

Central Arkansas Library System

Board of Directors Meeting

February 27, 2025, at noon

Hybrid Meeting: Dee Brown Library & Zoom Video Call

Board members in attendance were Karama Neal, Alexis Sims, Audrey Evans, Luke Underwood, Dustin McDaniel, Jennifer Jamison, David Finkbeiner, Ginann Swindle, and Esperanza Massana-Crane. Stacey McAdoo, Ryan Davis, Madhav Shroff, and Joyce Elliott were absent.

Staff in attendance were Nate Coulter, Tameka Lee, Jo Spencer, Ellen Samples, Kate Matthews, Gonzalo Hernandez, Eliza Borné, Hannah Saulters, Nathan Smith, Andre Thornton, Pamela Bandy, Carol Coffey, Joe Hudak, Elizabeth Clements, Mark Hotchkiss, Heather Pressgrove, Heather Zbinden, Stu Nichols, Ray Terry, Brant Collins, Rebecca Beadle, Amanda Orgel, Sarah Jane Rawlinson, Chloe Kilcrease, and Glenn Whaley.

Also in attendance were Amanda Sturgell with Polk Stanley Wilcox and Stephanie Chase with Constructive Disruption.

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes

Neal asked the Board to approve the January Minutes.

Evans moved to approve the January Minutes as presented. Swindle seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

2. Approval of January Financials

Underwood reported that as of January 31, 2024, CALS assets totaled \$110,339,885.66. The annual net income totaled \$354,754.99. He noted that tax receipts were higher than expected through January.

Spencer added that the increase is due to the collections from the Homestead Tax Credit and the disbursement of the credit in January.

Neal filed the January Financials for audit.

Information Items

1. Director's Report

Coulter thanked Brian Martin and the Dee Brown Library staff for hosting this Board meeting. Coulter noted the library's popularity in the community.

Coulter highlighted a few items from his written report:

- **Possible Partnership with LR Convention & Visitors Bureau:** Matthews described her recent trip to the Augusta, Georgia and Louisville, Kentucky Public Libraries, to view the retail spaces occupied by local visitors and convention bureaus. Matthews noted that those spaces have a small number of highly curated retail spaces for local goods. Coulter reiterated that he and Spencer hoped to finalize the agreement between CALS and the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau soon.
- **Pigeon Patrol:** Bandy introduced James Boyce from Avian Flyaway. Boyce stated that Avian Flyaway's deterrent system is an electric barrier that would be installed wherever pigeons could nest or roost on the building. Boyce compared the system to a small cattle fence. He described the system as an inch and a half tall with polycarbon insulators and UV protectant. All the hardware is stainless steel. Boyce estimated that the insulators have a thirty-year lifespan and can withstand snow, ice, and rain. The system will be stud-welded to the building and be a permanent fixture. Avian Flyaway guarantees their work where they have treated the building.

Coulter asked Boyce about the estimated installation time. Boyce estimated twenty-five to thirty-five days for installation. Coulter asked about disruptions to patrons or passersby. Boyce stated that Avian Flyaway is accustomed to working around businesses and patrons and would be open to working hours outside of Roberts Library's hours of operation. Coulter also asked about the visibility of the hardware after its installation. Boyce noted that the average person would not notice it is there. Boyce noted that Avian Flyaway has installed this equipment on the Jefferson Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, and the U.S. Treasury Building. Finkbeiner asked about the roosting locations of the pigeons on the building. Boyce answered that the birds are everywhere on the outside structures of the building and explained why that is so. Sims asked about the electrical needs of the Roberts building for this equipment. Boyce replied that he believed CALS would only need six 110-volt electrical outlets. Finkbeiner asked about the opportunity to wrap the rafters of the building with the electrical equipment and stated that he thought it might be a more cost-effective method. Boyce expressed his doubts about that route and argued that it would only deter about seventy-five percent of the pigeons currently there.

Neal asked about the system's harm to the pigeons. Boyce replied that the system pulsates and does not kill the birds. Boyce estimated that the system would last twenty-five to thirty-five years if it is properly maintained. Bandy asked about the issues most likely to go wrong with the system. Boyce answered that contractors working around the system can cause problems. Trash is also a factor. If snow accumulates on the system, it will shut down until the snow melts. The system does have flexibility to move because it is spring-tensioned. Bandy noted the total cost estimate from Avian Flyaway, which is \$179,000. [Update on March 12, 2025: the actual estimate is \$163,990.]

- **Update on Safe Routes Project:** Coulter updated the Board on the expansion of Jonesboro Drive, in front of Children's Library and over I-630. Coulter shared some of

the architectural renderings in his Director's Report. He applauded CALS and staff for being a major catalyst in getting this project underway.

- **Strategic Planning:** Chase with Constructive Disruption updated the Board on the Strategic Planning process and timeline. Chase reminded the Board of the Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values, as they exist after their approval by the Board at the December 2024 meeting. Chase outlined four priority concepts that will help CALS accomplish its strategic goals. The priorities were reported directly from the community and staff and are raising awareness, building lasting relationships, combating loneliness and isolation, and organizational excellence. Each priority will have a set of goals that will help ensure the priorities succeed. Chase reminded the Board of the Strategic Planning timeline. The Strategic Planning Team will finish the draft language and submit to CALS leadership by the end of March. Throughout April, CALS staff will engage with the drafted priorities and goals and provide feedback. In May, the final strategic plan will come to the Board for review and approval. Chase complimented CALS on the positive comments it received through community feedback.

Neal thanked the members of the Strategic Planning Team for their hard work and dedication and thanked Constructive Disruption for helping with this process.

- **CALS Used Book Sale:** Coulter mentioned hearing a complaint about scanners at the CALS Used Book Sale. Borné noted that 1,188 shoppers visited the Port over the eleven hours the Sale was open to the public over Valentine's Day weekend. CALS collected \$17,812.48 after taxes and fees. Addressing the scanners, Borné added that the complaints against them ebb and flow. Borné noted the best guideline for scanners addresses customer behavior, not the actual scanning, and that banning the scanning devices would result in a decrease in revenue. Sims added that she had attended the last two Used Book Sales and agreed that enforcing customer behavior was a better option than banning scanners and losing revenue. Beadle asked where the Used Book Sale would take place once the Port closes. Borné answered that the Sale will be held on the first floor of the Roberts library. Coulter added that the Roberts would have a permanent used book space, a retail space for CALS merchandise, and an archival space for rotating history and art exhibits. Borné added that the Port will host two more sales before the move back to Main, to avoid moving stock.
- **Next Board Meeting:** Neal explained that the March Board meeting that is scheduled for March 27, 2025, at noon coincides with Spring Break within the State. Underwood was the only board member who indicated he would be away for the break. Evans asked about the CALS staff availability. Lee and Borné stated that they would be out of town with children and not able to attend that meeting. The board decided to leave the meeting on the schedule for March 27, 2025. The March meeting will be at Maumelle Library.

2/27/25

2. Move to Adjourn

Neal called the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'K. Neal', written over a horizontal line.

President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'H. Neal', written over a horizontal line.

Secretary