

March 5, 2024

Friends of the Arlington Public Library (FOAL) Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members:

Present: Claire Christian, Judy Kindell, Rob Hizon, Todd Ludeke, Brittany Robertson, Kate Summers, Natalia Lanteigne, Laura Porter

Absent: Jamie Krovontka, Marty Pippins, Jane Posner, Kelly Fado

Others Present:

Library: Diane Kresh and Peter Petruski

Other: Merri Horn, Amy Miller

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President, Claire Christian

I. February 12, 2024 board meeting minutes

MOTION: Judy Kindell moved to approve the February minutes as amended; motion was approved unanimously.

II. Library report

Diane remarks: Cherrydale event was great; very appreciative of our efforts. Glencarlyn event is coming up in September and the Jesmyn Ward meet and greet is a go for May.

Pete remarks: discussion of the Jesmyn Ward event. Programming team notes that Jesmyn is available for 30 minutes for a special meet-and-greet with FOAL members and the suggestion is to end the event 15-20 minutes before the Arlington Reads start time of 6 p.m. Kate Summers noted that this will be a special members-only ticketed event, with the price of admission including a copy of her book + light fare and a drink. The library will double-check if there will be any other restrictions.

Pete and Diane will check to see if reserving seats at the public event for FOAL members would be ok. Kate agreed to organize a small committee to flesh out further details for the event and reach out to potential restaurants.

Pete stated the recipient of the Summer Reading "Read-for-a-cause" donation will be the Outdoor Lab. The library chose the Outdoor Lab because they are owned and operated by the nonprofit Arlington Outdoor Education Association and the Lab provides hands-on outdoor education to more than 9,000 Arlington students annually.

III. Finance Update

\$1,845,539 in ACF, \$178,630 in two bank accounts. Last quarter statement from ACF, we made \$151K in interest.

FOAL Board will discuss financials in an executive session after this meeting and will then set up a time to meet with ACF moving forward. Claire will send Pete and Diane an update on what was discussed.

Diane provided an update on the MOU/MOA document between FOAL and the library. She noted that the county attorney was considering FOAL's suggested changes and

would need to approve them. Diane thanked the board for the extra work put into the budget and MOU/MOA because we mutually benefit.

Pete reported that we had unusually high sales in February across the bookstores. Central store in particular looks like a good bookstore!

IV. Partnership with Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center

Pete's team and other staff will work on this project.

Claire spoke with her contact who sponsored event last month and they noted the possibility of an event to kick off the project.

Diane had a comprehensive meeting with staff who deal with teens and teen issues on March 5, 2024 and she will share meeting minutes with FOAL. The hope is for the library to be more available to teens. Diane talked about including teens in more volunteer programs, since pilot programs for teen volunteers have been successful.

V. Donations and membership report

Amy reported:

- We had 13 donations totaling \$1,786.15
- We had 37 new members/renewals totaling \$1,185.00
- We have a total of 1,029 FOAL members
- Two upcoming events for Lifetime Members to pick up their membership card and thank you gift: Sat., March 16th at 1 p.m. at the Shirlington branch and Sat., April 6th at 10:30 a.m at the Aurora Hills branch.
- We had a successful social media campaign to celebrate 1,000 FOAL members. Great engagement on Instagram.
- April 3, 2024 National Library Giving Day – Amy to promote with email blast + social media. Claire suggested several emails go out to promote further.

Brittany Robertson reported on FOAL's participation at the Feel the Heritage Festival. She said that it was a well-attended event and we brought about 4 boxes of books from library, selling ~108 books. Children's books went very quickly. Brittany wants to make sure we have more children's books in the future.

Many people who came to the table had no idea who FOAL is. Call to action: when we go into spaces where people don't know who FOAL is – let's have more informational material. In addition, Brittany would like FOAL to participate in this event next year.

A discussion of tabling at farmers markets took place. Claire and Kate said that FOAL participated in these mainly during COVID. Kate mentioned that while farmers markets are great, we need to set our expectations. We never made more than \$1,200; but it is more about awareness raising. Other events to look into:

- Merri suggested the Arlington County Fair; however, it is a lot of work and you have to staff all days/all hours
- Other options to research: Columbia Pike Blues Festival, Clarendon and Neighborhood Days.

VI. County Board advocacy next steps

Claire stated that we are entering into next phase of budgeting. Claire will sign us up for a speaking slot at one of the open sessions in April. She will send out via email talking points that will be made. She also suggested that perhaps we sign up for multiple slots to get more talking points in. Kate suggested that FOAL board members attend to stand in solidarity with Claire with their t-shirts on. Diane's work session is on April 2nd.

VII. DPT updates

Merri Horn stated that things are going well and that we are still getting donations. The last 5-6 days have been busy. Merri requested that for events where FOAL wants specific books, the DPT needs more advance notice. It is easier if the request is a category that we already collect separately. For categories we don't separate specifically, such as the African American books for the Feel the Heritage festival, two months plus would be a better lead time.

Joe sent out numbers as of end of February. As of 3/1 there were 1,144 boxes of books collected: about 1,600 boxes of books for the sale. 33 boxes of puzzles and games.

VIII. Book sale report

All vendors are in place and on track.

Marty recommends that the Board and the Library immediately establish book sale dates for all of 2025 and 2026 to alleviate conflicts between author events and the book sale dates to help maximize book sale revenues.

The Fall 2024 book sale will take place October 3-6, 2024. Book sale dates suggested for 2025 are as follows and Pete will run these dates by the programming team to confirm their availability.

- Spring sale: April 2-6, 2025
- Fall sale: Oct 22-26, 2025

IX. AOB

Kate suggested that we participate in a fundraiser with a local restaurant where 20% of proceeds for a night out go back to FOAL. Goal is to do this after the book sale so that we can use the book sale to hand out flyers and publicize.

In April, Diane will hold two talks on her life in books and book collecting, one at Central and one at Shirlington. Will note that she gets many books from the FOAL sales. Diane will send verification on the dates.

Pete let us know that in 2 months renovation of staff space at central library will take place. Will impact ability to process donations for a week.

X. Next board meeting

The next board meeting will be on Monday, April 1, 2024 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Board Decisions

- Approval of February minutes as amended.

Action Items

- Establish a sub-committee to research and execute on an event for Jesmyn Ward.
- Create rack card for placement in FOAL bookstores and for use at all FOAL events.
- Look into tabling at farmers markets and other events.
- Start a calendar of events for FOAL tabling/selling of books.

FOAL Board Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Executive session: 8:04 p.m.

- Claire and Natalia recommended that the FOAL Board consider hiring Marty Pippins to assist with preparing some financial documents.
- MOTION: Judy Kindell moved to approve the hiring of Marty Pippins. Kate seconded; motion was approved unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Amy Miller