

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 28, 2019
The Cox Building – 3rd Floor Meeting Room

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

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

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes

Rousseau, presiding the meeting in President Berry's absence, asked the Board to consider the February Minutes for approval.

Bush moved to approve the February Minutes. Wright seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved.

2. Financials

Herrington reported that as of February 28, 2019 the library's total assets came to \$117,115,186 and net losses of \$986,788. She noted that tax collection had increased 16.5% over April 2018.

She added that there had been some last-minute corrections to the originally distributed Financial Report, but the corrected document had been distributed before the start of this meeting.

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

3. Approval of Change to Board Policies 109, 110, & 111

Coulter said that these policy changes were proposed in an effort to correct inequities between part time employees who fall into different categories, those who are pages and those who are considered part time permanent employees. The changes would also raise the minimum number of hours a part time employee must work to be eligible for health insurance benefits from 20 to 30 hours a week. This change would apply to future hires. Part time employees working 20 or more hours now receive health insurance benefits and these employees would continue to be eligible for that coverage. Coulter noted that some of the current disparities between pages and other part time employees go back to hiring practices that arose in the wake of the 2008-09 Recession. At that time to save money on payroll CALS hired more part-time and temporary employees (pages). Coulter said that this practice was particularly unfair to pages who were classified as temporary employees, did not receive any benefits, and did not have their time as a page count towards their total years of employment at CALS. They might work 20 hours a week

alongside another part time employee who was NOT a page who received health insurance and retirement benefits. Currently, CALS employs 79 part-time employees that work at least 20 hours a week and up to 39 hours a week. Of those employees, 43 of them receive no benefits.

Going forward, Coulter said that CALS wants to create a new level of part time employees above pages. Those pages who were handling more responsibilities could be promoted by supervisors to this clerk position and receive a small bump up in pay and be eligible for some benefits other than health insurance. In addition, Coulter recommended that CALS follow the advice of the payroll consultant Blair Johanson and implement an industry standard 30 hours a week threshold for eligibility for health insurance benefits. This would be in concert with trying to employ fewer part time employees generally so that the percentage of CALS employees receiving health insurance would not decline. The proposed changes to current Board policy would give all employees who work 30 hours a week health insurance, provide all part-time employees at least 3 hours of PTO on holidays, and allow all pages's initial start date to count towards their total years of employment at CALS. Coulter reiterated that any employees currently working less than 30 hours per week who already receive health insurance benefits would not lose them.

Spencer said that Board Policies 109, 110, and 111 all have new language added to reflect these changes. Guerrero asked if there was any possibility for part-time employees who do not qualify for insurance through CALS to buy into the CALS plan. Spencer replied that she was not aware of any way to do this, but she would consult with CALS's insurance brokerage firm. Wright, Brown, and Bush asked if CALS could afford these changes. Spencer said that since CALS' premiums had gone down 3% this year, and the total annual expense added to make this change would be \$16,000 it was definitely affordable. Rousseau asked if the Board will move to approve these proposed changes.

Bush moved to approve the proposed changes to Board Policies 109, 110 and 111. Grice seconded the motion and the changes were approved unanimously.

4. Resolution to Change Signatories on All CALS Investment Accounts

Spencer said that last summer, CALS asked the Board for approval to change the signatories on the Vanguard Investment Account to reflect current leadership. Now that CALS has opened a new account with Arvest, they require a similar resolution that gives Spencer and Coulter signatory control over the accounts. She said that she made the language of this resolution more all-encompassing, so that CALS will not have to come to the Board for every single new account that is opened, at least unless a new Finance Director and/or Executive Director are hired. Spencer asked the Board to approve the proposed resolution.

Wright moved to approve the proposed resolution. Brown seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Information Items

1. Marketing & Resources Development Report

Lee reported several news mentions this past month which include a write-up in Downtown Little Rock Partnership's magazine talked about co-working spaces and entrepreneurship opportunities available at the library. Lee added there was also a featured ad that highlighted Women in Business in honor of

Women's History Month. There was also a mention of our Monthly Book Club topic in Little Rock Family. She said that the Arkansas Literary Festival, coming up at the end of next month, was being promoted across a number of platforms, including B98.5 radio station, KOKY, Fox 16, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Arkansas Times, El Latino, and Savvy. Lee noted a few event highlights included:

- *Author! Author!* on Friday, April 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library.
- *The Birth of Loud* on Friday, April 26 at 10:30 p.m. at Four Quarter Bar.
- *Maker's Alley* on Saturday, April 27 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the alley between Ron Robinson Theater and the Bobby L. Roberts Library.

The full schedule of events for all four days (Thursday, April 25 – Sunday, April 28) has been posted on our website and will be distributed in print in mid-April.

Lee invited Mark Christ, Head of Adult Programming, up to speak about other events coming up this month. Christ noted that there were several events of note coming up this month:

- Community Forum, topic to be announced, will be held on April 18 at 6:00 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater. This event is sponsored by KUAR and the League of Women Voter's. [This event has since been postponed until May.]
- How to Expunge Criminal Records Help on April 23 and April 25 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at McMath and Dee Brown respectively.

Guerrero said that he would hesitate to endorse CALS getting into City Politics, since that could be messy. Christ responded that while he understands those concerns, CALS was functioning more as a location host. Nathan James also added that this will be more in the style of a Town Forum to better inform local voters of the issues. Brown asked if CALS should look into voter registration opportunities. Hudak responded that CALS does already offer the opportunity to fill out voter registration forms when patrons sign up for a library card. Rousseau noted that LR Central High School offers opportunities for voter registration to qualifying students.

Lee invited Ellen Samples, Youth Services Coordinator, to speak on upcoming programs for children and teens. Samples said that CALS received a grant from the National Recreation and Parks Association, funded by the Walton Foundation, to implement a program to help provide access to meal sites. One proposal is to provide bus passes to youth and teens who need this access. Guerrero asked how the word is getting out about this program. Samples replied that a promotional toolkit is being provided by the funding organization. She also noted that CALS just began a partnership with the Juvenile Courts to provide access to books and book club discussions to students in the juvenile justice system. The program will begin with group of girls. The group's next selection is a book by Elizabeth Eckford and will end with a field trip to a reading event featuring Elizabeth Eckford at Ron Robinson Theater. Brown asked if there are plans to expand this program for boys. Samples replied that since the program is new and hasn't fully rolled out there are no immediate plans for a boy's version of the program, but she imagined one may develop after this initial program is better established. She added that CALS has an ongoing program about Violence Prevention Education for Teens called Safe Dates that discussed healthy relationships, and ways to identify behaviors and patterns that indicate an unhealthy relationship.

2. Butler Center Report

Stricklin reported that there were several events coming up this week and next month through the Bobby L. Roberts Library.

- *The Betsey Wright Lecture* entitled “Women’s Suffrage and Race Relations: A Divided Legacy” will be March 29, 2019 at noon in the Ron Robinson Theater. The lecture this year will be given by Page Harrington, the Former Executive Director of the National Women’s Party.
- *State of the Art* film viewing sponsored by AETN on April 13 at 8:00 p.m. in the Ron Robinson Theater. The film will feature Crystal Bridges and the art of Northwest Arkansas.

Stricklin announced that the Encyclopedia of Arkansas was also in the midst of a website redesign that would hopefully roll-out in mid-April. [The launch has since been pushed back until May.] He noted that Nathan James had spend a great deal of time on the design. James added that the main changes will mostly be made to the appearance of the site to make it more consistent with the CALS website that launched last summer. It will also be interoperable with the other CALS websites and they are looking into the possibilities of adding a geographic information system (GIS) to help entries be sorted by location. Guerrero asked if the search function would change. James said that it has not changed significantly although he said that the advanced search function may be more intuitive to use. Guerrero asked if there will be a screen or page noting what has been updated once it has launched. James said there will be a blog post that will walk users through the new site.

3. Statistical Report

Coffey reported all primary metrics saw increases February 2019 over February 2018. Door count was up 13% across the system, which can be completely attributed to the fact that Maumelle and Sanders were both closed last February. She said that if the door counts for both branches were removed for both months, the difference between the monthly totals shrinks to 42. Circulation was up 18%, including a 54% increase in digital circulation. Physical circulation was up 7%. Coffey noted that the closures affected those numbers but not to the same degree because materials owned by closed branches frequently continue to circulate to fill holds. She said staff assistance and instructional assistance totals were up by double-digit percentages. Assistance with using the kiosks actually dropped 18%, mostly because patrons know how to use the kiosks now. Community Resource Specialist Rebecca Beadle estimates that she helped about 10 patrons in February but will have a better count each month going forward. Coffey said the number is now being reported on the system report. In February, digital circulation accounted for 33% of circulation, while print books accounted for 43%. DVDs and Binge Boxes were at 21%. Binge boxes count as 5 circulations, since that is the average number of DVDs in a box.

4. Director’s Report

Coulter reported that there are several things developing at the library. The Steering Committee in charge of aiding the strategic plan consultants (Library Strategies) will meet in late April to review the strategic plan draft. He also said that he has a potential donor interested in renovating Hillcrest Hall to make it available for a wider array of use. Coulter noted that he previously mentioned interest in more workforce development opportunities for the library and there are now tentative plans to renovate a section of the

fifth floor of the Main Library to create a co-working space. He said that there are several libraries already offering similar spaces, including the Toledo, OH and Durham, NC Public Libraries.

Coulter said that CALS has another new tenant to join those who have begun to rent space in Library Square. To create a presence in Downtown Little Rock, the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute which is located atop Petit Jean has rented a small space for four of their employees to work in Little Rock.

In addition to the announcements from Lee, Coulter said that CALS announced its dedication to assist people navigating Arkansas Works, the program that provides health care coverage but requires proof of employment or proof of attempts to be employed to qualify. While this is something CALS was already doing to some extent, it was an opportunity to show state government officials how the library is a valuable community resource that does important work to help the state's citizens. He also related that only hours after the announcement was made that a federal judge ruled to end Arkansas' work requirement for those receiving Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act.

Coulter finished by noting a list on the screen of all of the many partners and sponsors who are currently working with CALS to improve the community. He expressed hopes that this list of partners would grow

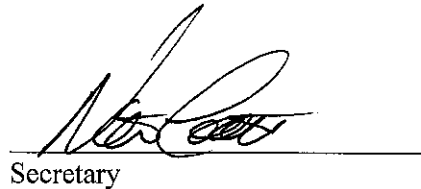
5. Other

There were no additional announcements.

Rousseau adjourned the meeting at 1:16 p.m.



President



Secretary