

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 25, 2018
Main Library Board Room

Board members in attendance were Bob Brown, Annette Herrington, Marian Berry, Nancy Rousseau, Sophia Said, Sarah French, John Bush, Stephanie Gibson Branton, Andre Guerrero, Sheila Wright, and Mike Berg. Kelly Moss and Marilynn Porter were absent.

Staff members in attendance were Nate Coulter, Lisa Donovan, Jackie Patel, David Stricklin, Madelyn Ganos, Elizabeth Newbern, Linda Ellis, Carol Coffey, Adam Bearden, Jo Spencer, Cathy Sanders, Tameka Lee, Nathan James, and Scott Kirkhuff.

Action Items

1. Minutes

Berry moved to approve the December minutes with corrections. Rousseau seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Financial Report

Herrington reported total assets as of December 31, 2017 are \$114,947,700, liabilities of \$4,749,047, and total equity of \$110,198,654. Salary expenses for 2017 were down 1.7% from the budget. Income and tax collections are up 2.6% over last year. Total income is up 22% over January of the previous year.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Herrington moved to accept the financial report and file it for audit. Wright seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Amendment to Finance Policy for Capital Assets Thresholds

Herrington reported that the Finance Committee met with auditors at the end of the past year who recommended the Capital Assets Threshold be increased. Currently CALS capitalizes expenditures greater than \$1,000 with an estimated useful life of one year or over. The auditors recommended that CALS change the threshold to \$5,000. Herrington notes that this will smooth out areas of the audit.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Herrington moved to approve the amendment to the accounting policy on capital asset thresholds. Wright seconded the move and the motion passed unanimously.

4. General Fund Budget Revision

Coulter reported that the proposed general fund budget from the December meeting provided funds to hire in-house janitorial staff at the ASI for 2018. Since those discussions, CALS has learned that the vendor CALS has been using to provide these janitorial services contends that its contract with CALS runs through the end of 2018. Therefore, the budget lines for staff salaries and benefits with the contract housekeeping will be adjusted to reflect this change.

Herrington moved to approve the revision to the general fund budget. Wright seconded the move and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Literary Festival Budget Revision

Coulter reported that in an internal budget meeting held the previous Friday (January 19) it had come to the attention of the Finance Department that there was an inaccuracy on the income line. There was \$5,000 left out that increases the amount of money available to the Literary Festival for expenditures from \$17,000 to \$23,000. In another unrelated change there were some changes to expenditure numbers available for WITS (Writers in the Schools) program.

Bush moved to approve the revision to the Literary Festival budget. French seconded the move and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Approval of Update to Board Policy 401

Coffey presented an update to Board Policy 401 on circulation and fees. She noted that these changes were primarily for clarity, to remove gendered language, and to remove references to obsolete technologies no longer available through CALS, such as VHS tapes, audiobook cassettes, and CD-ROMs.

Bush moved to approve the changes to Board Policy 401. Herrington seconded the move and the motion passed unanimously.

7. Approval of State Library Allocation for MLS Grant

Donovan asked the board to approve the application for an Arkansas State Library (ASL) scholarship for Main Library employee Nate Coulter, who currently serves as Executive Director and is working on his MLIS at the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee.

Rousseau moved to approve the request for the ASL scholarship for Coulter. Guerrero seconded the move and the motion passed unanimously.

Information Items

1. Director's Report

Coulter reported that the recent Tech Cards announcement, held at the Main Branch on January 19, has been widely reported and supported in local news. He added that this type of "free advertising" for CALS is incredibly helpful.

He noted that tax revenues in 2017 were stable and revenues for operations were up 3%.

Coulter also noted that four renovated libraries have re-opened, including Dee Brown and Fletcher. Sanders has recently closed to begin the move to its new building and is currently scheduled to reopen in March. Maumelle is also scheduled to reopen in the next few months.

He reported that circulation is going down throughout CALS. He said it was unclear if it was a move towards digital and away from print, or something else. However, he said this is not the trend for all libraries in the country. Circulation is stable at many libraries across the country, some of whom have developed a "Neighborhoods" model for displaying their books that resembles those seen in Barnes and Noble or Books-a-Million Stores. This model organizes books by topics and allows patrons to browse.

Coulter also emphasized that there should be a push to use the newly formed Department of Marketing and Resource Development, resulting from a merger of the Marketing and Communications Departments, to tell more of our own stories.

He introduced Nathan James, Digital Innovations and Technology Manager, to talk about the website redesign. James showed mock-ups of the website and explained that the design was cleaner and consistent with standard websites seen online today. He introduced the concept of mega-menus to the Board and explained that this helped them design a page to connect all CALS sites together and still make it easy to navigate. Kirkhuff added that the new website helped facilitate a better network for patrons to share their own thoughts on CALS within the larger community and have that promoted through CALS.

2. Committees Report

Berry suggested that the Board form a marketing committee upon the suggestion of Sanders. French, Rousseau, and Brown agreed to join as members.

3. Building Report

Bearden reported that Maumelle was on schedule to launch but the Sherwood location, Sanders, was currently waiting on a delayed carpet installation. He said that CALS was in the middle of an Energy audit that would help finalize the scope for the energy system. He added that the Parking Deck's finish out deal with the University of Arkansas Little Rock was about to get underway. Coulter added that this project would bring \$80,000 of revenue to CALS. Bearden reported that a project to install a Nexus Coffee & Creative shop on the first floor of Main was in the midst of budget pricing. He also added that Main finally has a recycling program as of this month.

4. Statistical Report

Coffey reported circulation and building attendance statistics continued to be down, while our program attendance saw a nice increase over December 2016. She added that building attendance was down 10%, but she noted there may be problems with our people counters. Coffey said that CALS is expected to do a trial of a new kind of counter in a few branches later this year that will hopefully give better and more consistent numbers. She stated that Maumelle's closure is affecting all numbers, especially circulation and attendance. Coffey added that because Sanders is closed for their move, numbers will likely continue to decline. Systemwide programming numbers were up. We presented 17% more programs than we did in December 2016, and program attendance was up 8%. Children's and Young Adult programming seems to be driving that growth.

5. Communications & PR Report

Lee stated that the Tech Card announcement, hosted at Main last Friday had gone well. Numerous outlets, including THV 11 and KARK 4, covered the event. She also said that Fiction & Fact registration closes February 5. . Lee said that the Ron Robinson Theater is doing another \$2 movie series in February starting on February 6 called Love is Love. She announced that there would be a Darragh Lecture called News and Fake News led by Rex Nelson taking place at the Ron Robinson Theater on Thursday, February 15, that will be free and open to the public.

6. Butler Center Report

Stricklin announced the Butler Center's first Arkansas Sounds event was a successful collaboration with the Arkansas Times, the first Central Arkansas Music Awards, with a sold-out show in Ron Robinson. He said that this month the Arkansas Sounds series would pay tribute to True Soul Records at the Ron Robinson Theater on Friday, February 23rd. Stricklin said February's Legacies & Lunch speaker will be Charles Stewart, talking on the 7th of the month in the Darragh Center about the 25th anniversary of the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame and the new book published by Butler Center Books. He added that Sounds in the Stacks would be at Rooker on February 15th at 6:30, featuring Kelley Hurt and Chris Parker, vocal-and-piano duo. Stricklin announced that the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture (EOA) had been visited by people from 238 countries to date. He also announced that the Butler Center has produced a new podcast called Natural Slate, which allows filmmakers to discuss their connections to Arkansas.

7. Other

The Board agreed to move the March meeting originally scheduled for Thursday, March 22nd to Thursday, March 29th in an effort to increase attendance. It was noted that some members have in the past missed the March meeting because it coincides with Spring break.

Berry thanked the staff for their respective reports and called the meeting adjourned.

President

Secretary