

Meeting of the Muscogee County Library Board
January 27, 2023 – 1:00 pm
Mildred L. Terry Public Library – Alpha Kappa Alpha Room

Members in Attendance:

Marion Scott, Chair
LaRae Dixon Moore
Susan Berry
Beth Schwartz
Denise Eckley
Tavanasha Shepard
SirMichael Jones
Reggie Lewis
Todd Robinson

Also, in Attendance:

Alan Harkness, Director, CVL
Gabriel Lundeen, Deputy Director
Tracie Price, Finance/HR
Katie Burnett, CPL Branch Manager
Amber Brookins, Materials/Statistics Coordinator
Greta Browder, Children's Outreach
Coordinator
Lizette Cruz, Administrative Specialist

Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

Chair Scott asked for **approval of the minutes** from the **December 1st, 2022**, meeting. Denise Eckley moved to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Todd Robinson. Motion was approved unanimously by Scott, Dixon Moore, Berry, Schwartz, Eckley, Shepard, Jones, Lewis, and Robinson.

Public Comment – None

Muscogee County Library Foundation – Director Harkness gave the MCLF Report. The Founders Society Gala was an enormous success. The guest author for the Gala, Marie Benedict, gave a free public presentation the day after the Gala in the Grand Reading Room, and had over 100 in attendance.

Treasurer's Report – Tracie Price covered the FY23 Period 6 financials which ended on December 31st, 2022. Everything is on track except for energy costs. Price reviewed the energy bills for the past year and found that the July, August, and September bills were significantly higher than in the past. There was an 83% increase. The new Operations Coordinator is doing assessments of all the air-conditioning systems to verify that they are functioning properly. Price has asked Georgia Power to do an audit to verify that the meters are being measured correctly. The bills coming in presently have returned to normal trends. If the trends continue as normal, the increase of July, April and September will put energy costs over by about \$55,000.00 budgeted.

The reason the discrepancy took so long to discover is because the CVL does not receive the energy bills in house. The school district receives one bill for the entire system and then they separate the individual schools, and the Columbus libraries branches costs from there. This means it takes longer to find out when an energy cost is out of the norm. To prevent this in the future, Price is working on developing processes that will alert admin sooner when an energy bill has increased significantly.

There was some discussion held on other contributing factors such as the age of buildings, built in energy saving measures, energy alternatives and budget comparison prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director's Report –

Director Harkness presented the updated dashboard statistics. (Please see attached).

The Cathy Fussell Quilt Exhibit is up and open in the grand Reading Room at Columbus Public Library. It will run through March 5th. On February 2nd, there will be an opening reception at 6PM with Cathy Fussell presenting at 7PM.

The Winter Reading program ends next week. There were 600 participants with 400 completions. The NEA Big Read starts February 17th at the CSU (Columbus State University) Riverside Theater with graphic novelist and illustrator, Thi Bui, the author of *The Best We Could*.

The CVL is partnering with the Springer Opera House on their First Act Program. This first event

is called "Going on a Bear Hunt." Last weekend they came to the North Columbus Public Library. This weekend they will be at the Mildred L. Terry Public Library on Saturday and the Columbus Public Library on Sunday. North Columbus was packed at this event, and we expect the same for MLT and CPL this weekend.

Gabbi Harp is the new Operations Coordinator for the CPL. She comes with extensive experience in property management for the Pezold Hotel Group. Director Harkness then introduced Greta Browder; the Children's Outreach Coordinator who did a presentation on the new program being launched by the CVL called LENA Start.

Branch Report - Deputy Director Gabriel Lundeen showed a video presentation of the continuing construction of the South Branch Library, and pictures of several events including the Springer House First Act "Going on a Bear Hunt" at the North Columbus Public Library.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business

Vote for a New Chair

Chair Scott wished to step back from the position of Chair. After some discussion Beth Schwartz made a motion to elect Darcy Brito as the new chair. SirMichael Jones seconded that motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Scott, Dixon Moore, Berry, Schwartz, Eckley, Shepard, Jones, Lewis, and Robinson.

Approval of the updated job descriptions presented by the Operations Committee.

Operations Committee Member Todd Robinson presented the following revised job descriptions for approval by the board.

a. Cataloging Librarian

b. Librarian I

c. Acquisition & Receiving Specialist

Todd Robison made a motion to recommend that the Muscogee County Library Board approve the job descriptions as written. Motion was seconded by LaRae Dixon Moore. Motion was approved unanimously by Scott, Dixon Moore, Berry, Schwartz, Eckley, Shepard, Jones, Lewis, and Robinson.

Present considerations for new members to the Muscogee County Library Board

Director Harkness noted that there has been an opening on the board for a while. In addition to this opening, Robert Landers has moved on from his position as the Civic Center Director and resigned from the board. There are now two vacant slots. Director Harkness presented the resumes of three candidates for these two slots, Donovan Granville, Judy Barnett, and Teasha Johnson.

After some discussion Dixon Moore made a motion to accept Granville as a board member. Schwartz seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Scott, Dixon Moore, Berry, Schwartz, Eckley, Shepard, Jones, Lewis, and Robinson. Denise Eckley made a motion to accept Johnson as a board member. Robinson seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Scott, Dixon Moore, Berry, Schwartz, Eckley, Shepard, Jones, Lewis, and Robinson.

Review and discuss proposed changes to the by-laws

The Muscogee County Library Board reviewed and discussed proposed changes to the by-laws which would add the following:

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1: (Covers number of meetings)

Section 2: (Covers a quorum for voting)

Add a Section 3:

The public is invited to attend all meetings, which are held to conduct the business of the Muscogee County Libraries. Only residents may address the Board, and only at the allotted time on the agenda. To participate, residents should notify the Library Director by 2pm the business day prior to the meeting.

Comments to the Board are:

- not to exceed five (5) minutes
- for the Board to hear, but not to take action
- limited to only one member of a group
- limited to one presentation of the same topic per Board meeting
- limited to 30 minutes in total per meeting

After some discussion, the following changes were agreed upon:

- Change the notification to participate from “2PM the business day prior” to “2pm two business days prior”.
- Remove “limited to one presentation of the same topic per Board meeting.”
- Add “Only residents of Muscogee County may address the Board.”

The Board would also like the CVL Code of Conduct posted prominently in the meeting rooms and to have any participants reminded of the Code of Conduct prior to speaking.

Director Harkness will amend the language as indicated above and send the final copy to all Board members for a 30-day review as per the by-laws before voting in the March 2023 meeting.

Chair’s Report – Chair Scott did not have a report to present but wanted to thank everyone for their support and level of commitment to the board and the CVL. She also thanked the entire CVL team.

Next meeting is set for February 23, 2023.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.

