



Richmond Public Library Board

101 E. Franklin Street
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 646-4256 / fax: (804) 646-7685



**Library Board Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2021**

PRESENT: Chair William Yates, Vice Chair Christine Peterson, Emily Altman, Barbara Burton, Brent Graves
Sheron Carter-Gunter, Garrett Sawyer, Janet Woody, Gail Zwirner

ABSENT: N/A

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Attorney Laura Drewry, Gianna Pack, Adam Zimmerli, Friends of the Library
Chair Ruth DeBoer

Meeting of the Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) was called to order by Chair William Yates at 11:47 a.m. This meeting was held as an electronic meeting pursuant to and in compliance with the City of Richmond Ordinance #2020-093. The public participated by using Richmond Public Library YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/2VfKL9U>, where it was Live Streamed. A quorum was established.

Agenda	<p>Approve the February 24, 2021 Agenda as submitted by roll call vote:</p> <p>Chair William Yates – AYE Brent Graves – AYE Vice Chair Christine Peterson – AYE Garrett Sawyer – _____ Emily Altman – AYE Janet Woody – AYE Barbara Burton – AYE Gail Zwirner – AYE Sheron Carter-Gunter – AYE</p> <p><i>AYES: 8 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 Approved Unanimously.</i></p>
Consent Agenda	<p>Approve the January 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes, Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as submitted by roll call vote:</p> <p>Chair William Yates – AYE Brent Graves – AYE Vice Chair Christine Peterson – AYE Garrett Sawyer – _____ Emily Altman – AYE Janet Woody – AYE Barbara Burton – AYE Gail Zwirner – AYE Sheron Carter-Gunter – AYE</p> <p><i>AYES: 8 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 Approved Unanimously.</i></p>
Public Comment Period	None Present

REPORTS

<p>Friends of the Library (FOL) <u>Ruth DeBoer</u></p>	<p>Ms. DeBoer reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email winter newsletter goes out on February 25. • Gathering information and history for the 100th Anniversary of the Library. • Discussions of Summer Book Sale in the Park are in process. • April is the beginning of the new fiscal year for the FOL. At this time, the FOL will cover base-level items such as the color copier this fiscal year.
<p>Library Foundation <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Mr. Firestine reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finance Committee met on February 24 to go over the financials to date. • The Executive Committee will meet on March 3. • The Full Foundation Board will meet on March 10. • Interviewed candidates for the Grant Writer’s position, made an offer, and waiting on HR’s approval on finalizing paperwork before we can announce the new employee and start date. • Wrapped up the Annual Giving Fund. Should be able to have a report at the next meeting.
<p>Administration <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Highlights and Additions to Director’s Report: Mr. Firestine reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring is on-going. Waiting on final approval from HR. We are working on an onboarding process. • COVID Update: Continuing extended curbside services and virtual programming. • Black History Month – Engagement, quality, and content is exceptional. • Dublin Book Award – Finalized their long list. Staff will have another opportunity to vote. • VCU has selected their Common Book: <i>Rising Dispatches from the New American Shore</i>, by Elizabeth Rush. The program will start in the fall. • READ Up Richmond is in process.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

<p>Chair <u>William Yates</u></p>	<p>Mr. Yates highlighted areas on the Statistical Report while the libraries were closed to the public included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to do well in circulation both curbside and on line. • New Library Card requests are doing well. • The highest virtual program attendance was in <i>Cash Flow is King</i>, which was a Youth Services program in partnership with Richmond Public Schools.
<p>Finance Chair <u>Garrett Sawyer</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Mr. Firestine reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overspent in the membership funds due to investing in an affiliate membership in the Virginia Library Association (VLA), which allows RPL to include all of the professional and paraprofessional staff as members. It will help raise the knowledge base of all staff in engagement and training opportunities. There will also be a conference in Richmond in the fall. Membership will be extended to the LBOT, Friends of the Library, and Library Volunteers.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS (CONTINUED)

Facilities Chair <u>Janet Woody</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	Mr. Firestine reported on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master Plan Update – RPL received the final contract with Steinberg Hart/KEI to do the Master Plan for the Main Library. He has reached out to the architect firm to get timeline details and will provide that information as soon as possible. Ms. Zwirner asked if the members could receive a hard copy of the document to review. Mr. Firestine will schedule a virtual meeting with the Facilities Committee in March.• Hull Street Building Damage Update: The Prebid Conference for contractors is scheduled for February 26. Contractors will have an opportunity to view the damage and ask questions prior to bid submission.
Governance Chair <u>Emily Altman</u>	No Report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- At the February 24 meeting during the finance section of the meeting, it was discussed to have talking points and library accomplishments available to LBOT members when they have conversations with their respective City Councilmembers. Mr. Firestine began the discussion with the infographic created by East End Branch Manager Adam Zimmerli and talking points that were attached to the Board Packet. The goal is to remind Councilmembers of RPL’s many accomplishments to be proud of and want to continue. The second goal is to stress the challenges such as the 9% cut in personnel and 9% cut in materials in last year’s budget cycle, which impacted Sunday hours, evening hours, and inconsistent start times in Branches. This is to share restoring the FY21 Budget is critical.

Chair Yates will send a follow-up letter to the Mayor and Councilmembers on behalf of the LBOT to reinforce all items discussed in today’s discussion.
- Members had an open discussion on what RPL may look like post-COVID:
 - Schools reopening – there may be a need for surrounding institutions to help kids catch up.
 - Social interacting and community building skills.
 - Continuing RPL/RPS Partnerships.
 - Hispanic outreach for children and adults – Build relationship with Sacred Heart Center.
 - Homelessness Issue in Richmond.
- Strategic Plan – Tabled until LBOT members can meet in person.

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m. by unanimous consensus from the members that were present in the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, by Electronic Meeting.

Approved: 
Mr. William Yates, Chair

Recorder: Gianna Pack, CAP
Senior Executive Assistant