



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
January 25, 2023

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

ABSENT: Garrett Sawyer, Friends of the Library Chair Ruth DeBoer, Cheryl Clarke

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Attorney Laura Drewry, Clay Dishon, Gianna Pack, Susan Revere, Adam Zimmerli, Phil Shephard

Meeting of the Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) was called to order by Chair William Yates at 11:45am at the East End Branch Library located at 1200 North 25th Street, Richmond, Virginia 23223. The meeting was noticed and the public could attend in person or by viewing Richmond Public Library YouTube channel <https://bit.ly/2VfKL9U>, where it was live streamed. A quorum was established.

Agenda	Approve the January 25, 2023, Agenda. <i>Motion: Gail Zwirner, Second by Sheron Carter-Gunter</i> <i>AYES: <u>7</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> <i>Ms. Altman was not present for voting.</i>
Consent Agenda	Approve the December 7, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as submitted: <i>Motion: Gail Zwirner, Second by Janet Woody</i> <i>AYES: <u>7</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> <i>Ms. Altman was not present for voting.</i>
Public Comment Period	One speaker requested, but did not show.
REPORTS	
Friends of the Library (FOL) <u>Clay Dishon</u> <u>Ruth DeBoer</u>	Mr. Dishon reported on the Friends of the Library Operations in Ms. DeBoer’s absence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 7-8: Successful Book Bag Sale: \$3,000.00 made • February 1: FOL Executive Board Meeting – Main Library • Vacancies on the Board. In the process of looking for new members • FOL’s new office is now located near the Book Sale and is also in the process of vacating the Special Collections area. The computer and copier have been relocated to the new area.

REPORTS (CONTINUED)

<p>Library Foundation</p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Ms. Revere reported on the Library Foundation Operations:</p> <p>Foundation Update: The Maya Smart event will be held at Virginia Museum of History and Culture on April 25. The day includes a breakfast talk geared toward civic leaders, a reception for donors, and an evening conversation geared toward parents/guardians. The event outline and registration will be confirmed and shared with all three Boards once the information becomes available.</p> <p>Grant Activity/Partnership Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Foundation will submit a Letter of Introduction (LOI) to The Community Foundation (TCF) by January 31, 2023. The R.E.B. Foundation (a supporter of RVA Reads) is under the TCF umbrella. This information is also shared with those who have Donor Advised Funds, and TCF’s discretionary funds.• The Foundation has submitted a LOI to the National Home Libraries Foundation.• The Foundation continues to focus on strengthening individual donor relationships and increasing its capacity for fundraising.• The Foundation is excited to share the hiring of our Community Memory Fellow, Chloe McCormick. She is trained in Folklore, Anthropology, Archive development, and more. <p>Chair Yates mentioned if any of the members had not donated to the Annual Fund, there is still time. It helps the Foundation to show 100% support by the LBOT has donated.</p>
<p>Administration</p> <p><u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Director’s Report: In addition to the items submitted on the Director’s Report in the Board Packet, Mr. Firestine reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The computers are now available for check out by the public. They have been deployed to the Branches and the Main Library. The website will be updated to announce the availability.• ETA for the North Avenue Branch Library to reopen looks to be approximately March 30 if everything runs smoothly with the contractors for new carpet, painting, dry-walling, and freshening up the Branch, but could be much longer.• Door count is down across the library system.• Law Library Changes: Moving from actual physical books to electronic version subscription. RPL is one of few libraries that still have a large collection of physical legal books. There has been extensive weeding of timeworn Westlaw physical books, and it is now available on line. This will free up some space for Uniquely Richmond building a collection. That space will also be reactivated to be used more efficiently and provide better access to Special Collections. <p>Ms. Woody inquired about the January 6 VCU Pilot Branch Tours at some of the Branches listed in Mr. Firestine’s Director’s Report. Mr. Firestine explained it was a joint partnership with VCU and MCV Health Network to promote Health and Wellness in the Libraries. The tours were to visit the Branches to see if there was adequate space to do a Blood Pressure Screening Program at the Branches. The program will kick off in February for Heart Healthy Month.</p> <p>Ms. Zwirner inquired if the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) Program will be something RPL would be interested in supporting. Mr. Firestine is researching the possibilities of state funding for the program. He also put a proposal forward to the Mayor’s office to see if the City would fund DPIL through special funds. RPL has RVA Reads.</p>

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

<p>Chair Report <u>William Yates</u></p>	<p>Chair Yates mentioned the circulation numbers looked good although door count was down. He encouraged members to review the statistical reports in more detail because it may show negative in one area, but positive in another.</p> <p>Chair Yates shared his appreciation to Ms. Zwirner and Ms. Woody for their hard work on the Master Plan before going into discussion.</p>
<p>Finance Chair <u>Garrett Sawyer</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Mr. Firestine announced the Mayor and City Administration are in the phase of building the Budget and Strategic Plan. The Mayor is doing a State of the City Address on January 30 and a presentation of the Budget on March 6.</p>
<p>Advocacy Task Force <u>Sharon Carter-Gunter</u> <u>Garrett Sawyer</u></p>	<p>No formal report.</p>
<p>Facilities Chair <u>Janet Woody</u> <u>Gail Zwirner</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>No formal report.</p> <p>Discussion of the Master Plan was conducted in Unfinished Business.</p>
<p>Governance Chair <u>Emily Altman</u></p>	<p>No formal report.</p>

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Firestine shared the Master Plan was the result of over 18 months of work by a team from Steinberg Hart, KEI, the RPL staff, the RPL Board of Trustees, the RPL Foundation, and the Friends of the Richmond Public Library. The document was a major step toward a much needed renovation of the Main Library building. The plan was developed in a collaborative manner by the team and included a great deal of input from the public. It is a meaningful, useful, exciting, and thoughtful document which can be use as moving forward into the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) process. The plan provides enough information and ideas to begin the budgeting process.

Depending on the CIP progress, the team will move forward into steps which will include additional review and modifications. While most of the comments received have been very positive, the LBOT recognizes the Master Plan document is not perfect. The envision path forward will consider the comments and suggestions of all our stakeholders.

The Board members had an in-depth discussion on whether or not to approve the Architectural Master Plan developed by Steinberg Hart and KEI Architects as submitted.

After discussion, Chair Yates called for a motion to enthusiastically endorse and approve the Architectural Master Plan developed by Steinberg Hart and KEI Architects as submitted.

Motion: Christine Peterson, Second by Brent Graves

AYES: 8 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 *Approved Unanimously.*

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Peterson gave a report on Early Childhood Learning and what “We Can We Do in the Library.”

Last fall Ms. Peterson gave the Board facts and figures of 15,800 birth to 5 years, almost 60% not school ready and a summer slide of three times for 5 year olds compared to older children. The Board agreed to do better and make the in-library efforts a priority starting Summer 2023. With less than 5 months until Summer 2023, Ms. Peterson shared the update:

- Budget Update: COVID took a toll on the Library like with other organizations. Budget and staff reductions are serious problems for RPL including our children’s programming, staffing, and activities. Without money or adequate staff, Summer 2023 is going to be a challenge, but there is a plan.
- Good News: Ms. Morris, Mr. Firestine, Ms. Revere, and Ms. Peterson have reached out to other organizations (all who have stove piping problems) and are developing solid relations. These will pay off in joint programming opportunities, funding efforts, and resources, but it takes time.
- Ms. Morris is developing expanded and new programs, which include:
 - Saturday Programming – This will help parents bring their children to the libraries on the weekend who cannot bring them during the week.
 - A new school readiness program for the weeks before school starts is being developed for launch done in connection with the Children’s Museum of Richmond, Virginia’s Home for Public Media (VPM), and Excell. Broad Rock Branch, East End Branch, Ginter Park Branch, Hull Street Branch, and the Main Library will be sites to host school readiness fairs.
- Challenges/Problems:
 - Staffing an expanded, vigorous Summer 2023 Program is a problem. Mr. Firestine is working on the Early Childhood staff position, but realistically does not think the position will be approved until next fiscal year starting July 1, 2023.
 - RPL currently does not have the staff or trained staff to expand as much as it would like.
- Focus:
 - Mr. Firestine, Ms. Morris, and Ms. Peterson are meeting often to push birth to 5 years this summer focusing on RPL alignment, programing, resources, and partners.
 - Ms. Revere, Foundation member Jennifer Goins, Ms. Morris, and Ms. Peterson are aggressively pursuing foundation and individual gifts. The team is meeting and talking every 2 weeks. Funding sought would enable RPL to pay summer interns (grad degree early learning students) and teacher fellows. If funding can be found, these positions would give RPL the extra skilled manpower needed.
 - As a Board, to continually reinforce that RPL can be the driving forces in birth to 5 years, but it will take hard work.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm by unanimous consensus from the members that were present in the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, for a Regular Monthly Meeting at the Broad Rock Branch Library located at 4820 Old Warwick Road, Richmond, Virginia 23224.

Approved: 
Mr. William Yates, Chair

Recorder: Gianna Pack, CAP
Senior Executive Assistant