



**Richmond Public Library**  
**Library Board of Trustees**  
 101 E. Franklin Street  
 Richmond, VA 23219  
 (804) 646-4256 / fax: (804) 646-7685



**Library Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 27, 2022**

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

**ABSENT:** Brent Graves, Garrett Sawyer, Friends of the Library Chair Ruth DeBoer, Gianna Pack

**STAFF:** Scott Firestine, Attorney Laura Drewry, Clay Dishon, Cheryl Clarke, Susan Revere, Phil Shephard

Meeting of the Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) was called to order by Chair William Yates at 11:49am at the Main Library located at 101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia. The public was noticed and could attend in person or by viewing the Richmond Public Library YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/2VfKL9U>, where it was live streamed. A quorum was established.

<b>Agenda</b>	Approve the July 27, 2022, Agenda as amended by Library Director Scott Firestine removing Sunday Public Service Hours for discussion under New Business: <i>Motion: Christine Peterson, Second by Janet Woody</i>  <i>AYES: <u>7</u>      NOES: <u>0</u>      ABSTAIN: <u>0</u>    Approved Unanimously.</i>
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Approve the June 22, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as submitted: <i>Motion: Barbara Burton, Second by Sheron Carter-Gunter</i>  <i>AYES: <u>7</u>      NOES: <u>0</u>      ABSTAIN: <u>0</u>    Approved Unanimously.</i>
<b>Public Comment Period</b>	None Present
<b>REPORTS</b>	
<b>Friends of the Library (FOL)</b>  <b><u>Clay Dishon</u></b> <b><u>Ruth DeBoer</u></b>	Mr. Dishon reported on the Friends of the Library Report in Ms. DeBoer’s absence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No July Meeting.</li> <li>• Continue to work towards searching for and bringing on some new Friends Board members.</li> <li>• Annual Meeting scheduled for November 4 – Special guest speaker is local reviewer, critic and instructor Ed Slipek, who will give a talk about the Richmond Public Library.</li> </ul>

**REPORTS (CONTINUED)**

<p><b>Library Foundation</b></p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Ms. Revere reported on the Library Foundation Report as follows:</p> <p><b>Grant Activity/Partnership Updates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Foundation is excited to announce the \$30,000 grant awarded by Virginia Museum of History and Culture’s (VMHC) Commonwealth History Fund, supported by Dominion Energy for a Community Memory Fellow position. This grant falls within the Strategic Plan focus area Uniquely Richmond. Thank you to Chair Yates for his letter of consent in support of the application, to Christine Peterson for reviewing and strengthening our application, and to Sheron Carter-Gunter for her support of representing the team at the VMHC Reception to receive the grant award. We look forward to sharing more information with you in the coming months.</li> <li>• The Foundation submitted a grant request to Dominion Charitable Foundation in support of the YAVA and RVA Reads Programs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Library Foundation (Continued)</b></p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Greg Hundley and his team at VCU’s Pauley Heart Center are working with the Foundation to support RVA Reads during Heart Health Month in February 2023 with <i>The Busy Body Book</i>, by Lizzy Rockwell. Many of RPL’s RVA Reads partnerships are in historically under resourced neighborhoods where significant health disparities and outcomes exist.</li> <li>• Beginning August 1, RPL teams up with Virginia Credit Union on a financial literacy pilot program at Broad Rock and West End Branch Libraries. The kiosks contain a collection of approximately 80 multi-lingual titles about important financial concepts appropriate for children pre-K – 6th grade. Studies have shown that many money habits are already in place by age 7. These books and the programs around them support conversations about financial decision making.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <p><u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p><b>Highlights and Additions to Director’s Report:</b> Mr. Firestine reported on the highlights from the Director’s Report and Statistical Report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Aid Waiver Update: In May 2022, Mr. Firestine applied for State Aid Waiver due to local support decrease during the pandemic. He had to explain what had happened and how funding has been/will be restored. After confirmation, the State Library was satisfied and approved the waiver.</li> <li>• The At Home newsletter is up and running again.</li> <li>• RPL was selected by the State Library to pilot a program called Career Online High School (COHS). This will allow adult students in Richmond to take online schooling, designed in compliance with VA education standards, to acquire the true high school diploma. During the pilot, the cost of the program will be underwritten by LVA. Other VA Libraries currently hosting COHS include Prince William, Fairfax, Chesapeake, Virginian Beach, and Norfolk. Relevant results include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 81% of the COHS graduates in Virginia have pursued post-secondary degrees, finding a pathway to community college and skilled trades.</li> <li>○ Each graduate impacts their community with increased earnings and less dependence on government assistance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The State Library discovered the impact of this program and secured funding for a select group of Virginia libraries with the highest need in their communities (Frederick County, Lexington, and Richmond) to offer scholarships. This is an opportunity for RPL to participate and supports our strategic goal of Lifelong Learning.</p>

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

<b>Chair Report</b> <u>William Yates</u>	No formal report.
<b>Finance Chair</b> <u>Scott Firestine</u> <u>Garrett Sawyer</u>	Mr. Firestine reported on the end-of-year close out with the City: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a surplus at the end of the fiscal year.</li> <li>• All staff received a 5% increase on their first pay check for the new fiscal year.</li> <li>• The City addressed some compression in certain job classifications.</li> <li>• The City initiated a starting wage of \$17.00/hourly, which is higher than surrounding localities.</li> <li>• Collective bargaining was approved by the City.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities Chair</b> <u>Janet Woody</u> <u>Gail Zwirner</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	Ms. Woody reported the Committee was still working on the conceptual document. She also mentioned the architect had to complete another form for the Urban Design Committee. The Urban Design Committee will meet August 2 to continue discussions.
<b>Governance Chair</b> <u>Emily Altman</u>	Ms. Altman reported there were no responses in changing Committee responsibilities by members. Mr. Yates mentioned all members would continue working within their respective current Committees.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Advocacy Wrap Up:** Ms. Peterson reminded everyone if they have not reached out to thank their respective Councilmembers, to please do so as soon as possible.

**American Library Association (ALA):** Ms. Peterson mentioned the ALA has a few set a side groups, which include Trustees, Foundation, Friends, and Library Directors called United for Libraries. Their Annual Conference theme is Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (EID). Mr. Firestine and Ms. Peterson will be presenting at the ALA Conference on August 10 on EID.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RPL100:** Mr. Dishon gave a brief update on the Committee meeting to develop public programming recognizing 100 years of the Richmond Public Library. Library/Community Services Manager Ben Himmelfarb of the Main Library and Mr. Dishon are leading the effort. All Branches are represented and participating on the Committee as well as Foundation, LBOT, and Friend members. Foundation Member Dontrese Brown is donating his time and expertise to work with the Committee on a Message, Voice & Personality (MVP) development project. The workshop will address brand design and creative strategy around the library: How we tell our story and engage with patrons and others.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:46pm by unanimous consensus from the members that were present in the meeting.

There being no meeting in August, the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 28, 2022, for a Regular Monthly Meeting at the North Avenue Branch Library located at 2901 North Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23222, if the meeting room is available. Ms. Pack will confirm meeting room location with the members.

Approved:   
Mr. William Yates, Chair

Recorder: *Gianna Pack, CAP*  
Senior Executive Assistant