

# Central Arkansas Library System

## Board of Directors Meeting

July 24, 2025, at noon

### Hybrid Meeting: Cox Building & Zoom Video Call

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

Staff in attendance were Nate Coulter, Jo Spencer, Tameka Lee, Ellen Samples, Kate Matthews, Hannah Saulters, Nathan Smith, Eliza Borné, Carol Coffey, Joe Hudak, Ray Terry, Brant Collins, Sarah Jane Rawlinson, Amanda Orgel, Heather Zbinden, Stu Nichols, Jennifer Cordell, Rebecca Beadle, Andre Thornton, Linda Ellis, Priscilla Barnes, Gonzalo Hernandez, Marilyn Cash, Brian Robertson, and Glenn Whaley.

Also in attendance were Amanda Sturgell with Polk Stanley Wilcox, Joe Flaherty with the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, and Matthew Lehner, Johnathan Runnels, Humberto Rodriguez, and Blake Helm with CDI.

#### **Action Items**

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

Neal asked the Board to approve the May Minutes.

Swindle moved to approve the May Minutes as presented. Massana-Crane seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

##### **2. Approval of May and June Financials**

Underwood reported that as of June 30, 2025, CALS' assets totaled approximately \$109,431,000. Tax receipts totaled \$13.2 million year-to-date, which is 7% over the previous year. Spencer added that several locations are dealing with HVAC issues. The repair costs for those units will come from the Deferred Maintenance budget.

Neal filed the May and June Financials for audit.

##### **3. Resolution Allowing CALS to Apply for an ADEC Grant**

Borné described the Arkansas Community Assistance Grant program that is administered by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission. The funds from the grant would go towards the installation of an ADA accessible ramp on the west side of the Roberts Library. The Board was informed about the project at the April 2025 Board meeting. Borné stated that CALS is seeking \$602,552 in funding. Applicants must match their awards, which CALS will do through its 2022 bond funds. Borné explained that the CALS administration would need official approval from its Board, as part of the

application process. Underwood made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Evans and passed unanimously.

## **Information Items**

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

Coulter highlighted a few items from his written report:

- Coulter introduced Lehner with CDI. Lehner then introduced members of his team. Lehner added that the project is still within the initial budget. Coulter reiterated the significance of reopening Main on September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Coulter mentioned some of the recent tours CALS staff have led. Coulter added that there would be a tour of Main after the Board meeting adjourns.
- Coulter introduced Robertson, who discussed the digitization of Carolyn LeMaster's Arkansas Jewish History collection at Roberts Library. Robertson added that the collection is seventy-four linear feet in total. Borné added that the fundraising initiative has had statewide support, due to the collection's significance. Evans asked how the decision was made to fund the project through the CALS Foundation. Borné answered that this fundraising project is like other projects, where the CALS Foundation supports an ongoing project at the library. Coulter added that part of the confusion lies in the fact that CALS staff overlap with the CALS Foundation, and the two entities are not separately staffed.
- Coulter discussed the development of the 30 Crossing Park. Coulter added that he is hopeful about this project and thinks that space could be developed by early 2026. The space would include shade trees, pollinator gardens, and a stage for programming. Underwood asked if the obstacle to completing this project was bureaucracy or fundraising. Coulter responded that the bureaucracy was stalling the project, for fear that developing this small area would impact the development of larger parts of the city.
- Neal reminded everyone of some important upcoming dates: the next Board meeting is August 28, 2025, at the UALR Downtown Space; the Main Reopening event is September 20; and the kickoff for the Six Bridges Book Festival is September 28.

### **Move to Adjourn**

Underwood made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Evans and the motion carried unanimously. Neal called the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.



President



Secretary