

Central Arkansas Library System  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 28, 2019  
The Cox Building – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Meeting Room

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

Staff members in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Nathan James, David Stricklin, Lisa Donovan, Cathy Sanders, Lance Ivy, Tameka Lee, Carol Coffey, Rosslyn Elliott, Scott Kirkhuff, Polly Deems, Rebecca Beadle, Ellen Samples, Mark Christ, Pam Rudkin, Joseph Hudak, Linda Ellis, and Elizabeth Newbern.

### **Action Items**

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

Berry asked the Board to consider the January Minutes for approval with noted corrections.

Rousseau moved to approve the January Minutes. Herrington seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved with corrections.

#### **2. Financials**

Herrington reported that as of January 30, 2019 the library's total assets came to \$114,634,648 and net losses of \$856,569. She noted that tax collection had doubled compared to this time in 2018 but said that there were no other significant financial notes to report.

Brown asked if there was any possibility that the \$3M set aside in the general fund for the operating account could be invested. Spencer said that while there have been moves to increase the amount allocated for our investment accounts, those funds were set aside in the operational account and needed to be readily available for use, since it only makes up two months' worth of expenses.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Herrington moved that these numbers be filed for audit and it was approved unanimously.

### **Information Items**

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

Lee reported that CALS had several exciting ongoing promotional developments. THV 11's "The Vine" now features a weekly segment on Tuesdays at 9:15 a.m. that gives watchers information about weekly library programming. CALS will also be featured on an episode of Rock the Culture which will be available on March 4 through Apple Podcast, Google Play, and Spotify. She added that Williams Library Manager Latina Sheard will be featured on a KARK's Education Matters segment on entrepreneurship that will also air on March 4 at 5:00 p.m.

Lee said that there are several notable upcoming events at CALS:

- Author Greg Iles will be at the Ron Robinson Theater on Thursday, March 7 at 12:00 p.m. for a talk and book signing. This event is open to the public and doors will open at 11:00 a.m.
- The Friends of CALS Basement Book Sale is coming up Thursday, March 7 – Saturday, March 9.
  - Thursday, March 7, 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Friends of CALS – Members only)
  - Friday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Friends enter at 9 a.m.)
  - Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Friends enter at 9 a.m.)

There have been a few changes to the sale this time around. CALS increased the book prices (paperbacks changed from \$0.50 to \$1; hardbacks changed from \$1 to \$2). This change is consistent with prices set by other Public Library Friend organizations. CALS is also discontinuing wristband sales. Only Friends of CALS can enter on Thursday and get early entry on the other two days.

- The UA-Little Rock Downtown Center has rolled out some programming. Wednesday nights from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. they are hosting a weekly lecture series and they have plans to offer Saturday classes in that space as well, such as a class on Stargazing.

Lee said that there are plans to change the name of the Arkansas Literary Festival starting in 2020 to make it more contemporary and inviting. CALS has not yet unveiled these plans but welcomes any suggestions.

Lee asked Mark Christ, adult programming coordinator, to speak on new programming come up. Christ noted that there were several exciting developments on the docket this month:

- A Conversation with Arkansas Supreme Court Justices (Q&A) featuring Chief Justice Kemp on Thursday, March 7, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. in the Darragh Center.
- Equip: Small Business Owner's Guide to Filing Taxes will be held at Dee Brown Library on Tuesday, March 19. Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m., followed by a training session and Q&A.
- *Becoming American – A Documentary Film and Discussion Series on Our Immigration Experience Series* features short films and moderated discussion about what it means to become an American citizen. These film viewings will be held at several locations across the system, with the first being on Thursday, March 7 at Main Library.

Guerrero asked if *Becoming American* would address the major demographic shifts that Arkansas itself had been experiencing. Christ said he didn't think the documentaries themselves address this point, but that the moderated discussions after the documentary viewings could very well bring this point up.

Lee introduced Scott Kirkhuff, creative and digital content manager, to address some information about website analytics. Kirkhuff noted that there had been a 12% increase in users accessing the site between January 2018 and January 2019. New user usage is up 17%; page views are up 18%; number of sessions are up 8%; pages viewed per session are up 9%; and session duration is up 5%. He noted that event page usage in particular was way up. He also noted that our bounce rate, which is the rate at which users are sent to another website, is down 5%.

Porter asked if our website had sponsorships. Stricklin said that while CALS does have sponsorships attached to programs, the Encyclopedia of Arkansas site, and Arkansas Sounds programs, our main website has never had sponsorships attached to it. Nathan James added that CALS also has sponsorships in our programming catalogs.

## 2. Butler Center Report

Stricklin reported that there were a few events that he wanted to highlight for this month:

- Second Friday Art Night: The 10-year anniversary of the Bobby L. Roberts building will be celebrated on at this month's 2FAN on March 8. There will be a reception that evening.
- Betsey Wright Lecture: This year's Betsey Wright Lecture will feature Page Harrington, former Director of the National Women's Party. This will occur on Friday, March 29 from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Ron Robinson Theater.
- Maurice Smith Lecture: This year's Maurice Smith lecture will be a talk by President Clinton and the formal re-dedication of the Bobby L. Roberts Library. Tickets for the lecture will cost \$50, and VIP tickets that include a pre-lecture reception will cost \$200. The event will be on Friday, April 5 and the lecture itself will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater.
- Legacies & Lunch: Dr. Robert Griffin will speak on his book *Raised to Serve; Selected to Lead*. He will be interviewed by former Congressman Vic Snyder on April 3 at 2:00 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater.

## 3. Facilities Report

Ivy reported that he received approval today for Entegry to begin the Energy Conservation Measures (ECM). They plan to begin by upgrading the 6,000 light fixtures in the system to LED which will reduce lighting related energy expenditure by 50%. Next, they will work on water conservation upgrades. He said that this will be followed by HVAC Equipment and Controls upgrades, as well as HVAC tune-ups for newer systems. Ivy noted that this should create significant long-term savings since the cost of heating and cooling creates about 50% of all energy costs. The entire process would be finished once CALS and Entegry did a utility rate correction. He said that an exact timeline of all these upgrades would be available soon.

## 4. Statistical Report

Coffey reported that January 2019 saw a large increase in circulation over January 2018. That increase can mostly be attributed to two things: 1) digital circulation grew 54% over the previous year, due to heavy use of the music streaming service along with a smaller bump in the number of OverDrive checkouts, and 2) a more artificial increase for physical materials due to Maumelle having been closed for renovation in January 2018. She noted that programming continued its trend of increasing at most locations, with Maumelle's 2018 closure also contributing to that rise. Coffey added that the Encyclopedia of Arkansas experienced a more than 100% increase in the number of page views. We believe that is due to work being done to prepare the new EOA website.

She reported that the 2018 Annual Statistical Report is now available. Thanks in large part to the new music streaming service, digital circulation was up 28% for 2018, which contributed to total circulation being up 1% over 2017. In 2018, digital circulation accounted for 26% of overall circulation, while DVDs were 23% of overall circulation. Coffey added that physical books accounted for 47% of total circulation; DVD circulation fell 9% in 2018 after years of either growing or remaining basically flat. The number of library visits was down 4% in 2018, although programming attendance was up. She noted library staff presented more than 10,000 programs, which drew more than 244,000 attendees. Library staff provided direct assistance more than 528,000 times in 2018, either by answering a question, teaching someone to

use library services or equipment, or updating their account. Checking someone out is not included in that number. Desktop and laptop computer use was lower by 1% but our WIFI was used 449,652 times in 2018.

CALS added 101,021 items to our overall collection in 2018. About 40,000 of those additions were physical books, but we also added over 31,000 digital audiobooks, most as part of the new unlimited access collection from RB Digital. The total number of items in our collection may not reflect that same difference because we also remove outdated and damaged items from the collection regularly.

## **5. Director's Report**

Coulter reported that the Library Strategies Retreat held on Saturday, January 26, was a success with 60 people in attendance. Library Strategies consultants Stu Wilson and Chris Watkins are well on their way to drafting a Strategic Plan for us that will have four to six objectives. Coulter asked Berry if she wanted to share any observations from the day. Berry quoted the the social media assessment of Jay Barth, Hendrix College professor who attended the retreat: "Just a really great day with a roomful of folks with great ideas for moving an excellent institution to being a transformative one.

Coulter said that Advocates for Arkansas Public Libraries (AAPL), a state group CALS contributes to, has engaged lobbyists from Impact Management Group to help promote libraries' importance. One idea they suggested was that libraries assist patrons who want to stay enrolled in AR Works to maintain their Medicaid coverage and then highlight this effort so state government officials would appreciate better the importance of libraries. Coulter added that (AAPL) and CALS have been continuing to oppose HB 1402 that would restrict Special Elections to May and November. He added that there appears to be larger opposition to this bill than there was two years ago when it came within one voter of passing.

Coulter said he and other staff members participated in a Webinar recently about cultural competency. This followed Dr. Christopher Jones of the Innovation Hub noting at the strategic planning session that CALS's cultural competency was "decent." Another participant contacted Coulter later asking what the employee demographic reflected in the context of the demographics of the service area. Coulter noted CALS staff is still overwhelmingly white (78%) while the service area is approximately 50% white.

Guerrero noted that it is important to disaggregate diversity from cultural competency. He said that they are two different issues, and while they are often related they cannot be measured in the same way. It is worth noting that cultural competency can be more important than diversity in some cases. Coulter thanked Guerrero for the clarification and insight. Coulter acknowledged that even if the CALS staff work force were a third African American, and thereby consistent with the population CALS serves, that would not assure that the staff was culturally competent. Aspiring to have a staff that reflected more closely the population served would lower the risk of not being open and receptive to all library users.

Coulter said that the library Foundation had recently received the funds (\$445,000) from The Ron Robinson Trust. This will generate income annually to be used by the library, but the use of this income is narrowly restricted. It may be spent only to acquire more materials for the Ron Robinson Arkansas Collection. Coulter asked Stricklin to explain what this collection included. He noted that it contains materials like those currently exhibited in The Galleries at Library Square, Arkansas-based movie posters from the early 1900s.

Coulter also reported that there was a new tenant in the apartment above the Flying Saucer. Matt McLeod, a local artist, will be renting that apartment and using it as a work space.

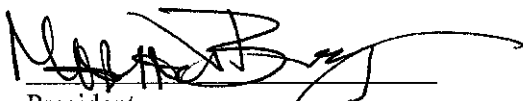
**6. Other**


Brown complemented the performance at the Symphony on this past Sunday afternoon (February 24). The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra partnered with CALS on a poetry contest. The teen contest winners read their pieces on Sunday; the adult contest winners read on the previous day (Saturday, February 23).

Rousseau said that she had recently learned that the author Kat Robinson, who wrote *Arkansas Pie*, had recently published *Arkansas Food* which describes the history of various food stuffs that can be found around the State. She highly recommends it.

She also announced that Little Rock Central High School will be hosting a free concert entitled *No Tears Suite* on Sunday, March 3, at 3:00 p.m.; Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine, will be in attendance.

Berry called the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

  
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President

  
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Secretary