

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Directors Meeting
March 19, 2020
Conference Call

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

Staff members in attendance were Jo Spencer, Nate Coulter, Nathan James, Lisa Donovan, Ellen Samples, Lance Ivy, Tameka Lee, Polly Deems, Cathy Sanders, Kay Kay DeRossette, David Stricklin, Pam Rudkin, Carol Coffey, Joseph Hudak, Kate Matthews, and Elizabeth Newbern.

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes

Herrington asked the Board to approve the February Minutes with submitted corrections.

Rousseau moved to approve the February Minutes. Wright and Brandon seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

2. February Financials

Grice reported that as of February 29, 2020, CALS assets totaled \$117,605,387 with net losses of \$1,393,303. He noted that he and Spencer expected revenue to go down following the library's closure to the public in March. This will likely extend into April. Grice said that revenue losses will be offset by lower expenditures since contracted services will not be needed or paid during this time. CALS Ron Robinson Theater and The Bookstore are also expected to lose money from lack of sales and/or rental revenue. There will be a longer-term impact on tax-collections, but it is unclear what that will look like at this time.

Spencer expressed some concern that collections would be running on time. This may put funding for CALS next year in a less ideal situation that we had hoped.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Grice moved to submit the February Financials for audit. Wright seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Business Continuity Plan

Coulter said that two weeks ago, CALS staff started collecting information about what libraries should be doing in this pandemic. Finding ways that the library can provide some level of continuing service to patrons. This includes but is not limited to offering at-home access to databases, online library card processing, curbside pick-up for holds, staff telecommuting to work when possible, offering virtual programs, etc.

As part of this process, CALS Administration developed a plan to continue to provide services to patrons while still prioritizing both patron and employee health and safety. Part of this plan includes a telecommuting policy that be in place starting next week. This policy will allow staff to work normal hours doing many activities from home, but some on site as needed. This requires rolling out remote access to all managers and providing a lot of technical support to staff using technology in ways they haven't been used to date. Staff access to our Timesheet program to log hours is also in the works. Currently, this plan will not require anyone to use their PTO, but that may change.

James said that telecommuting work, which will begin next week, will involve working on projects and assignments from some generated lists, working closely with managers to determine weekly work expectations, and ensuring that each staff member contributes some work hours daily. He also noted that CALS has determined to make adjustments on a week-to-week basis but are in agreement with most other organizations that the key to public health and safety is to limit access to public spaces for as long as possible.

Herrington noted that the Board would approve the business continuity plan over email early next week to give all board members the opportunity to read over the policy. It was misplaced over email.

Information Items

1. Marketing Report

Lee said that due to the global COVID-19 crisis our events and programs planned for through May 9 have been cancelled or will be rescheduled to another date. This includes, but is not limited to, the Six Bridges Book Festival, originally scheduled for late April, and the Basement Book Sale planned for March. James added that this was all done in accordance with CDC Guidelines which were released this week.

Coulter mentioned that CALS was looking to reschedule some of the book festival events for November based on Tim O'Brien's availability.

Porter asked if it would be feasible to use a public school for the Six Bridges Book Festival if it is rescheduled for the Fall. Coulter said that one of the things that Brad Mooy and Mark Christ are talking about if we wanted to use space when O'Brien is available that is bigger than the theater, we could fill it up because he is very popular. Rousseau said that it would be possible to use a school auditorium, such as Little Rock Central High Schools, but it would need to be done in the evening.

2. Director's Report

Coulter said that in meetings within the past week, a central question asked by the Superintendent of LRSD was how to ensure that kids are fed during school closures. Many kids received breakfast and lunch on school premises during the school year. During the pandemic, it has been decided that students can continue to pick up meals to eat off-site. In addition to eight schools who will be serving breakfast and lunch, CALS has agreed to offer three of its libraries as food distribution sites for lunches. The USDA is paying for schools to run their sites and the Be Mighty program is fundraising to fund these services at CALS. Rock Region Metro has been helping as well by providing free transportation to the distribution sites.

Rousseau noted that Stephanie Streett from the Clinton Foundation said that all meals being provided at the Clinton Center have been coming from World Central Kitchen, the non-profit started by Jose Andreas. While she understands that current food distribution project is well funded, she asked if CALS knew if other food organizations need monetary donations. Coulter said that the short answer is yes.

Coulter asked why CALS cannot get reimbursed for food costs like the LRSD. Donovan said that school districts are designated as economically disadvantaged organizations and USDA, which is providing reimbursement, gave schools funding priority. DeRossette added that while there are no waivers for libraries and other organizations, she is hopeful that there will be in the near future. In the meantime, Be Mighty is fundraising to support their food efforts and asks Board members to please pass along the information about Be Mighty's work to provide meals. She noted that CALS is also in need of volunteers to serve meals and to please contact the volunteer coordinator for meal provision, Lori Ducey.

In terms of traditional library services, Coulter noted that we are working hard to provide information about our digital collections and databases. This includes efforts to add digital

services, such as providing unlimited use of ebooks in the Overdrive Collection. CALS is continuously working to provide services to meet needs and is updating changes and information about services on its website. The Arkansas Democrat Gazette is providing free COVID-19 coverage to all during the pandemic.

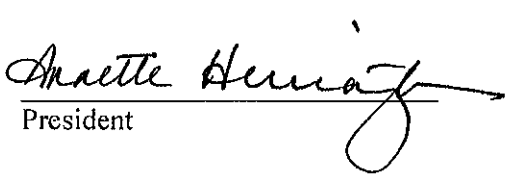
Finally, Coulter noted that while CALS is in the fortunate position to not have to lay-off or furlough any of its employees at this time, it is important to be sensitive to the fact that many public service workers are losing their jobs.

3. Other

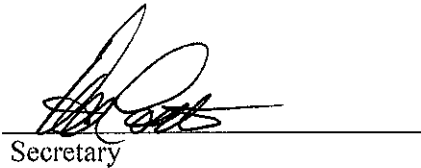
Coulter noted that April's meeting is still scheduled to occur, although it will likely be virtual.

Herrington reminded the Board to please vote on the Business Continuity plan approval by the end of the day on Monday.

Herrington called the meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.



President



Secretary