

Muscogee County Library Board Meeting  
Thursday, May 23, 2013  
Columbus Public Library

Minutes

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Meridith Jarrell      Owen Ditchfield      Michelle Griffin  
Frank Star            Carleton Coleman  
David Fox             Lori Auten

Ex-Officios: Linda Davis (for John Phillips)  
Tyler Townsend, Library Foundation  
John Donohue, Friends of Libraries

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Kent Illges            M. A. Dowdell      Helene Watson  
Rick Covington      Price Walker, Jr.

Ex-Officios: John Wells, MCSD  
Athavia Senior, MCSD

OTHERS ATTENDING

Wanda Edwards, CVL Interim Director  
Gabriel Lundeen, CVL Deputy Director  
Lyn Anderson, CVL Chief Financial Officer  
Abbie Dillard, Chattahoochee Valley Libraries Board Chair  
Mark Rice, *Ledger-Enquirer Newspapers*

Chair Meridith Jarrell called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the April 25, 2013 meeting and the May 9, 2013 called meeting. Owen Ditchfield moved that both sets of minutes be approved. Frank Star seconded the motion. **The minutes were approved unanimously as distributed.**

PUBLIC COMMENT – There was none.

FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES – John Donohue reported the FOL Book Sale starts next Tuesday for members only and then will open to the public on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The hours of the sale will be 30 minutes after the library opens and will close 30 minutes before library

closing. Mr. Donohue stated that at the most recent FOL Board meeting, it was noted that revenue is going to be down this year. He stated that Book Store revenue is going to be down about 25%. He said this is a continuing trend over the past four or five years. The group is looking at different avenues of raising revenue to reverse the trend. Mr. Donohue said the Board is considering recruiting outside directors. To date, Board members come through the Friends organization and they tend to have similar ideas. He said it might be beneficial to have individuals on the Board that did not come through the Friends membership. He said this is something they are looking at over the next few meetings. Meridith Jarrell suggested that the Friends of Libraries may want to consider asking a member of the Library Foundation to serve on its Board.

LIBRARY FOUNDATION – Tyler Townsend announced that Jeanne Swift will become the Chair of the Library Foundation on July 1, 2013. He stated that Ed Burdeshaw will become the Chair-Elect on July 1, 2013.

Mr. Townsend stated that one of the goals of the Foundation has been to get to know the Library Board better and spend more time with the Library Board. He thanked Meridith Jarrell for including the Foundation because it allows the Foundation to raise more money to benefit the library.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Lyn Anderson reviewed the Period 10 financial report with the Board. Revenue is slightly under budget. Mr. Anderson reminded the Board that he had told them at their last Board meeting that the library would be receiving some revenue from the state. He said the amount received is \$23,803. He said that will be included in next month's report. He stated the remainder of the Foundation donations has been received. He informed the Board that the amount showing from the Foundation donations was a little over what they had budgeted and this was due to a carryover from the previous year because funds were not received until the current fiscal year. Mr. Anderson reviewed the expense side of the period financials. He stated the reason the report shows an under budget status is the fact that there are a number of positions open and are in the process of being filled. Frank Star moved the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. David Fox seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report was distributed prior to the meeting. The Chair asked Wanda Edwards if she had anything to add to the report.

Ms. Edwards reported that approximately 4,500 people attended the Children's Book Festival. She said the library was packed and it was a big success. She reported that the Aflac Vacation Reading Program kickoff was held. She said they had held a soft kickoff and so the numbers were down a little but as the program progresses, numbers are expected to rise. She said the Teen Vacation Reading Program had a pizza kickoff and it was very successful. Their numbers are up over last year.

Ms. Edwards reported on her attendance at the Directors meeting in Athens. Most of the meeting was different speakers talking about the Georgia Library for Accessible Services. Several archivists spoke. She said one of the state archivists wants to come to Columbus and do some digital archiving of some of the documents in the Genealogy Department.

Ms. Edwards addressed the open positions at the library. She said a lot of the positions are being filled internally which is in turn opening another position in the library.

### BRANCH REPORT

Gabriel Lundeen reported that a lot of summer reading is going on in the branches. He said the Marketing Department did a fantastic video promoting the vacation reading program and Henry McCoy and Darius Covington really did an excellent on the video. The video can be seen on the library's website.

The new bookmobile has been on the road for over a month and extremely well received. He said he has heard nothing but good things about it.

Lyn Seaman and Sarah Spence just finished the eighth round of *Simple Steps*. Mr. Lundeen said this program has really had an impact on future generations. The program is being expanded at Columbus Regional Healthcare. The goal is to have someone there every day of the week to read to the children. He said it is really an excellent outreach program.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### Finance Committee Recommendation: Approval of the amended FY2013/2014 Budget

Lyn Anderson reviewed proposed budget with the Board and stated it has changed only slightly from the document they had previously received. Under the line item, Maintenance & Operation, the amount budgeted increased from \$98,454 in 2012/2013 to \$198,410 in 2013/2014. Mr. Anderson stated this is because of the Internet service being changed to where the library system contracts with a provider and GPLS reimburses the system. The property tax digest did increase to \$6,266,135. Due to the increase in property tax, the Beginning Reserve amount was reduced from \$560,610 to \$491,311. The Foundation indicated they may be going through some organizational changes which may cause them to provide a little less than originally anticipated.

On the expense side of the budget, Employee Training (Travel) was increased back to the same level as FY2012/2013. The management group reviewed the CPL Renovation and added \$114,450 back into the Capital Buildings and Equipment for a total budgeted expense of \$141,850. The Budgeted Reserve was increased by \$25,000 to \$50,000. Mr. Anderson explained this is for emergency use should something arise that must be addressed.

David Fox asked about the rebate from the city on the unused SPLOST. He asked if that was figured into the budget. Mr. Anderson said it was not because it is still in question.

He said that if the library receives the funds, it will be just included in revenue and then offset on the expense side with whatever expenses are incurred that the funds can be used for. Mr. Anderson stated that the receipt of the funds will have to be approved by the Muscogee County Library Board and the Muscogee County School District. Mr. Fox asked if use of the funds was limited. The Chair stated that it can only be used on the scope of what the original SPLOST was to be covered. The Chair said it is thought it will be about \$150,000. There is about \$260,000 +/- left. The Memorandum of Understanding between the city and the school district for a certain portion for the bus loop which took approximately \$105,000 from the SPLOST balance.

Owen Ditchfield asked if the library was consulted when the school district diverted some of the funds for use for the bus loop. Mr. Anderson stated that they said they were going to use the library's parking area for a flow through for the buses. Library management said that would be a lot of traffic for the parking lot and that the school district would pay for any damages.

Owen Ditchfield stated he was prepared to vote against the budget if there had been no capital improvements budgeted. He said he was very pleased that there was at least some funding included for improvements.

The committee recommendation did not require a second. **The recommendation passed unanimously.**

#### Director's Search Update – Library Board Candidate Approval

The Chair Director's Search Committee had final interviews and the "meet and greet" with the candidates. She said the candidates appreciated the process and learned a lot.

The Search Committee recommended to the Board that Alan Harkness be hired as the next Library Director. Mr. Harkness is currently with the Georgia Public Library Service. The Chair gave a brief background on Mr. Harkness to the Board.

The committee recommendation did not require a second. **The recommendation passed unanimously.**

Owen Ditchfield moved and Frank Star seconded the motion to authorize Chair Meridith Jarrell and Lyn Anderson to negotiate the details of the hiring with Mr. Harkness. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Dr. Star said he felt that one of the candidates, Ms. Odom, would be an asset to the library. The Chair said she thought she would certainly be a good candidate.

NEW BUSINESS There was none.

Frank Star recommended to the Chair that she contact Rob Varner, Muscogee County Board of Education Chair, to ask that if ex-officios of the School Board do not attend meetings of the

Muscogee County Library Board, they be replaced by another Board member who will attend the meetings. Owen Ditchfield asked if that included John Wells. Dr. Star stated that it should cover all ex-officios.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair reported that it had been brought to her attention that Robert's Rules of Order defines an ex-officio in the way a person is elected to the Board. Normally, a regular board member goes through the nomination process through the Nominating Committee. An ex-officio are named and/or appointed and not always by name but by position. Example: Tyler Townsend is an ex-officio of the Muscogee County Library Board because he is Chair of the Muscogee County Library Foundation. Over time, an ex-officio has gotten to be known as a second-class citizen. That is not the case. An ex-officio member of the Board is responsible for everything that a Board member is according to the bylaws of that organization. The Muscogee County Library Board Bylaws say that ex-officios are non-voting members. If it did not say that, they would have a vote. Therefore, Tyler Townsend does not have a vote, John Wells does not have a vote, etc. That is because our bylaws state that. However, if you want to use Tyler on committees, you can have him on a committee. If he wants to say something in a committee meeting, he can. However, as in a regular board meeting, the ex-officios do not have a vote.

The Chair informed the Board Linda Hyles would be leaving her position with the library in order to spend time with her family. The Chair asked if anyone could provide a resolution in honor of Ms. Hyles' work at the library.

The Chair proclaimed the following:

“Be it that today is May 23, 2013, the Muscogee County Library Board proclaims it Linda Hyles Happy Retirement Day.”

**The Board voted and approved the proclamation unanimously.**

The Chair reported that a group of people got together and raised \$32,000 for the endowment and purchased the family room naming opportunity at the Mildred L. Terry Public Library in honor of Claudya Muller.

A letter of resignation has been received from Dr. Clark Gillett. He stated that he has so many administrative responsibilities at the hospital that he does not have the time to devote to his membership on the Library Board. David Fox will reconvene the Nominating Committee to fill Dr. Gillett's term.

The Chair stated that it was recently discovered that GPLS leaves Library Board tenure up to the individual Boards. Our By-laws say 3 years but the Board has been doing four years. Future appointments will adhere to the bylaws. The Chair will work with Debbie McGreggor on making the corrections to Board tenure.

The Chair asked the Board to review a handout that she had received from Alice Budge (Friends of Libraries) and distributed to them dealing with what is expected of library trustees. She stated the handout was good in addressing the fact that the Board is a governing board and that the library administration are charged with the day-to-day operations of the library. She said she thought it was an excellent tool for trustees.

Owen Ditchfield asked if a reception was going to be held for the new Director upon his arrival. The Chair said she had not thought about it but thought it was a good idea.

The Chair said she would have an update at the next meeting on the ex-officios once she has met with Rob Varner.

The meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.