

Library Board Minutes

February 22, 2018

Location: Duncan Branch Library, Meeting Room

Present: Kathleen Schloeder, Frank Fannon, Trudi Hahn, Helen Desfosses, Oscar Fitzgerald, William Brierre, Councilman Willie Bailey, Director Dawson, Deputy Director DiPilato, Division Chief/Administrative Services Wesson

The meeting was called to order at 4:05pm

Public Comments

Chuck Ziegler (Vice President, Friends of Beatley Central Library) reported that the Friends of Beatley Central Library had 229.5 volunteer hours in January and had \$127,084 in the bank. Recent allocations include funds to repair Beatley’s compact shelving and a camera for programs in the meeting room. He added that the Friends would have a book sale in March, and that they were making minor revisions to their bylaws. He said that he would be addressing City Council on February 24 in support of the library. The Beatley Friends were continuing to discuss diversifying fundraising avenues and were interested in seeking more media engagement. Kathleen thanked the Beatley Friends for letting their members know about the Alexandria Library Foundation’s Amazon Smile link through which customers can direct a portion of Amazon purchases to be made to a favorite charity.

Approval of minutes

A motion to approve the December minutes was made by Mr. Brierre and seconded by Mr. Bailey. The motion carried.

Director’s Report

Director Dawson presented the Monthly Activity Report. The Year-To-Date statistics are as follows:

Division	Circulation	Circulation Percentage Inc/Dec	Patron Count	Patron Count Percentage Inc/Dec
Barrett	123,726	0.62%	67,435	1.48%
Beatley	343,911	-3.31%	213,259	13.30%
Burke	68,037	0.62%	57,320	2.67%
Duncan	189,589	-4.30%	86,498	-4.27%
Law Library*	8,431	278.58%	2,021	43.54%
Local History/ Special Colls.	4,226	38.24%	6,570	-21.73%
Talking Books	3,894	-5.35%	1,402	2.86%
E-materials	184,504	-2.75%		
TOTAL	926,318	-1.82%	434,505	5.45%

*YTD Current is high due to the retro conversion project.

	YTD Current	% Inc/Dec
Registered Borrowers	103,305	2.53%
EBorrowers	30,953	-11.46%
Library Materials	525,333	3.43%
Library Website Visits	362,380	3.91%
Library Website Pages Used	3,310,918	18.39%
Wireless Users	45,627	1.12%
Passports (# Processed)	4,288	
Proctoring (# Exams)	224	

Monthly Internet Computer Utilization:

	No. of Terminals- Automated Signup	No. of Sessions	Utilization
Barrett	8	1,759	50.04%
Beatley	26	5,338	38.11%
Burke	16	2,079	35.84%
Duncan	9	1,294	32.10%
Law Library	4	242	22.05%
TOTAL	63	10,712	37.79%

Director Dawson reported that the patron count continued to increase and, for the first time the circulation for e-material decreased. She noted that some changes with Overdrive had created some frustration, with Library staff having to lend increased assistance. It was noted that an article in the Wall Street Journal had reported that people were turning away from e-books, and were returning to the hardcover. There was a big surge of e-borrowers in June, and so it was predicted that the percentage decrease will decline as we go through the rest of the year. The Director noted that passport processing continued to be brisk, with an average of about 600 a month. The circulation of Law Library materials appeared extremely high due to the conversion project of those materials.

The Director reported that the Library is now able to offer Wi-Fi black and white printing with its new Comprise system. The Library had a soft launch, but would be advertising the service soon.

The Library was preparing to introduce a new format aimed at ELL (English Language Learners). Play-aways are a new audio device that allows the reader to follow along with a text. Deputy Director DiPilato explained that many are classics with illustrations. The text provides them with pronunciation and comprehension assistance. Earbuds are needed for the items which have three-week checkouts, with renewals. The Beatley Friends have committed to support the purchase of the new materials with \$3500.

The Director reported that the Library held several programs for Black History month. Beatley hosted the 1939 sit-in display, which City Manager and department heads were able to see at a recent meeting

hosted in the building. Four of the panels would be brought to the Library Company lecture, which highlight the “Library Ladies,” important figures in the history of the Library.

Director Dawson reported that Virginia Delegate Mark Levine introduced legislation to increase the filing fee for District 8, which supports the Law Library budget. He requested that it go from \$4 to \$7. The legislation made it out of committee, and went to the full House for consideration. However, someone asked to send it back to committee. Levine asked if it was because they needed more information, or because they didn’t want to vote on it. The reply was that the committee would not be meeting on it, so as a result the legislation died.

The Director reported that signs were up at the Burke Branch announcing the upcoming Public Art project, but the committee had not yet been established. She also stated that the City’s Facilities plan had not come out yet so we don’t have any updates on Burke’s first floor.

Treasurer’s Report

Ms. Desfosses reported that we are 58% through the year, had spent 59% of the budget and had made 56% of its fines and fees requirement. In addition, the Law Library had received \$8,075 in filing fees.

Investment Report

Mr. Brierre reported that as of December 31, 2017, the fiscal year to date portfolio performance was 6.99% higher than the benchmark of 5.85%. The performance over the previous 12 months was 13.99% compared to the benchmark at 11.85%.

Old Business

Director Dawson reported that the City Manager had released the Proposed FY19 budget. Health insurance and retirement costs were not as high as anticipated which allowed the tax rate to go unchanged with few reductions in service; in fact some enhancements to service were possible, and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) received everything it asked for. The City Manager accepted the Library’s two reductions and included the supplemental proposal to expand ELL (English Language Learner) services which will be headed by DCHS. In addition, the City Manager proposed that the City would provide half the cost (\$36,250) for the Pop-Up Library Outreach vehicle, and asked the Alexandria Library Foundation to pay the other half.

New Business

Deputy Director DiPilato presented a request to the Board to expend Mourot funds for conservation of Local History materials. Following several assessments of Local History and its collection, the Library feels that it is a good time to do conservation. Reviewing a list prepared by the Library previously, the current Branch Manager Patricia Walker has identified some additional items. We are in a position where we are unable to allow customers to use some of the materials in the collection. For example, the Office of Historic Alexandria had requested to use a scrapbook in the collection, but we had to decline because of its condition. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the Mourots were interested in American furniture and that their intent was to buy decorative arts books. There are a number of programs in the area who

would love to use such a collection. However, he added that he tended to think that it is probably not a good idea to add to that collection because they probably would not be used. Deputy Director DiPilato added that the Library also does not have the space. Mr. Fitzgerald continued, saying that the items in question are important documents and he tended to think that it was a good idea to conserve them. He also added that Ms. Walker might propose a document whose conservation the Library Company could support. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested a motion that the Library could spend up to \$10,000 of the Mourot fund interest on the conservation of the CG Lee Collection, the Alexander Family ledger, the Whittington Diary and the WWI Red Cross Scrapbook. Ms. Hahn made the motion which was seconded by Mr. Bailey. The motion carried.

Mr. Fannon informed the Board that an editorial in the Alexandria Gazette today did not reflect well on the Library. Director Dawson noted that the editorial contained inaccuracies. For example, Ms. Tabb said that she had spoken with the Director, which was not true. Ms. Schloeder said that the Board and Library Administration would investigate and work on a response to the editorial.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm.