

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Directors Meeting
January 28, 2021
Zoom Video Call

Board members in attendance were Nancy Rousseau, Mandy Gill, Audrey Evans, Karama Neal, Bob Brown, Stacey McAdoo, Marian Berry, Stephanie Gibson-Branton, Brandon Grice, and Marilyn Porter. Kelly Moss, John Bush, and Andre Guerrero were absent.

Staff members in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Lisa Donovan, Nathan James, Lance Ivy, Kelli Marks, Pam Rudkin, Tameka Lee, David Stricklin, Joe Hudak, Jessica McDaniel, Mark Christ, Ellen Samples, Polly Deems, Carol Coffey, Kate Mathews, Kay Kay DeRossette, Cathy Sanders, and Elizabeth Newbern.

Also in attendance was Joe Flaherty, reporter for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Action Items

1. Approval of December Minutes

Rousseau asked the Board to approve the December Minutes as written.

Rousseau moved to approve December Minutes as written. Grice seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

2. December Financials

Grice reported that as of December 31, 2020, CALS assets totaled \$109,977,012 with a net income of \$1,950,575 for the year. The net income was a result of property tax income being higher than anticipated and the library costs being down related to changes made due to the pandemic (i.e., building closures, reduction in contract fees, employee furloughs, etc.)

He added that tax receipts for January totaled \$783,348. This is a 9 percent increase over January of last year, which can be attributed to a rise in sales tax income.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Grice moved that the December Financial Statements be filed for audit. McAdoo seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Information Items

1. Director's Report

Coulter began by introducing the three new CALS Board members – Mandy Gill (Perry County), Karama Neal (Little Rock), and Audrey Evans (Little Rock). Each board member thanked Nate and briefly introduced themselves with information about their career and their connection to CALS.

He noted that he submitted his formal report to the Board in writing ahead of the meeting, but wanted to touch on a few highlights:

- *Staffing change* – Cathy Sanders, our Director of Resource Development who helped lay the groundwork for our current donation projects, will be leaving CALS at the end of this month. CALS staff are sad to see her go, but they wish her the best of luck on her new venture.
- *The Galleries at Library Square* – the long awaited merger of the The Bookstore at Library Square and The Galleries at Library Square is almost done. The Galleries staff have worked hard to move all of the books from the Cox Building to the revamped space. Coulter invited Board members to come by and walk through if they have not done so yet.
- *Count-Up Program* – The Walton Foundation and Mayor Scott have heard good things about this program to date, which is encouraging.
- *Event Tonight (January 28, 2021)* – Christ said that Leonard Downing Jr., a retired reporter and writer for the Washington Post, will be speaking about his new book recounting his experience. The conversation will be led by our writer-in-residence Benji de la Piedra, who is documenting Herbert Denton Jr. – an Arkansas native and the first African American editor of the Post. The event will take place virtually via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. this evening.
- *Program Evaluation* – Stricklin said that this has been a project going on for over a year, it's a tricky thing because of the difficulty of measuring reactions to virtual attendance. There is a really good service from PLA called Project Outcome, Stricklin said that he and Carol Coffey are optimistic that CALS is going to get a good system for this work.

2. Other

Rousseau noted that she was very impressed with the virtual programming related to Martin Luther King Day. She complimented Coulter's introduction that day. Coulter thanked Rousseau and added that many staff members went into planning the day of service, most notably Be Mighty Coordinator Kay Kay DeRosette and Be Mighty AmeriCorps VISTA Megan Belleford.

Rousseau asked if CALS receives hard copies of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Coulter said that we only receive hard copies of the Sunday paper. Monday through Saturday is available on circulating iPads provided by the newspaper.

Porter asked if there has been any additional thought about her suggestion from last month about creating an exhibit that featured the daily headlines from papers throughout 2021. Coulter said he had been in touch with the CALS Art Coordinator Colin Thompson. Thompson expressed interest in this idea and said he would be in touch with Porter in the near future.

Brown asked if CALS was connected to Pathway to Freedom run by Scott McLean. He recently spoke with him and knew they were looking for books for their libraries and were also looking for ways to expand their work release program. Coulter said he would be in touch with McLean and see what might be possible in terms of working with them on the work release program. Polly Deems, CALS Volunteer Coordinator, said that CALS has worked with them before to provide book donations. She said she would reach out to them to see if Pathway to Freedom would like to shop CALS' donation shelves for anything they may need.

Lee said she wanted to introduce CALS to Kelli Marks – CALS new Creative Writer. Lee said that in effort to mix up our weekly newsletters, CALS wants to feature what books our Board Members are currently reading or recently finished. Marks will be reaching out in coming weeks to ask Board members what their current reading lists entail.

Rousseau asked for a motion that the meeting be adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Berry moved to adjourn the meeting. Brown seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.



President



Secretary