

Central Arkansas Library System
Board of Directors Meeting
October 28, 2021, at noon
Hybrid Meeting: Roberts Library Rm 124 & Zoom Video Call

Board members in attendance were Nancy Rousseau, Brandon Grice, Audrey Evans, Andre Guerrero, Stacey McAdoo, John Bush, Bob Brown, Mandy Gill, and Esperanza Massana-Crane. Jennifer Jamison, Marian Berry, Marilynn Porter, and Stephanie Gibson-Branton were absent.

Staff in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Lance Ivy, Joe Hudak, Brad Mooy, Carol Coffey, Mark Christ, Eliza Borné, Kay Kay DeRossette, Ellen Samples, Nathan Smith, Polly Deems, Jasmine Zandi, Kate Matthews, Lisa Donovan, and Elizabeth Newbern.

Also in attendance was Joe Flaherty, reporter from the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and Anna Morshedi, representative for the Coalition of Neighborhood Libraries.

Action Items

1. Approval of the September Minutes

Rousseau asked the CALS Board to approve the September Minutes as corrected.

Bush moved to approve the September Minutes as corrected. Grice seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

2. Approval of the September Financials

Grice reported that as of August 31, 2021, CALS assets totaled \$103,647,813 with net losses of \$1,441,083. He noted there was nothing new to report with tax collections. CALS is waiting for final collection numbers for the month. Coulter noted that 60 percent of tax collections come in April and October, and the rest come throughout the year. In 2020 and 2021 it has been more staggered.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Grice moved to approve the September Financials and have them filed for audit.

Information Items

1. Director's Report

Coulter noted that he submitted a written report ahead to the Board ahead of the meeting, but wanted to highlight a few other things:

- ***New Board Member*** - Coulter noted that Esperanza Massana-Crane, our newest Board Member, was at the meeting and mentioned her work with the Arkansas Economic

Development Commission. As he mentioned at the last meeting, she was recently appointed new director of the Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWOBE) Division. Massana-Crane thanked Coulter for the introduction and expressed her enthusiasm to be on the CALS Board.

- **Millage Election** - Coulter introduced Anna Morshedi, representative from the Coalition of Neighborhood Libraries, to give an update on the committee's work for the public campaign. Morshedi said that the CNL has continued to work on promotional videos and posts on social media. The most recent video included several CALS patrons and retired Director Bobby Roberts. CNL has also done a postcard writing campaign, will be putting out yard signs, had KABF & KUAR radio sponsorships and ads, and three separate mailings. Morshedi also mentioned plans to handout post cards at Harvest Fest in Hillcrest, an area that historically has a strong voter turnout. There are also two different op-eds in line to be published, one from Baker Kurrus and another from the CALS Board member Judge Bob Brown. Coulter added that the early voting would start Tuesday, November 2 and run until Monday, November 8. There will be no voting on Saturday, November 6 and on Monday, November 8 will only be available at the Pulaski County Regional Building. Rousseau added that she had provided information about the millage election on the Central High School parent website, so they were aware.
- **CALS Employee Health Insurance** – Coulter asked Jo Spencer, Director of Finance, to speak about some upcoming changes in CALS Health Insurance Coverage. Spencer noted that premiums were going to increase 18 percent this year, originally it was going to be higher. CALS brokers at Meadors, Adams, & Lee helped reduce the increase down. Consequently, CALS will be allowing employees to have tiered pricing for insurance. One option will be similar to what is currently offered but at the higher premium rate and the second option will be offered at a lower premium rate, but with a higher deductible.
- **Six Bridges Book Festival** - Coulter introduced Brad Mooy, Director of the Six Bridges Festival, to talk about this year's festival. Mooy said that there were 17 more public events left to attend in the festival, including Sandra Cisneros and Jacqueline Woodson. The last events will be on Sunday, October 31. CALS still needs votes for the Tasty Reads Contest, the Costume Contest, and Classics in Context. Mooy added that while the mostly virtual program has been an adjustment, it has allowed him to attend 27 out of the 41 events, when he is normally lucky to see a few during the festival. Wordsworth is the official bookseller for the Six Bridges Book Festival.
- **Grants Update** - Coulter asked Eliza Borné, Director of Development, to give an update on grants CALS has been pursuing. Borné said that CALS has received a grant from the ESSER III Fund to support our Count Up Math Tutoring program, as well as some afterschool enrichment camps; a National Endowment for Humanities grant for the Encyclopedia of Arkansas; and there is another 6-figure grant that will be announced today at 1:00 p.m.

- [At 1:00 p.m. on October 28, the Small Business Administration announced the recipients of the Community Navigator Pilot Program. Through this program 51 organizations will receive a combined total of \$100 million in funding. The Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center at UALR was one of the 51 organizations, receiving a \$2.5 million grant to engage in targeted outreach to small businesses in underserved communities. This Community Navigator program operates under a “hub” and “spoke” model. ASBTDC is a “hub,” and their proposal featured six community partners, including CALS, who will serve as “spokes” providing services to different sectors of Arkansas’s entrepreneurial community. As a spoke, CALS will receive \$250,000 of the \$2.5M to support the Rock It! Lab program over the next two years (\$125,000 per year).]
- **Staff Day 2021** - Coulter wanted to note that four employees were recognized during staff day for excellent work this past year:
 - **Kathryn Blake**, who works in Youth Services at the Main Library, received the “Paraprofessional of the Year” award from the Arkansas Library Association (ArLA).
 - **Annick Dellman-Schaffer**, who works in Patron Services at the Main Library, received the Kristi Bust Unsung Hero award, which is elected by staff each year for a staff member who they feel deserves recognition.
 - **Candace Owens**, who is a clerk at Dee Brown Library, received the Super Clerk award.
 - **Blake Phillips**, who works in Patron Services for the Main Library, received the Employee of the Year award.

2. Other

Carol Coffey, Patron Experience and Library Analytics Coordinator, said that she and Nathan James, have been exploring OnBoardMeeting as a better way to organize documents and meeting information for the Board Meeting. CALS will be getting a demo of the project and asked any Board Members who were interested in participating to please email her, ccoffey@cals.org or Elizabeth enewbern@cals.org. Nathan James also mentioned the possibility of investigating a system called Treelo as a Strategic Plan Updating System.

Rousseau said she wanted to celebrate Central High School’s scholars. Central had 30 National Merit Semi-Finalists, 7 Commended scholars, 2 National Hispanic Scholars and several Principal Scholars, that she nominates each year.

Guerrero asked if there was a way to tweak the sound quality, because for people on the virtual call, people in the room sounded tinny and echoed a bit. Coulter said the CALS staff would continue to see what they could do to improve the sound quality.

Coulter announced the appointment of a new board member, Esperanza Masana-Crane. She is taking over for Susana O'Daniel, who had to step down from her position after she accepted job that relocated her out of state. Masana-Crane works for the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and was recently appointed new director of the Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWOBE) Division. We are excited to have her join the Board and offer her insight. She was unable to join us today due to a prior commitment, but she plans to attend the next Board meeting in October

Rousseau reminded everyone to please attend the Dedication of the Roosevelt Thompson statue at the Roosevelt Thompson Library on Saturday, October 2 at 10 a.m. She also noted the Central has a record 30 National Merit Semi Finalists this year, 6 Commended Scholars, and 2 National Hispanic Scholars.


3. Meeting Adjourned

Rousseau asked for the meeting to adjourn at 12:42 p.m.

Evans moved that the meeting adjourn. Porter seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.



President



Secretary