

The Alexandria Library Board was called to order by Chairperson Kathleen Schloeder, on Monday, April 15, 2013 at 4:05 pm in the Ilka K. Dickman Board Room at Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library. Members present were K. Schloeder, O. Fitzgerald, R. Hobson, and A. Paul. Members absent were G. Day-Fuller, A. Silberberg, and H. Desfosses.

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

Guests present were Eileen Bradley, President of the Friends of Beatley Central Library. Also present was staff member Kimberly Nathaniel, Library Communications Officer.

Eileen Bradley updated the Board on the Beatley Friends' recent advocacy efforts in support of the library's FY14 budget. They supported the reinstatement of a custodial contract and the \$565,000 of capital improvement funds to remediate infrastructure problems at Beatley, and asked City Council to vote against the proposed cuts to the materials budget and to service hours at the three branches. Ms. Bradley testified before the Council at the March 11, 2013 council hearing. On March 18, Beatley Friends Vice President Chuck Zeigler testified at the public hearing. Mr. Zeigler also wrote a letter to the editor of the *Alexandria Gazette Packet*. On March 20, the Beatley Friends launched a petition drive to collect signatures from library users and encouraged Friends members to write to Council in support of the Library. Ms. Bradley testified at the April 13 council hearing on these issues. In addition, she took pictures of interior and exterior water damage at Beatley which was sent to Council, along with photographs and supportive patron comments from Library Snapshot Day 2012. Ms. Bradley summarized by saying that the Friends had received good, accurate coverage in the *Alexandria Patch* newspapers and had collected 2,339 signatures in its petition drive. She stated that this kind of citizen advocacy is important; it reinforces the Friends' belief that the library is an important institution in the community. Ms. Schloeder thanked the Beatley Friends for their strong support.

Mr. Hobson moved to approve the February 2013 minutes. Ms. Paul seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

The Year-To-Date statistics are as follows:

DIVISION	CIRCULATION	CIRCULATION PERCENTAGE INC/DEC	PATRON COUNT	PATRON COUNT PERCENTAGE INC/DEC
BARRETT	129,793	21.24%	89,695	-7.83%
BEATLEY	496,014	27.16%	230,794	-6.65%
BURKE	101,111	6.15%	77,725	-15.53%
DUNCAN	239,617	16.60%	173,379	6.28%
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	8,790	-26.25%	12,054	19.47%
TALKING BOOKS	4,372	-11.10%	1,717	4.48%
EMATERIALS	50,118	65.52%		
TOTAL**	1,029,815	21.87%	623,710	-4.01%

REGISTERED BORROWERS	138,122	-8.04%
EBORROWERS	13,235	31.51%
LIBRARY MATERIALS	491,500	2.71%
LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS	322,835	52.19%
LIBRARY WEBSITE PAGES USED	1,413,899	439.73%
MEETING ROOMS	156 Meetings (MONTHLY) \$2885.00 (YTD)	

MONTHLY INTERNET COMPUTER UTILIZATION:

	No. of Terminals- Automated Signup	No. of Sessions	Utilization
Barrett	8	1,585	73.83%
Beatley	30	5,569	61.46%
Burke	16	2,090	56.31%
Duncan	9	1,044	46.78%
TOTAL	63	10,288	59.78%

Ms. Schloeder reported that on March 11, she testified at the City Council’s budget hearing, along with Mr. Hobson and Beatley Friends President Eileen Bradley. She also reported that she had recently given an interview on behalf of the Board to the *Alexandria Times*. She noted that Vice Mayor Silberberg had made some very positive remarks in that article as well.

Ms. Schloeder reported that the Duncan Friends had also been active in support of the Library’s budget, and were working on an online petition and thus far had gathered 360 signatures.

Ms. Schloeder reported that the Alexandria Library Foundation would be participating in Spring2action, which was a one day online fundraising event, on April 17. Funds raised would be used to support the Library’s materials budget. It was noted that Mr. Billy Brierre, of the Alexandria Library Company, would be sharing the Spring2action information with Library Company members and that Mr. Braxton Moncure had agreed to be a “free agent” to fundraise on behalf of the Alexandria Library Foundation. Ms. Nathaniel presented the Foundation’s Spring2action webpage, noting that last year the event had raised a total of \$320,000 on behalf of nonprofits in Alexandria.

Director Dawson reported that the overall patron count continued to decrease while circulation had increased 22%. She attributed this to “non-traditional users” who are using the Library’s ebooks; the number of eborrowers had increased 31%. Website usage was up tremendously, but she noted that this was because we had previously only been able to count hits on the homepage; now, the Library was able to count usage of all pages on its website. The site was now a lot more interactive, advertised programs and other services, and was drawing more use. Director Dawson reported that the wi-fi had been upgraded in each building, and the Library now had the capability to count usage of people using their own devices, laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc. The Library had over 1,800 wireless users in the month of March. The Board requested that the Library’s wi-fi remain on after hours, to provide 24 hour access to visitors on library grounds.

Director Dawson applauded the Library Board's advocacy efforts on behalf of the library's FY14 budget. She reported that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) had contacted her to ask whether the department could absorb the cost of the proposed two hour reduction. The Director informed OMB that the Library would be willing and able to absorb the two hour reduction. She reminded them that Library Chair, Ms. Schloeder, had informed Council at a budget hearing that the Library would be able to retain its current hours if the Library could retain three of the five positions proposed to be cut.

Mrs. Paul reported that the Library was 75% through the year and had spent 68.6% of its budget and 64.7% of its State Aid. The Library had made 67.7% of its fines and fees requirement, and anticipated being approximately \$30,000 short of that requirement. Library staff had informed the Office of Management and Budget that the fines collections were decreasing due to the contract with Unique, the collection recovery company. Patrons were increasingly returning their items on time and paying their fines sooner. In addition, it was noted that ebook users incur no fines since items are automatically returned on time. Director Dawson noted that she had asked other library jurisdictions how long they stayed with a collection agency once receipts had leveled off; the consensus was that they continued using the agency because it encourages patrons to return books and pay their fines.

Mr. Hobson reported that the total portfolio performance decreased year to date through Feb by 5.8%, slightly more than the 5.7% the benchmark had decreased. For the quarter January through March, the portfolio increased 4.25%.

Ms. Schloeder reported that Ms. Desfosses had inquired whether the board is covered by liability insurance and she confirmed that members do have such insurance.

Ms. Schloeder read a letter she had received from Chief Earl Cook, in response to her thank you for help in finding the missing 1796 Alexander ledger. The letter reads:

Dear Ms. Schloeder:

I am writing to personally acknowledge receipt of your February 16 letter, commending officers and detectives of the Alexandria Police Department for the outstanding job they did in locating the missing 1796 Alexander Family Ledger.

I am pleased that lead Detective Orlando Santiago and other members of my staff, were able to assist you in locating the missing ledger and that this experience has left you with a positive impression of the Alexandria Police Department. The men and women of the Alexandria Police Department, work hard to provide high quality service and live up to our values. It is important to me as well as them, when those in our community take the time to acknowledge our efforts.

We gave Detective Santiago a copy of your letter and one has been placed in his personnel file. I know he appreciated your kind remarks. I have also shared your letter with other members of my staff who were involved in the investigation and they too, take pride in knowing they played a part in helping to locate this historical document.

Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge our efforts and please do not hesitate to contact us whenever we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Earl L. Cook Chief of Police

Director Dawson reported that a press release had been issued, announcing the reappointment of Gwendolyn Day-Fuller and Kathleen Schloeder, welcoming two new members, Allison Silberberg and Helen Desfosses, and recognizing the incumbent Library Company members who serve on the Library Board.

Director Dawson informed the Board about an article which appeared in the March/April 2013 issue of *Public Libraries* magazine, authored by former Communications Officer Mark Schwartz and Special Collections Manager George Combs, about the 1939 library sit-in at the Barrett Library.

Ms. Schloeder announced that the 2013 All Alexandria Reads program would be starting soon, and that the Storycorps from National Public Radio (NPR) would be at the Library on April 22nd.

Mrs. Paul moved to adjourn at 5:27pm. Mr. Hobson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Oscar Fitzgerald
Vice Chair