

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 23, 2019
The Cox Building – 3rd Floor Meeting Room

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

Staff members in attendance were Nathan James, David Stricklin, Mark Christ, Lance Ivy, Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Joe Hudak, Tameka Lee, Cathy Sanders, Carol Coffey, Pam Rudkin, Ellen Samples, Lisa Donovan, Polly Deems, Linda Ellis, Brad Mooy, and Elizabeth Newbern.

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes

Berry asked the Board to consider the April Minutes for approval.

Brown moved to approve the April Minutes. Grice seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved.

2. Financials

Herrington reported that as of April 30, 2019 the library's total assets came to \$115,753,870 and net losses of \$2,589,379. She noted that tax collections were up 6.68 % year to date over April 2018 year to date.

She added that there was some money received by the library through the CHAMPS grant that is funding the Be Mighty program.

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

3. Approval of CALS Strategic Plan

Nathan James invited Stu Wilson from Library Strategies to join the Board via video conference to speak to them about the current draft of the Strategic Plan. Wilson greeted the Board and apologized that his colleague Chris Watkins was unable to join them this morning. He said that the Strategic Plan is intended first and foremost as a reference point for the Board and is intended to be a Big Picture long view of where CALS plans to move. The staff will have access to a more detailed Implementation Plan and the Board will be given regular updates through the Strategic Plan dashboard that was sent to administrative staff that morning.

Wilson said that there were three things Library Strategies relied upon to generate the plan:

1. Community/Staff/Leadership Input
2. Trends in Other Urban Libraries

3. Building on CALS Existing Strengths/Assets

All three aspects put focus on CALS taking more strategic direction that has broader internal cultural and organizational shift. CALS is also reprioritizing community outreach.

The strategic plan document is overall very brief, containing only six pages. It begins by laying out the Mission, Vision, and Values statements, which emphasize a shift from prioritizing CALS collections to prioritizing what the library users want and need. If adopted by the Board, these new statements will replace the previous Mission and Values statements.

Next the plan outlines seven overarching goals for the system to be accomplished over the next three years, which emphasize making CALS services easier to use and more integrated into the community. The plan is designed to look at things from a system-wide perspective and not prioritize any one location over the others but find the best way to allocate resources fairly. Brown asked to what extent CALS will be expanding its social services. Wilson said that the plan does not have specific plans to expand social services but noted that offering some social services has become more of a roll that public libraries have been filling. The overall cultural shift in all public libraries is to focus more on the people and less on the stuff.

Guerrero asked how each of these goals will be achieved on an operations level. Wilson said that the staff have been given an Implementation Plan by Library Strategies that outlines different strategies and accompanying deadlines to be met by staff. It is a much longer, more detailed document. He added that the Board will be provided with updates at each meeting through a dashboard document, also provided by Library Strategies.

Nathan James thanked Wilson for his explanation and Wilson signed off. Berry asked for the Board to vote to adopt the proposed strategic plan.

Herrington moved to adopt the proposed strategic plan. Guerrero seconded the motion and it was adopted with unanimous approval.

Information Items

1. Marketing & Resource Development Report

Lee reported that CALS has been doing some cross promotion with Nexus Nook and Jimmy's Serious Sandwiches. She and Amy Counce, co-owner of Nexus, appeared on THV 11's The Vine recently to talk about the Nexus Nook. Lee showed the videoclip of this segment.

Lee also noted that there are a bunch of upcoming summer events:

- *Terror Tuesdays* will be returning to CALS Ron Robinson Theater from June 4 through June 27 on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m, doors open at 6:00 p.m. Each Tuesday will feature a different horror film.
- *The Ira Sanders Distinguished Lecture* will occur on Tuesday, June 11 at noon at the Downtown UA Little Rock location. It will feature Richard T. Hughes who will speak on "Understanding

White Supremacy: Why We Must Hear Black Voices.” [Note: The Sanders Lecture was moved to the Ron Robinson Theater after reservations exceeded the UALR venue’s capacity.]

- *Dave Rosen Big Band* will perform on June 14 at 8:00 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater. This event is part of the CALS Arkansas Sounds program. Tickets are \$10 each.
- *Sounds in the Stacks* will occur on Tuesday, June 25, at 6:30 p.m. at Fletcher Library.
- Delia Owens will be at CALS on Sunday, July 21, to sign her book *Where the Crawdads Sing* at 2:00 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater. The event is free and open to the public.

Lee invited Adult Programming Director Mark Christ to speak about some upcoming adult programming events. Christ noted that there were several upcoming events:

- *Issues that Matter: The Environment* a panel developed in partnership with KUAR and the League of Women Voters. The panel was originally scheduled for April, but it will now occur on May 30 at 6 p.m. at the Ron Robinson Theater.
- Ernie Dumas will give a talk on his new book *The Education of Ernie Dumas* on June 10 at 6 p.m. at the Ron Robinson Theater. He will be signing copies of the book starting at 5:30 p.m. before the talk and directly after the talk.

Christ added that the recipients of the Big Read Grant will be announced on June 12 and if CALS receives the grant it will allow Tim O’Brien to appear at the Six Bridges Book Festival next year (formerly the Arkansas Literary Festival). He said that Brad Mooy will be going to Book Con in New York City this year in order to also draw a larger pool of authors to the Festival. Staff have met with Mary Gay Shipley who has been very successful drawing a wide array of big-name authors to her bookstore in Blytheville. Porter noted that making stronger connections with Mary Gay Shipley is an asset since she is very well connected.

Youth Services Programming Coordinator Ellen Samples said that the biggest youth programming items on the agenda are all related to Summer Reading Club. Registration opens on May 28 and she invited everyone to sign up for the program, including Adults.

2. Roberts Library Report

Stricklin reported that the new Encyclopedia of Arkansas website had launched earlier this month. There are still a few bugs to be worked out, but the response to the new site has been largely positive. Stricklin said that the most serious complaint he had received was that a user asked why there was “no entry on my daddy.” Guerrero asked if there was some specific rationale behind the map that is displayed on the homepage as the featured image. Stricklin said that there was no specific reasoning behind it, except that it is a map of the region when Arkansas was still a territory.

Nathan James noted that the new site gives CALS more control over the site and any future changes that may be unrolled down the line since the new site was built on a more versatile platform than the previous one.

Stricklin said that there are several events coming up in June through the Roberts Library:

- Legacies & Lunch on June 5 will feature Tommy Jameson. The event will occur at noon in the Darragh Center at the Main Library.

- Finding Family Facts will occur on June 10 at the Roberts Library from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Second Friday Art Night (2FAN) will occur on June 14 and will unveil the Natural Treatment and Southern Frayed exhibitions. This will start at 5:00 p.m. at The Galleries at Library Square and The Bookstore at Library Square.

3. Statistical Report

Coffey reported that overall circulation was up 7%. Digital circulation for April was up 39 % over the same month the previous year, while physical circulation was down 3%. Dee Brown reported that following the soft launch of its Tool Library on April 20, there had been 42 tools checked out by library users by the end of April. Coffey added that numbers for the Arkansas Literary Festival were down from last year, which can be attributed to fewer authors in attendance this year and fewer programs offered compared to previous years. There were 68 programs with total attendance of 5,602. The Writers in the Schools Project reached 1,960 students.

4. Director's Report

Coulter highlighted two recent articles that believes highlight the importance of the library as a place to gather. Arkansas Business reported the architect for the new arts center noting that museums must find ways to provide "social space" where people want to be. Strong libraries are already doing this. Another article contained a survey showing that people living in neighborhoods having more amenities like parks, grocery stores, bars, coffee shops, fitness centers, and libraries are more confident about their communities and less isolated.

While on the subject of the Arkansas Arts Center's renovation, Coulter also noted that CALS continues to work closely with the Arts Center staff as they began to close their main facility this summer. He noted when he attended the announcement of the Center's lead fundraising the leadership and supporters of the Arts Center had repeatedly thanked him for the library's help with adopting some of the Center's collection to exhibit in branches. Coulter thanked Nathan James for his role in this relationship.

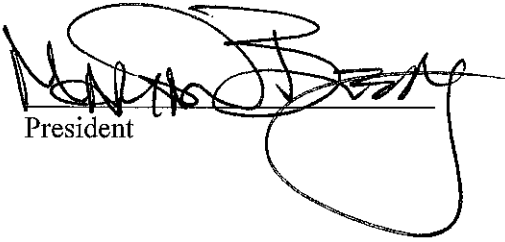
He added that CALS would be hosting the J.N. Heiskel Lecture this fall which would feature Arkansas Democrat-Gazette publisher Walter Hussmann. Hussman will speak on the future of print journalism in the digital age. This is timely since the Democrat-Gazette will cease issuing print editions of the paper at the end of 2019. Subscribers, including the library, will get a free tablet from the paper to read the digital copy of the paper.

5. Other

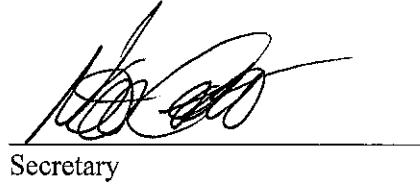
Nathan James said that one item that CALS administration had been working on was making clear naming guidelines to consolidate our many brands under one umbrella and to be consistent with approved naming conventions. For example, the Bobby L. Roberts Library should no longer be called the ASI or referred to as the Butler Center; that is a separate entity that refers to the archives, history programming, and reading room. The preferred naming conventions were included in the presented PowerPoint.

Donovan said that the Branch Services Coordinators had been working on the comprehensive review of Board Policies for CALS over the last several months and would have a comprehensive report sent around to the Board members in June.

Berry adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.



President



Secretary