

The Alexandria Library Board was called to order by Chairperson Dorothy “Brooksie” Koopman, on Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 4:08 pm in the Ilka K. Dickman Board Room at Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library. Members present were R. Hobson, D. Koopman, O. Fitzgerald, A. Paul, G. Day-Fuller, and T. Downing. Member absent was F. Fannon.

Staff present were Director Dawson, Deputy Director Renner and Administrative Officer Wesson.

Mrs. Paul moved to approve the September 2011 minutes as amended. Mr. Hobson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

The Year-To-Date statistics were not available.

Mrs. Koopman announced that she had attended and made a presentation to Council at the first public budget hearing for the FY13 budget, on Saturday, October 15th. She circulated her comments to the other Board members. She added that Andrew Sulavik , a librarian from Howard University, also spoke on the library’s behalf. Mrs. Koopman reported that she had also attended the Goal 7 budget hearing on October 18, at which Director Dawson spoke. She announced that she had sent a template to the Friends groups and asked them to write to their council members and show their support of the library. She reported that she had begun work on reviewing the library’s bylaws. She said that there were three or four more budget sessions before the end of the year, and encouraged the board to speak at those upcoming sessions.

Director Dawson announced that she would be attending the department heads’ welcome for the new City Manager, Rashad Young, as well as the two budget public hearings on Saturday, November 12th and Saturday, December 17th. She reported that Overdrive, the primary vendor that provides the Library’s ebooks and downloadable audio books, now provided items which were compatible with Kindles, one of the most popular ereaders. Over a 3 day period before we announced it to our patrons, many had figured it out on their own. Since September 24, the Library had had more than 724 items downloaded to Kindle devices. Popularity is evident and this is why the Library needs additional funds for ebooks.

Director Dawson reported that the FY13 CIP budget would include a request to increase funds for Library building maintenance from \$150,000 to \$190,000, as well as other funding for special projects. The FY13 operating budget request included supplemental requests to provide the following: Needs Assessment (\$40,000); partial restoration of hours including Local History but not including 9-10am (\$158,000); partial materials budget restoration (85,000); and a part-time custodian (\$18,000). Rose described the Goal Group process, which utilized the department’s rankings of their supplemental requests. The Goal Group reviewed the rankings of all departments in the goal and determined which ones should move forward in the budget process.

Director Dawson announced that United Way collections were under way throughout the City and was hopeful for donations to the Alexandria Library Foundation. She also noted that Rashad Young, the new City Manager, serves on the executive board of the Urban Libraries Council.

Mrs. Paul reported that the Library had spent 18% of the budget and 28% of State Aid. Director Dawson added that there were a number of invoices which were paid at the beginning of October so the percentage spent was now closer to 25%. With the temporary staff shortage in Administration, not all monthly reports were complete. The Board therefore delayed approving the Treasurer’s Report until December.

Director Dawson reported that she had received a letter from Sandra Treadway, Director of the Library of Virginia, which informed libraries that based on a governor appointed task force, all state mandates were under review. There were two library mandates of interest being reviewed. One was the requirement that the chief librarian for libraries in localities of more than a 13,000 population be certified public librarians. The second item under review was the Virginia Library Board's maintenance of effort requirements to qualify for state aid.

Mr. Hobson presented the Investment Committee report. Of the 94 equity investments, 80 were below their cost; i.e. 85% were showing a loss. In the quarterly benchmark report, the library's investments did not compare well for the current month, the previous 6 months, and the last year. Mrs. Koopman noted that while it was interesting to focus on the equities, she noted that almost 71% of the total investment was in bonds and less than 21% are in equities. Looking at the total portfolio where they use a blended benchmark, the library's investment over the last 3 months was down 1%, while the benchmark was up 2 ¾%. Mr. Hobson said that the Investment Committee had a meeting scheduled on November 15 with BB&T advisors.

Director Dawson reported that the Library had conducted its FY11 patron survey. She noted that this survey had fewer questions than previous years and focused on electronic resources. The option of "extremely" as a response had been removed, resulting in lower ratings overall. With the new upgraded integrated library system, the Library was able to send the survey via email to those patrons for whom we had email addresses on file. It was emailed to approximately 70,000 patrons, as well as being handed out at the branches. We received more than 6,000 responses. The overall satisfaction with cleanliness of the facilities was higher than we had anticipated. However, staff are aware that we need to grow in that area, which is why the Library requested an additional part-time custodian in the FY13 budget.

Director Dawson presented a draft donation policy, which would eventually update the library's current policy, and requested that comments and suggestions be emailed to her.

Mrs. Koopman asked Mr. Downing to work with the Library on the 75th anniversary events in 2012.

Mrs. Paul moved to adjourn at 6:19pm. Mr. Hobson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwendolyn Day-Fuller
Secretary