

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD
Minutes, April 13, 2021 Meeting
Athens-Clarke County Library Board Room

Vice Chair Kaplan called the meeting to order at 4:02pm. Trustees in attendance are Ms. Bogue, Ms. Clark, Ms. Cox, Ms. Cullen, Ms. Hall, Ms. Kaplan, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Mize, Ms. Ritter, Mr. Vernotico, Mr. Timmons, and Mr. Woods. Absent were Ms. Boydston, Ms. Darnell, Ms. Green, Ms. Hunt, and Chair Russell. Staff members present were Ms. Bell, Ms. Mayfield, Ms. Fike, Ms. Green, Ms. Shimobi-Obijuru, Ms. Plaksin, Mr. Bush, Ms. Bartra, Ms. Schumman, Ms. Eades, and Ms. Price.

Announcements:

Ms. Mayfield announced Ms. Bartra as the new Branch Manager of the Pinewoods Branch.

Ms. Bell announced Ms. Mayfield's promotion from Circulation Desk Supervisor to Assistant Director of Regional Services. Ms. Bell shared that Ms. Mayfield was outstanding throughout the interview process, and possesses outstanding organizational and team building skills.

Ms. Bell announced Ms. Shimobi-Obijuru's promotion from Lead Circulation Supervisor to Regional circulation Coordinator. Ms. Mayfield shared that Ms. Shimobi-Ogijuru's excellent organizational and problem solving skills will fit perfectly into her new role.

Ms. Bell announced Ms. Price as the new Administrative Assistant. Ms. Bell shared that Ms. Price is a self-starter with excellent organizational and customer service skills. Her bright personality stood out from other candidates.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes:

- The Draft Minutes from the January 12, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved.

Approval of Agenda:

- The Agenda was then adopted and unanimously approved. (Moved by Mr. Vernotico, Seconded by Mr. Woods)

Financial Report:

- FY2021 - QTR 3, unanimously approved. (Motioned by Mr. Timmons, Seconded by Br. Vernotico)

Committee Reports:

- **Foundation**

Ms. Bogue gave the report for the Foundation. She stated that the Foundation is currently valued at around \$1,500,000.00 as of the 1st of January, 2021. Ms. Bogue stated that the Foundation moved \$60K from the Merrill Lynch account to the Suntrust bank account to be used locally. Ms. Bogue stated that the current interest accrued on the account was \$14,652 for the month, and that the value today, per Meg Parker at Merrill Lynch, is \$1,494,184.00 Ms. Bogue stated that she has met with David Baker twice to finalize plans to get people to come forward and serve on the Foundation Board of Directors. He thinks 6 members will be needed, and he plans to have that many serving by December 2021.

- **Friends of the Library** - Geraldine Kalim gave the report as the liaison for the ACCL Friends of the Library. She is currently the Secretary. She reports that the friends are thinking of creative ways to sell books by the box and by the bag online, but they are still in the planning phase. She stated that they are exploring selling items with their logo as a revenue generating idea. She stated that the board needs new members, and asked everyone to send folks her way. She also mentioned the slogan contest and thanked those for participating.

- **Winterville**

Marie Mize gave the report, and stated that they have 2 new members and a new chair in the upcoming year. She expects great things from the new board. She thanked the board and Val for helping them during the last year of COVID. Jonathan Scott will be the new chair. She mentioned that there is a new arborist in Winterville that is planning great things for the city and the library. The book clubs have resumed outside in Pittard Park, curbside continues, and the summer reading programs will continue to be done virtually this year. She also congratulated Toby Mayfield on her promotion and stated that she looked forward to working with her.

Director's Report:

News from the State

- We received .40 cents per capita for materials; up from .35 cents per capita. MRR funding went down slightly. ARLS was cut back around \$100K for MRR. Val expressed that she spoke with Nate Rall to make sure the situation would be okay for the libraries.
- Tech funding was not included in the FY22 budget. We received \$200 million dollars nationally for libraries. The majority of the funding will go through LSTA and IMLS to the states, through grants and mini grants.
- The Georgia allotment is a little over 4 million dollars. It's part of the ARPA stimulus package focused on pandemic response, and the digital divide.
- Director Bell, Sue Plaksin, and Donna Brumby (former AD, now consultant) have been working on possible grant funding.

Covid Updates

- New Executive Order from the Governor: as of April 7, 2021, the order extends the public health state of emergency and Covid guidance. It provides vaccines, and eliminates the gathering ban and distance requirements. Unfortunately, as Director Bell states, it eliminates the mask mandate.
- Director Bell will speak with Mr. Timmons for insight regarding the Governor's Order and mask mandates. ACC has a mask mandate, but other counties in the region do not. Director Bell states that this may be an issue. Signs will be produced that read, "mask recommended" instead of, "mask required."
- Director Bell states that as was planned before the Executive Order, ACC Library will go back to normal hours May 15 or May 17, as the numbers are looking good. We are now operating between 80% and 90% service hours.
- Director Bell states that they are keeping track of any variances that may change this date.

ACCL News

- Director Bell spoke on the Audit AUP performed by CPA Terry Masters in February. She stated that ARLS received two findings, which is typical per annual audit engagement. The findings will be discussed more at the ARLS board of Directors meeting. The findings were classification of state salaries, and misclassification of MRR monies. Both of these findings have since been addressed in Ms. Fike's corrective action plan.
- Director Bell expressed excitement about the library's participation with approximately 20 other community groups with One Book Readathon. One Book has been done around the country, but never before in Athens. She states that

this is part of an IMLS Trauma Informed grant. One Book is reading “Stamped,” by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X Kendi. The authors will be part of the Zoom celebration along with the new children’s book author of the same title. The first discussion will be hosted by Jeanette Rankin Foundation on April 29th.

- Director Bell reported that the Dr. Seuss corporation pulled 6 books from publication. She stated that we followed policy, and put the books through our request for reconsideration. Three librarians led the team; Evan Bush, ACCL Children’s Librarian, Rebecca Ballard, Oconee County Library Children’s Librarian, as well as Director Bell. They decided that the books did contain value as historical merit. It was decided that the books would remain in the collection. The books will not be checked out, but will be available to the community in our Reference or Heritage collections.
- Director Bell also stated that it was National Library Week. All locations received proclamations from their counties. The library also did a DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) video that can be viewed on the library’s website.
- Director Bell stated that because of the success of early voting at the library, she offered the meeting rooms to the Mayor and the Department of Health as a possible vaccination site. She stated that over 13K people came in to vote early, and if we could make it easier to get the vaccine locally, we may help eradicate the virus.
- Director Bell stated that the Director of Lay Park has indicated that the book drop is in bad shape. Director Bell stated that they may use funds from the year end reserves to repair the book drop. Mr. Vernotico questioned if there were any other books that may be racially or gender sensitive that the library might be proactive in addressing. Ms. Cullen warned that this could potentially be problematic. Director Bell stated that there is a new document/policy that the Regional Board will review for our statement on offensive things that may have historic value. The Regional Board will review our new policy.

Communications:

- Ms. Kaplan stated that her husband has accepted a new job at St. George University on the island of Grenada. She is moving abroad, and this would be her last meeting. Director Bell congratulated and thanked her for all of her time serving on the board.
- Director Bell invited the board to read the comments of praise from patrons listed in the children’s section of the Director’s Report.
- Ms. Cox asked for an update on the Eastside library. Director Bell informed her that it is still in the pipeline, but they are working on forming two groups (one big, one small) that will begin the process. She will inform the board as soon as she hears any news on the project.

New Business:

- A new Board list and Committee list was presented. Director Bell stated that if there were any edits, Ms.Price should be contacted.

Board Actions: none

Old Business: none

Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. by Vice Chair Kaplan. (Unanimously approved without opposition)

Next Meeting July 13, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.