

Central Arkansas Library System  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
October 25, 2018  
The Bookstore at Library Square – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Meeting Room

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

Staff members in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, David Stricklin, Nathan James, Lisa Donovan, Cathy Sanders, Tameka Lee, Carol Coffey, Rosslyn Elliott, Madelyn Ganos, Polly Deems, Mark Christ, Lance Ivy, and Elizabeth Newbern.

### **Action Items**

#### **1. Approval of Minutes**

Berry asked the Board to consider the September Minutes for approval. She noted she has submitted two minor corrections.

French moved to approve the September Minutes. Rousseau seconded the motion, and the September Minutes were approved with correction.

#### **2. Financials**

Spencer, filling in for Herrington who is out sick, reported total assets as of September 30, 2018 were \$111,500,226 with net operating losses of \$2,767,694.

Porter moved to accept the financial report and file it for audit. Bush seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

#### **3. Change to Board/Personnel Policy: Retirement & PTO**

Spencer reported that CALS currently has a substantial liability in the form of paid-time off (PTO) payouts related to staff seeking retirement. Compared to other employers, including public agencies in Central Arkansas, our leave system is unusually generous in that we make no distinction between vacation time and sick time. Most full-time CALS staff accrue nine hours of PTO per pay period which adds up to 234 hours of PTO per year. Once staff accrue 480 hours of PTO, all additional hours are rolled over into an account that has been called “frozen sick leave” and is currently capped at 2080 hours. In total, this amounts to 15 months’ worth of pay. What has happened in recent staff retirements, is that staff receive payment for the 480 PTO hours and the 2080 “frozen sick leave;” the former is paid out in bi-weekly payments along with regular salaried employees’ paychecks and the latter is paid through a lump sum. Based on money owed to staff retiring this year and those eligible for retirement that have this enormous PTO reserve, this represents a 1.8 M liability for the library.

Guerrero asked if staff had the option to donate PTO to a large pool. Spencer said that they do currently have this option in the form of the Sick Leave Pool and a policy in place for people to donate PTO to other staff in need if they meet certain conditions.

In addition to the financial liability, Coulter notes that to meet the financial obligation to retiring staff also causes financial stress that makes it difficult to hire new staff to fill vacated positions and to give needed raises to everyone employed at CALS.

She said that what the administrative staff propose is to continue to allow staff to rollover accrued PTO greater than 480 hours and put that into Frozen Sick. Then the cap on Frozen Sick will be 480, all other hours will not be kept. Coulter said that this serves a dual function: to reduce the financial liability for the library and to encourage staff to use their PTO. He added that this is in keeping with similar things that other government entities do, including the Little Rock School District, The County, The City, and others. Spencer asked the Board to approve moving forward with this policy change.

Rousseau moved to accept the change to the Board/Personnel Policy regarding retirement and PTO. French seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

## **Information Items**

### **1. Marketing & Resource Development Report**

Lee said that there have been several recent events that had been garnering positive media and social media attention for CALS. This includes the blog post on our new mobile printing services, articles detailing the new coffee shop (Nexus Nook) that is under construction on the first floor, and posts on the new digital business studio at Williams.

She said that some upcoming events of note included:

- Early Voting - Dee Brown, McMath, Thompson and Williams Libraries have been selected as early voting sites for the 2018 elections; early voting at these sites began on Monday, October 22 and would continue until Saturday, November 3.
- Friends of CALS (formerly known as FOCAL) have been celebrating National Friends of Libraries Week (October 21-27).
- Basement Used Book Sale – The tri-annual used book sale, hosted by Friends of CALS, will take place in the Main Library Basement from Thursday, November 8 through Saturday, November 10.
  - Members-Only Preview Party - Saturday, October 27 at The Bookstore at Library Square from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### **2. Butler Center Report**

Stricklin reported that there were three new volumes available from Butler Center Books: *Arkansas Backstories: Quirks, Characters, and Curiosities of the Natural State*, by Joe David Rice; *Mountain Feds: Arkansas Unionists and the Peace Society*, by James Johnston; and *The Elaine Massacre and Arkansas: A Century of Atrocity and Resistance 1819 – 1919* by Guy Lancaster. He noted that CALS said goodbye to Butler Center Books Manager Rod Lorenzen, who retired after seeing more than 60 books through the publication process.

Stricklin said that coming up in November CALS has numerous events to look forward to, including:

- Wednesday, November 7 - Legacies & Lunch with Patricia Blick from the Quapaw Quarter Association, on QQA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at noon in the Darragh Center.
- Friday, November 9 - Second Friday Art Night with a new exhibition by the Arkansas League of Artists at 5:00 p.m. in Roberts.
- Friday, November 9 - Arkansas Sounds featuring the Charlie Hunter Trio at 7:00 p.m. in Ron Robinson Theater (RRT).
- Tuesday, November 13 - Sounds in the Stacks featuring blues and soul musician Stuart Baer at 6:30 p.m. in Amy Sanders Library.
- Friday, November 16 - Arkansas Sounds screening *The Last Waltz*, the Martin Scorsese concert film on Levon Helm and The Band, at 7:00 p.m. in the RRT

### 3. Building Report

Nathan James reported that the construction on Nexus Nook was on track. CALS and Nexus were waiting on mill work and flooring. If all continues as planned, they will be opening during the holiday season between Thanksgiving and New Year's. He added that the UA Little Rock parking deck finish-out is also coming along.

### 4. Statistics Report

Coffey reported that total circulation in September 2018 was up 1% over September 2017, from 216,634 to 219,415. While physical circulation was down 10% from 2017 (from 171,413 to 154,468), digital circulation rose 44% from 44,430 to 64,172. Again, Freegal drove most of that growth, although the September streaming numbers were similar to those from August. She noted that Flipster also saw another nice jump to its highest number since 2016. She said that OverDrive's circulation dropped a little from August but still rose 23% from September 2017.

Trend charts presented:

- a) Library Program Attendance – this chart shows our program attendance by audience each September since 2013, which is when we started reporting Young Adult attendance separately from Juvenile attendance. Juvenile attendance has grown steadily. Adult attendance was trending down for a while but has mostly leveled off. Young Adult attendance has been more variable but has climbed back up from a dip in 2017. Theater attendance is not included in this chart as those numbers just became available.
- b) Circulation by Format – Print book circulation has begun trending down from that of the busy months of June and July. DVD checkouts are fairly level, while digital is trending up generally but dipped from July and August's high points. CD Books and CD music checkouts continue to be stagnant. We recently adjusted the DVD checkout limit from 10 to 15, but any growth caused by that change may not show up for a month or so.
- c) Staff Assistance – this chart shows the trends in how many times we were asked Reference questions or directional questions (where's the bathroom, copier, etc.), and how many times we showed someone how to do something (using the kiosk, copier, internet, etc.) In general, the trend for these questions continues down. Based on the numbers that come from each branch, instructional assistance is the largest single non-circulation thing we do as far as direct patron interactions are concerned.

## **5. Committee Report**

There were no Committee reports presented at this meeting.

## **6. Director's Report**

Coulter reported that the Entegrity Contract was undergoing final approvals as CALS worked on securing financing. He noted that the staff is working on next year's budget. This is of some concern at the moment. Last year's budget was projected on the assumption that this year's property tax would increase 2%. That has not materialized. CALS has seen only a 0.67% increase for 2018 thus far. However, it is not a crisis. CALS is currently under budget and made cuts to create \$200,000 savings for the year.

Historically, CALS has used capital asset money from bonds to fund the collection development budget. There is nothing wrong with that from a legal standpoint but using bond debt is not the most sustainable option for funding collection development. This needs to be a part of the operation budget for stability. Coulter said that the staff and Board would discuss this in more detail at the next Board Meeting on Thursday, December 13. There will be no November meeting since the fourth Thursday of the month conflicts with the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Guerrero asked if it would be possible to go a year without putting money towards collection development. Coulter said that it was theoretically possible to do this, but it would be a last resort. Nathan James added that it is really difficult to catch up with title acquisition if you do this and you run the risk of upsetting patrons by not providing current titles. He also noted that even if we stop adding to our physical collection, downloadables take up a more substantial part of the budget than you might imagine, since in many cases it costs more for an eBook title than a physical book.

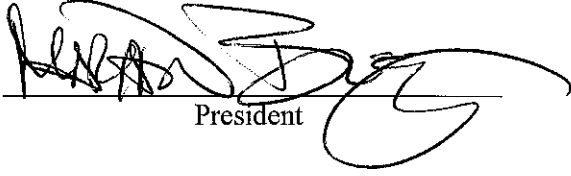
Coulter also mentioned that there are continued talks to find ways to repurpose Hillcrest Hall for library-related use. He also added that on Tuesday, November 12, Fletcher Library would be having a Bird Watching Collection Open Reception in honor of Alan Ross Kumpe. The collection and the memorial were funded by his parents. In addition to the memorial, Fletcher will also have birding kits with binoculars circulating and some programming.

## **7. Other**

Coulter asked the Board to join him in welcoming four new staff members who started work earlier this month.

- Mark Christ, Head of Adult Programming
- Polly Deems, Volunteer Coordinator
- Lance Ivy, Director of Facilities & Operations
- Kay Kay DeRossette, Nutrition/Feeding Grant Program Coordinator

Berry called the meeting adjourned.



President



Secretary