

# Central Arkansas Library System

## Board of Directors Meeting

April 24, 2025, at noon

### Hybrid Meeting: Rooker Library & Zoom Video Call

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

Staff in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Tameka Lee, Ellen Samples, Kate Matthews, Hannah Saulters, Nathan Smith, Pamela Bandy, Eliza Borné, Carol Coffey, Joe Hudak, Elizabeth Clements, Ray Terry, Brant Collins, Sarah Jane Rawlinson, Leslie Blanchard, Amanda Orgel, Heather Zbinden, Stu Nichols, Audrey Taylor, Shya Washington-Webb, Gonzalo Hernandez, Cassandra Kwarteng, and Glenn Whaley.

Also in attendance were Matthew Lehner with CDI, Stephanie Chase with Constructive Disruption, Daniel McFadin with the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, Kate East and James Sullivan with AMR Architects, and Terry Haley.

#### **Action Items**

##### **1. Approval of Minutes**

Neal asked the Board to approve the March Minutes.

Shroff moved to approve the March Minutes as presented. McDaniel seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

##### **2. Approval of March Financials**

Underwood reported that as of March 31, 2025, CALS' assets totaled approximately \$105,000,000. Tax receipts as of April 2025 were \$1,670,000. That totals over \$4,500,000 for 2025, which is 3% over the previous year. Underwood added that the net income is negative \$3,390,000 but added that more tax revenue would help to offset that.

Neal filed the March Financials for audit.

#### **Information Items**

##### **1. Director's Report**

Coulter thanked Audrey Taylor and the Rooker Library staff for hosting this Board meeting. Coulter noted that Taylor is the longest-serving CALS employee. Coulter also introduced Cassandra Kwarteng, the new PR Specialist in the Communications department.

Coulter highlighted a few items from his written report:

- **Renovations at the Roberts Library:** East and Sullivan with AMR described the future projects at the Roberts Library, which include closing the entrance doors on President Clinton Avenue and installing an ADA complaint ramp at the west entrance. East argued that the current entrance layout is not user-friendly and that the new entryway on the west side of Roberts would flow nicely with visitors and traffic to Main. East stated that the ramp would work nicely with parking in either the parking deck or the lot between Main and the Cox building. East and Sullivan shared their renderings and designs electronically with the Board.
- **Pigeon Abatement:** Coulter asked Sullivan to discuss his letter regarding the pigeons at Roberts. The letter was shared with the board prior to the meeting. Sullivan stated that the current process of power washing is not ideal, in the long term. Hernandez added that CALS currently outsources power washing to a company that washes twice a week before the Roberts Library opens. The company washes the western entranceway, sidewalk, and stairs. CALS currently pays approximately \$1,300 per month for this service. Hernandez described the current test-method of “capping” the I-beams with steel. This method prevents the pigeons from roosting but requires outsourcing to a roofing company. Whaley stated that pigeons have always been a problem at Roberts Library, but the situation was exacerbated by the nearby demolition of the ramps onto and off the I-30 River Bridge which forced the pigeons to find a new home.

McDaniel reiterated that something needs to be done regarding the pigeon feces around the entrance but expressed concern over the I-beam option. He suggested having a structural engineer and the building’s insurance carrier approve the plan before any work is done of the existing exoskeleton of the building.

McDaniel added that he would support whatever plan the Board adopts but cautioned members about the large expense any pigeon abatement option will cost, coupled with other planned construction on the western side of Roberts Library. Finkbeiner stated that he supported the I-beam installation option because of its cost and support from CALS staff. Borné stated that she appreciated thinking of the long-term integrity of the building, and East and Sullivan agreed that consulting a structural engineer was a sound idea before going in that direction, but recommended something be done to prevent the pigeon waste because power washing causes wear and tear on the building and is not a viable, long-term solution.

Neal reminded the Board that no decision needed to be made at this meeting; this was an informational presentation for the Board to consider options and to decide at the May meeting.

- **Strategic Planning:** Coffey and Chase presented the finalized draft of the Strategic Plan. Coffey described the Strategic Planning process and methodology, which included nearly 3,500 survey responses, ninety-two focus group participants, twenty-five Community

Café participants, passive engagement opportunities, and over forty interviews with community members. Coffey also thanked the twenty-seven CALS staff members who have worked on the Strategic Plan.

Chase described the Strategic Plan draft as a combination of community input and staff expertise. Chase reminded the Board of the goals outlined in the Plan for CALS to accomplish its Vision and Mission Statements. They are: Raising Awareness, Building Lasting Relationships with Our Community, Combating Loneliness and Isolation for Those Often Overlooked, and Organizational Excellence. Chase then outlined strategies for how those goals could be achieved, which were included in the Strategic Planning handout.

Chase reminded the Board that they will vote to approve the Strategic Plan at the May Board meeting. She also invited members and stakeholders to think about which goal resonates with them most, and how they could help CALS achieve that goal. Neal asked the Board members to familiarize themselves with the Strategic Plan and to be ready to discuss and vote on the Plan in May.

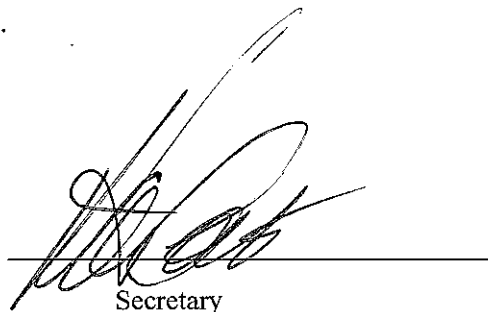
- **Next Board Meeting:** The next Board meeting will be May 22, 2025, at Nixon Library.

## 2. Move to Adjourn

Neal called the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.



President



Secretary