, who need to take her child to a doctor's appointment and Carol Finerty, who reported professional obligations prevented her from attending in person.

Mr. Brockwell opened by sharing a video for the Board that was a highlight reel of the yearlong celebration of the Library's 200th anniversary. The video was produced under the leadership of the Library's marketing and communications department and was a great reminder of the incredible events hosted throughout the year.

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Brockwell asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Suzette Denslow moved; and Peter E. Broadbent Jr. seconded. The Board approved the agenda unanimously on a voice vote.

**III. WELCOME TO VISITORS AND STAFF**

Mr. Brockwell thanked Board members and staff for their service and engagement. He shared the excellent news that the Governor made two appointments to the Board. He has reappointed Vice Chair Blythe Ann Scott and appointed Dr. Mary Prentice. He offered a special welcome to Dr. Prentice who was attending her first meeting, and he noted she joins the growing Lynchburg caucus of the Board, which includes Dr. Canida and Preston Bryant, an honorary lifetime resident of Lynchburg. Dr. Prentice teaches foreign

policy as an associate professor of government in the Helms School at Liberty University. She earned a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Florida and holds a Master of Science in Library Science from Clarion University in Pennsylvania. Those are just a few of the highlights from her impressive resume, and Mr. Brockwell shared she has already demonstrated enthusiasm and energy for the Library's work.

He also welcomed visitors, members of the Library's Executive Management Team, and special guests including Conley Edwards, president of the Friends of the Virginia State Archives; Amanda Jackson, president of the executive committee of the Virginia Public Library Directors Association and director of Chesapeake Public Libraries; Abigail Gump, assistant attorney general and Board Counsel; Emily Anne Gullickson, deputy secretary of education and member of the Librarian Search Committee; and Dennis Clark, the next Librarian of Virginia.

#### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dennis Clark, incoming Librarian of Virginia, offered a brief greeting to the Board. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as the next leader of the Library and shared his excitement for the opportunity to lead one of the finest libraries and archives into its third century. His first day will be Thursday, January 25.

#### **V. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES**

Mr. Brockwell asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Hearing none, Preston Bryant moved the approval of the minutes; Blythe Ann Scott seconded. The Board approved the minutes on a voice vote. Dr. Prentice abstained from the vote since she had not yet been appointed and present at the meeting.

#### **VI. INFORMATION ITEMS**

##### **A. Reports from Other Organizations**

1. Conley Edwards, president of the Friends of the Virginia State Archives, provided an update on the organization's activities. The Friends hosted the 23rd annual Slatten Lecture Program Sat., November 4, featuring Judy Russell, a nationally known attorney and genealogical expert, who offered four presentations throughout the day. During 2023, the Friends have expended \$20,450 for the acquisition of genealogical and family history materials for the Library. The Friends contributed \$500 to the Library of Virginia Foundation to support activities during Archives Month in October. The Friends are also working with Library staff to plan the 30th annual Straight to the Source program on March 15, 2024 featuring Lydia Neuroth, the project manager for Virginia Untold.
2. Amanda Jackson, director of Chesapeake Public Libraries and president of the executive committee of the Virginia Public Library Directors Association, shared her gratitude for the opportunity to speak and offered remarks on how librarians are drawn to the profession to help people and have a positive impact in their communities. Ms. Jackson shared the last few years have been very challenging as libraries adapted to the pandemic and increased demand for services. More recently, libraries are also dealing with First Amendment/censorship challenges.

She thanked the Board for their service and for volunteering to support public libraries throughout the state. She said she remains hopeful because of volunteer groups like the Board who work to ensure libraries can continue to be vital community places, and she is incredibly thankful for the increase in state aid recently passed. Ms. Jackson also shared her gratitude for Lisa Varga, the executive director of the Virginia Library Association, who recently received national recognition for her leadership. Finally, she offered her appreciation for the Library Development and Networking Division's work to help public libraries across the Commonwealth through resources and training.

**B. Committee/Division Reports:** Mr. Brockwell moved to committee reports:

- **Education, Outreach, and Research Services Committee:** Dr. Canida, committee chair, recognized Ashley Ramey Craig, community engagement and partnerships specialist, to provide a brief report. LVA on the Go concluded its inaugural and popular run with a visit to Russell County. In December, the Indigenous Perspectives exhibition opened and marks the culmination of three-year collaboration between the Library and 11 federally and state recognized tribes in Virginia. She invited all to enjoy tours either before or after lunch. Ms. Craig also shared updates on social media followership growth: followers increased 33% on Facebook, 14% on Instagram; and 454% on LinkedIn. Followers on X, formerly known as Twitter, plateaued. Overall, the Library exceeded 6.2 million ad impressions statewide through its multichannel advertising program. Mr. Brockwell added his appreciation for the Indigenous Perspectives opening reception and thanked the Foundation for securing support from Amazon for the exhibit. He also mentioned a billboard is currently promoting the exhibit on Interstate 95. Lastly, he shared that Board members should have received a save the date for the Strong Men and Women in Virginia History event on Feb. 22, and he noted that this timing was a change from previous years when the event was held in June. Additionally, this year's event will return to the downtown Marriott, and he asked members to let him know if they do not receive an invitation to the event.
- **Archival, Collections, and Records Management Services Committee:** Mr. Broadbent, committee chair, recognized Kathy Jordan and Greg Crawford to share updates from the committee. Ms. Jordan provided updates on the Library's partnership with Ancestry.com to digitize records as well as the NEH grant project to digitize World War II separation notices from the U.S. military. Progress on the Ancestry project has been proceeding well, and they have completed scanning half the Virginia personal property tax records, which encompasses 2,500 reels of film. The Library is preparing to ship the second half of that film. They completed digitizing births and death records from Richmond, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, 1897-1912. They are also beginning to index these materials and conduct quality control. They are working to digitize city directories from 60 localities from the Library's collections. Backstage Library Works is nearing completion of digitizing the World War II Separation Notices project, which was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This encompasses 70 records center cartons. The effort to transcribe these records has begun, and the team is planning outreach efforts

to different stakeholder groups to participating in transcription. Ms. Jordan also shared she and Librarian Sandy Treadway presented a proposal to the Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission in October to create a large crowdsourcing project to transcribe legislative petitions from 1776-1786, to create data and transcriptions that will improve access to the collections and engage residents around Virginia in ways that help them better understand what was happening in their community during this historical era. The commission was very supportive of the project, and there is a component partnership with George Mason University to create a website from the findings. Support from the commission will be dependent on the final State Budget.

State Archivist Greg Crawford provided an update on the diseased microfilm project and changes to the workflow with the Library's digitization vendor. In February, the Library hopes to send an additional 1,500 reels. The new process should be a lot more efficient for this project. The team is also working on a pilot project with Backstage to provide some data entry for reels that will help make the process more efficient. If this slows down the duplication process, the team will reevaluate. Mr. Crawford shared the Library submitted another request for \$300,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the Virginia Newspaper Project to support reformatting a wide variety of regions and cultural newspapers in Virginia. Mr. Crawford ended by sharing about the Virginia Untold project, whose success over 10 years has brought to life the stories of free and enslaved people in Virginia. The project manager is currently focused on contacting circuit court clerks around the Commonwealth who have original registers to see if they would like to collaborate on scanning and indexing locally held registers. Any records in the Library's collection have already been digitized. Six localities have transferred registers for scanning this year, and we are reaching out to 15 remaining localities. Circuit courts have been pleased to collaborate with the Library on this effort. A brief period of questions and discussion followed.

- **Legislative and Finance Committee:** Mr. Bryant, committee chair, reflected on the positive news from the Governor's introduced budget, which included increases in state aid, money for the Library's IT needs, and capital planning dollars for renovation plans. Mr. Bryant said that economists are projecting a mild recession in the coming year, which makes the proposed budget exceptionally good news given the overall climate on spending. Dan Hinderliter, deputy of finance and administrative services, echoed that sentiment. He reviewed the Library's finances. Through the end of November, the Library's budget remained on track. He explained variances in the spend rate on general funds appear faster primarily due to timing of state aid and payroll disbursements. Additionally, the Circuit Court Records Preservation program funds are being spent at a greater rate over last fiscal year, but the Library has strong reserves earmarked for this program should the appropriation need to increase. Mr. Hinderliter highlighted smaller impacts on the Library appropriations like the increase in the minimum wage, pay raises and the worker's compensation rate. He expressed gratitude that the Governor included an additional \$3.5 million in state aid in his proposed budget as well as \$1.4 million for continuing

IT needs at the Library. The General Assembly turnover of roughly 40 percent new members has, so far, resulted in fewer bills to track, which are primarily related to appropriations and one FOIA bill. The deadline to pre-file bills is Jan. 10, and staff will monitor for additional bills.

Mr. Hinderliter also reported the Library is also working on an updated MOU with the Foundation to reflect the Foundation's contribution to the Librarian's salary. On capital planning, Mr. Hinderliter shared that the Governor's proposed budget included the Library as one of only three projects authorized for pre-planning dollars. This is a positive development, and he thanked everyone who served on the joint task force on space planning. Mr. Brockwell shared that Deputy Secretary Emily Anne Gullickson wrote to express how their team loves the Library's work and is very happy to support these efforts. He echoed his appreciation for her partnership.

- **Public Library Development Committee:** Blythe Ann Scott, committee chair, recognized Nan Carmack, director of the Library Development and Networking Division, to provide highlights on the division's strategic planning survey results, Find It VA resource usage data and overall library use data. She also shared information about recent dissolution and unions in the state's public library community: King and Queen County has withdrawn from the Pamunkey Regional Library, and Cumberland County's library has been absorbed into the Central Virginia Regional Library. A brief discussion followed.
- **Library of Virginia Foundation:** Pia Trigiani, president of the Library of Virginia Foundation Board, shared updates on the work that the Foundation does to support the Library through applying for grants to fund projects and general fundraising to support exhibitions and programs. The Foundation's Executive Committee is working with the Library Board's Executive Committee on revisions to the MOU. Members of the Board have received a solicitation to give to a fund that honor Librarian of Virginia Sandra Treadway on the occasion of her retirement. All board members are encouraged to make a gift as able and to attend the reception the Foundation is helping host on January 18. She reported that to date the Foundation has raised about 10 percent more than it had projected. The Literary Awards were successful this fall, and the staff have been working with a consultant on a campaign planning study that will be completed by the end of January. Finally, Ms. Trigiani was excited to report the Virginia Shop will be reopening in a new location in the Capitol following the completion of renovations.

Executive Director of the Foundation, Scott Dodson, then thanked all members of the Board and the Friends of the Virginia State Archives for their gifts in support of the Foundation's work. During the current fiscal year, the Foundation has raised around \$1.1 million, and the team continues to aim higher each year. He offered highlights from the first half of the year: the Foundation has raised approximately \$170,000 for endowments, \$400,000 for conservation and acquisitions, and close to \$140,000 for program and exhibitions. This year, the Foundation has funded close to \$300,000 in library programming. The Foundation's endowment investment account crossed the

\$5 million threshold, which was an exciting development. He shared that is in part due to the Foundation Board voting to lower the threshold for endowed funds from \$100,000 to \$25,000 to encourage conversations around multi-year pledges to be used for areas of donor passion such as conservation and education. He highlighted several proposed endowed funds for conservation and one to support expanding the state art collection. The Foundation has helped submit around \$170,000 in grant applications, and around \$500-600,000 in additional grant applications will go out in the coming weeks. He thanked the Library staff for their strong partnership on the applications. Mr. Dodson reported the Foundation is still seeking funding for this year's internship program and the Brown Teacher Institute. He highlighted recent cultivation events including a reception in Charlottesville, hosted by Foundation board members Shareef Taboub and Jeff Dreyfuss. On March 13, the Foundation will host a Collections Up Close event at the Library focused on maps. He shared around 120 people have RSVP'ed for the January 18 retirement reception for Dr. Treadway. On February 7, the Foundation and Black History Museum will host a reception to honor Tilt Creative, which recently donated background information and research from their documentary *Birth of a Planet*. Mr. Brockwell thanked him for the excellent report and work to help honor Dr. Treadway with the Third Century Fund.

### **C. Report of the Librarian of Virginia**

Mr. Brockwell shared that Dr. Treadway has been away on the trip of a lifetime for a family reunion in Australia. For most of this trip, she was often a day ahead of the East Coast, Mr. Brockwell reported, and that her assessments from the future were that tomorrow is pretty bright. Before she departed for this trip, she recorded a video report for the Board, which was shared with the Board.

In her message, Dr. Treadway shared her gratitude for the opportunity to lead the Library of Virginia for the past sixteen years. When she came into this role, the economy and resulting drop in state funding resulted in challenging financial times. She is proud of the Library for making tough, but strategic choices that allowed staff to make the most of a challenging economic situation and to position the Library for success in the future.

The celebration of the Library's 200th anniversary has been a rewarding and exciting capstone to her career, and she encouraged the Board and staff to continue to identify opportunities to eliminate or ease barriers for the public to access resources and understand the Library's collections. She thanked Board members for their support over the years and expressed her gratitude to the Executive Management Team for their dedication and work to advance the Library's mission. She extended her thanks to the Librarian Search Committee for their commitment of time to the search and for choosing a great successor, which has helped make it easier for her to step back with the peace of mind the Library will be in excellent hands.

After her report concluded, Mr. Brockwell shared that Dr. Treadway recorded these remarks in the Library's new digital studio, which was built with support from the Foundation. He invited anyone interested to receive a tour of the space following the meeting. He also noted that tributes for Dr. Treadway have been pouring in from every

corner of the state. The Governor surprised her last month with a proclamation declaring December 15, 2023 Sandra Gioia Treadway Day; additionally, members of the Virginia General Assembly have drafted a commending resolution to honor Dr. Treadway. Mr. Brockwell reported he anticipates more honors will follow and has been working on related projects.

#### **D. Report of the Chair**

Mr. Brockwell commented that the fall was a very eventful one for the Library. At the October Literary Awards, the Board honored four outstanding individuals through a revival of the honorary Patron of Letters degree during a special evening.

Shortly afterward, the Librarian Search Committee completed its work which culminated in the announcement of Dennis Clark as the next Librarian of Virginia. He also thanked the members of the Search Committee – Peter Broadbent, Preston Bryant, Robert Canida, Emily Anne Gullickson, and Blythe Ann Scott – for their hard work, as well as Vanessa Anderson and Taylor Melton for providing additional assistance to the committee. He also expressed his appreciation to the Foundation’s Executive Committee for helping secure a top-tier recruit to the position through their engagement in the process and support. Currently, Mr. Brockwell reported that he is working on a historical memo since this was the first national search conducted for this position given the history of its selection over the years, and he hopes that his written report may be a helpful guide for future searches.

While this is not required, Mr. Brockwell shared that he felt it would be a good practice to have the full board record a vote to affirm the work of the Librarian Search and Executive committees this fall. Ms. Scott moved the Board vote to affirm and ratify the actions of the Executive and Search Committees to appoint Dennis Clark as Librarian of Virginia; Dr. Canida seconded. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Brockwell reported that Mr. Clark will start on Thursday, January 25, and that staff have been working diligently to ensure a seamless transition on day one. Major goals for the year include working with senior leadership and the Foundation to begin the next strategic planning process, continue working on the space planning, and spending a good portion of time building relationships internally and with friends across the Commonwealth.

Finally, Mr. Brockwell shared that Dr. Treadway’s retirement has initiated a season of honors for her outstanding career at the Library. To add to that, the Board is planning a special event on January 18, 2024 in partnership with the Foundation. At this time, pursuant to the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711, Ms. Scott moved the Library Board enter a closed meeting for the following purposes.

1. *Under subsection A.11, to discuss or consideration of honorary degrees or special awards; and*
2. *Under subsection A.8, to consult with legal counsel employed or retained by the Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel*

Mr. Broadbent seconded the motion, and the Board passed it unanimously on a roll call vote: Ayes – Mr. Brockwell, Ms. Scott, Ms. Blevins, Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Bryant, Dr. Canida, Ms. Denslow, Ms. Little, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Prentice; Ms. Real; Nos – None; Abstentions – None. Mr. Brockwell asked the Board for unanimous consent to include Deputy Secretary Gullickson, Mr. Clark and Ms. Trigiani in the closed session. Hearing no objection, they were invited to remain.

Once the Board returned from closed session, Ms. Scott moved that the Board certify by roll call vote that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open business meeting requirements, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were, here, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body. Mr. Broadbent seconded the motion. Mr. Brockwell asked if any member believed there was a departure from the requirement of the clauses Ms. Scott cited in the motion. Hearing none, the Board unanimously voted to certify the closed session was conducted in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act: Ayes – Mr. Brockwell, Ms. Scott, Ms. Blevins, Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Bryant, Dr. Canida, Ms. Denslow, Ms. Little, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Prentice; Ms. Real; Nos – None; Abstentions – None.

Finally, he shared that a timeline for 2024 nominations for the honorary Patron of Letters degree will be announced soon; he also looks forward to the April 15 Board meeting in Norfolk, Va., and thanked Blythe Ann Scott for her help planning this meeting.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Brockwell presented a revised Policy on Electronic Participation in Library Board Meetings. On the advice of counsel, he shared that amendments are recommended to ensure a new criterion for remote participation is included for members who reside more than sixty (60) miles from the meeting location identified in the meeting notice. Additional edits include simplifying the process for approving virtual participation from a Board vote to allowing the Chair or Vice Chair in his/her absence to approve requests made for remote participation. Suzette Denslow moved the approval of the amended policy; Dr. Shelley Viola Murphy seconded. Hearing no questions or discussion, Mr. Brockwell called the question, which Board approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Brockwell shared a commending resolution distributed to members that will be considered today in a motion from the vice chair:

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Sandra “Sandy” Gioia Treadway is a distinguished historian who has preserved Virginia’s heritage and strengthened educational outreach to communities throughout the Commonwealth; and*

***WHEREAS**, Sandy Treadway joined the Library of Virginia staff in 1978 as an associate editor of publications after earning a doctorate in history from the University of Virginia; and*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Treadway progressively assumed greater responsibilities and leadership roles, co-editing major scholarly publications like the history of the Library of Virginia and as a founding editor of the Dictionary of Virginia Biography; and*

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Treadway served as deputy librarian for eleven years prior to her appointment as Librarian of Virginia in 2007, advancing a clear and strong vision for expanding access to and awareness of the Library's comprehensive collections and helping patrons understand and unlock powerful stories of everyday Virginians throughout the Commonwealth's history; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Treadway will retire as the ninth Librarian of Virginia after sixteen years of outstanding service, ably managing The Library's collections documenting the history, culture, and government of the Commonwealth and demonstrating exemplary leadership while elevating the Library and its reputation; and

**WHEREAS**, Sandy Treadway has overseen The Library's participation in all major historical commemorations, including the anniversary of the founding of Jamestown in 2007, the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812, and the American Evolution Commemoration in 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, Sandy Treadway ably and admirably led the Library through challenging economic and financial times, making tough, yet strategic, decisions to address devastating budget reductions in the wake of the 2008 recession, and working to position the Library to be able to regain momentum when economic pressures eased; and

**WHEREAS**, Sandy Treadway has been tireless in encouraging and empowering Library of Virginia staff to find new and creative ways to make the collections more accessible to wider audiences, through popular crowdsourced transcription and indexing project, Making History; the Virginia Untold project, which provides digital access to hard-to-find records documenting the lives of enslaved and free Black Virginians prior to 1865; and the Library's Uncommonwealth blog; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Treadway served on the Virginia Women's Monument Commission and partnered with its members to research, plan, raise funds, and build an impressive monument to Virginia women from across four centuries; and

**WHEREAS**, Sandy Treadway has overseen plans for the Library to celebrate its 200th anniversary, making the most of this milestone as an opportunity to increase awareness of the Library's mission and to engage with Virginians across the Commonwealth and to introduce new audiences to the Library's rich collections; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Treadway has been an invaluable advocate and a tireless ambassador for the Library, creating an enduring legacy for libraries and historical research in Virginia, mentoring and inspiring countless board members and library professionals while building a dedicated and highly motivated team that will continue to serve well the residents of the Commonwealth; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Library Board on this 8th day of January 2024 that the Library Board recognizes Dr. Sandra Gioia Treadway on the occasion of her retirement for her dedicated service to the Library of Virginia and her many contributions to the Library's success; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting, and that a copy of it be given to Dr. Sandra Gioia Treadway as a token of the Board's gratitude for her service to the Library and to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Ms. Scott moved the following:

1. That the Library Board name Dr. Sandra Gioia Treadway as Librarian of Virginia Emerita upon her retirement from state service;

2. *That she be granted volunteer status and continued access to her Library email;*
3. *That the Library Board award the honorary Patron of Letters Degree to Dr. Sandra Gioia Treadway; and*
4. *That the board approve the commending resolution as presented.*

Mr. Broadbent seconded; hearing no discussion or questions, the Board voted unanimously voted to approve the motion as presented.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Brockwell adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m. He reminded everyone of the next meeting on April 15, 2024 in Norfolk and encouraged everyone to enjoy lunch together, check out the new exhibition and the Digital Studio. He also shared his hope that he will see many members on January 18 for Dr. Treadway's retirement reception.