

Meeting of the Muscogee County Library Board

January 27, 2022 – 1:00 pm

Columbus Public Library – Synovus Room

Members in Attendance:

LaRae Dixon Moore, Vice Chair
Todd Robinson
Grace Nagel
Marion Scott
Sebastian Cahill (virtual)
Beth Schwartz (virtual)
Denise Eckley
Reggie Lewis
Darcy Brito (virtual)
Tavenesha Shepard (virtual)

Also in Attendance:

Alan Harkness, Director, CVL
Gabriel Lundeen, Deputy Director, CVL
Tracie Price, Finance/HR
Katie Burnett, Branch Manager, CPL
Megan Aarant Jackson, Teen Services
Tiffany Wilson, Community Enhance.
Laura Ann Mann, Muscogee County
Library Foundation
Tammy Battley, Operations
Laine Presley, Children's
Jillian Weaver, Materials Mgmt.
Leisa Blankenship, Circulation

Vice Chair Dixon Moore called the meeting to order at 1:02pm.

Approval of the Minutes - Reggie Lewis moved to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Todd Robinson. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

Public Comment – None

Friends of the Library – There was no representative present by Director Harkness announced they were busy getting ready for the Book Sale happening this weekend.

Muscogee County Library Foundation – Foundation Director Mann stated the Gala has been canceled. The author who was supposed to hold a public appearance has canceled their travel due to COVID. Wine, Women, and Shoes is still currently on and planning is underway. Tickets start at \$100. Please share this information broadly. The Foundation Board will meet again on February 8, 2022. They are currently working on their budget and it looks like they are on track to be able to prove a little over \$900k in financial support in the upcoming year. The Friends of the Library recently voted to dissolve their 501(c)3 and will serve as a committee under the Foundation. Expectations are that the Friends will still operate, as far as the public is able to see, as usual. They will continue to operate the store, have book sales, and accept book donations.

Treasurer's Report – Tracie Price covered the Period 6 financials which ended on December 31, 2021.

Director's Report – Alan Harkness announced that the Cusseta branch is only slightly behind schedule and they are anticipating an April opening.

Harkness reported that in February we will reopen meeting rooms and in March we will resume regular programming. This with a caveat that if community conditions with COVID change, these plans could change as well.

Harkness reported that the salary study with Carl Vinson Institute of Government has been canceled due to the faculty member leaving the organization. The library will look into other options.

Harkness informed the Board that CPL has been without security since January 1, 2022 and all has gone well. Kudos to Branch Manager Burnett for her reutilization of staff and additional training. We will continue to monitor this.

Harkness stated the library is looking into providing NARCAN available at all branches. We are working with the Health Department to secure this product and the associated training. Opiate overdose has not been a problem in our libraries at this point but the DPH reports that opiate addiction has increased over 100% this past year in our community.

Harkness reported that the health department continues to come to the library on Tuesday and Saturdays to administer the COVID vaccine and boosters and it has been successful.

Harkness updated the Board on the progress at the South Columbus Public Library and was able to share renderings.

Harkness covered the materials he sent out to the Board about intellectual freedom. He covered the Collection Development policy and the updated Request for Reconsideration form that is now available on our website through the policy. He reminded that Board that if someone does not agree with the outcome of the staff decision related to reconsideration requests, they are able to appeal to the Regional Board.

Branch Report – Deputy Director Lundeen reported that Staff Day will once again be virtual and will take place on February 21, 2022. The topic will be “Allyship in the Workplace.” He shared anecdotal stories that demonstrate how the library is a safe space for so many within our community.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business –

Election Board Chair - LaRae Moore Dixon nominated Marion Scott. Motion was seconded by Beth Schwartz. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

Election Board Secretary - LaRae Moore Dixon nominated Todd Robinson. Motion was seconded by Denise Eckley. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

New Board Members – Proposed new Board members are Susan Berry, SirMichael Jones, and Robert Landers. Denise Eckley motioned to accept these three members. Motion was seconded by Reggie Lewis. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

Renewing terms for Beth Schwartz and Todd Robinson – Grace Nagel motioned to renew these two members. Motion was seconded by Reggie Lewis. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

Approval of addition of up to \$1.2M in reserves for South Building project – Harkness explained to the Board that due to the nature of building materials the project cost has gone up. The Foundation may be able to contribute \$600k of this and we would only need \$600k from reserves but he wanted approval for the full \$1.2M in case it's needed. Discussion proceeded. Marion Scott motioned to approve this expenditure. Motion was seconded by Todd Robinson. Motion was approved unanimously by Robinson, Nagel, Scott, Cahill, Schwartz, Eckley, Lewis, Brito, and Shepard.

Chair's Report – None

Meeting was adjourned at 1:57 pm.