



**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 26, 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, Gianna Pack

**STAFF:** Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Attorney Shannan Fitzgerald, Cheryl Clarke, Susan Revere, Barbara Booth, Nan Agaram

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 Belmont Branch Library located at 3100 Ellwood Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221. The meeting was posted and the public 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 26, 2023, Agenda. <i>Motion: Christine Peterson, Second by Sheron Carter-Gunter</i> <b>AYES: <u>8</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</b>
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Approve the June 28, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as submitted: <i>Motion: Gail Zwirner, Second by Emily Altman</i> <b>AYES: <u>8</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</b>
<b>Public Comment Period</b>	None.

**REPORTS**

<b>Friends of the Library (FOL)</b>  <u>Ruth DeBoer</u> <u>Clay Dishon</u>	Mr. Dishon reported on the FOL operations in Ms. DeBoer absence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>October 6, 7-9pm:</b> Annual General Meeting on in the Martha Davenport Special Collections Room of the Main Library. Local author Kristen Green will discuss her recent book "<i>Devil's Half Acre</i>". Refreshments will be served. Mr. Firestine to give the "State of the RPL" address.</li> <li>• <b>October 14, 2-4pm:</b> The Friends will be hosting a concert featuring Susan Greenbaum in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the renovation of Library Park at the Main Library.</li> <li>• <b>November 3-4:</b> Fall Book Sale in the Main library Auditorium.</li> <li>• The reorganization of the Friends sale sorting area in the Main Library Mezzanine – ongoing.</li> <li>• The Friends organization of a daily sales area at the Main Library is still in the concept stage.</li> </ul>
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<b>REPORTS (CONTINUED)</b>	
<p><b>Library Foundation</b></p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Ms. Revere reported on the Library Foundation Operations:</p> <p><b>Foundation Update:</b> The Foundation is working on our FY23 Impact Report and preparing to undergo its annual audit in August.</p> <p>Chair Yates thanked the Foundation Board Members who rolled off the end of June for their years of service and support of RPL (Marshall Pearsall, Brenda Drew, Hollee Freeman, and Trevor Cox).</p> <p><b>Grant Activity/Partnership Updates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Foundation is pleased to share that it learned Monday our Concept Note to the Mellon Foundation has drawn enough interest to be invited to participate in a full proposal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Foundation thanks John Ulmschneider for his review of the document, and the collaborative guidance shared by Chris Peterson throughout this effort.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The following grants have been submitted/updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Memorial Foundation for Children (Notification December 2023)</li> <li>○ Freeman Foundation (Notification Fall 2023)</li> <li>○ REB Foundation (Notification Fall 2023)</li> <li>○ Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <p><u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p><b>Director’s Report:</b> 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"> <li>• <b>July 17:</b> Banned Bookmobile Tour – The Banned Bookmobile stopped and parked in front of the Main Library. Mr. Firestine shared the bookmobile is going on a multistate tour to stop at libraries and bookstores to rally support for the right to read.</li> <li>• Mr. Firestine pointed out this Fiscal Year ended with over 800,000 items circulated, which superseded FY2019 and E-Content ended with over 227,000 items circulated.</li> <li>• Libraries now have Vox Books. Vox Books are children books that include audio reading.</li> <li>• Ms. Carter-Gunter inquired as to why there was no programming for Young Adults (YA). Mr. Firestine shared RPL does not have YA Librarians at all the locations to target that 13-17 age group at this time, but is looking towards adding when the budget allows.</li> <li>• The Children’s Museum is sharing a donation from Lego with the Library. The Library is working with the Children’s Museum to help distribute the Legos to programs like STEM.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advocacy Task Force</b></p> <p><u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u> <u>Garrett Sawyer</u></p>	<p>Ms. Carter-Gunter reminded members to send a communication share from the last meeting if they have not received a response it may be worthwhile to send a follow-up communication before the end of the week. Also we should be reinforcing the amazing summer programs that are available for social media and conversations with colleagues and neighbors.</p> <p>Ms. Carter-Gunter also stated, “We should start be thinking about moving our circles and serve as Library community ambassadors as we push our agenda in the fall”.</p>

**REPORTS (CONTINUED)**

<b>Early Literacy Update</b>  <u>Christine Peterson</u>	No formal report.  Mr. Firestine reminded to Save the Date for August 5 for the final celebration at Maymont to bring the Summer Reading Program to the end for this year. There are a lot of activities planned.
<b>Chair Report</b>  <u>William Yates</u>	No formal report. Chair Yates shared on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early Childhood Literacy is positive and remains the primary focus of the LBOT.</li><li>• Garrett Sawyer has announced he is running for Mayor for the City of Richmond.</li></ul> Chair Yates mentioned the Foundation has had three long-standing members go off the Foundation Board the end of June. They all have been very valuable to the Foundation. He expressed his gratitude and thanked them for all they have done. He also noted at least one, if not two, of those members were former chairs of the LBOT.
<b>Finance Chair</b>  <u>Garrett Sawyer</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	Mr. Firestine reported the FY23 ended on June 30, 2023.  The FY24 Budget increased by \$1.3M. \$800,000 is included to expand public service hours to all library locations. This is a top priority for the LBOT in the Five Year Strategic Plan. The Library will prioritize filling positions that are vacant or lost during the pandemic. The increased funding will restore and expand Sunday public service hours at the Ginter Park Branch, West End Branch, and the Main Library. Another goal is to expand weekday public service hours in the mornings and evenings across the library system.
<b>Facilities Chair</b>  <u>Janet Woody</u> <u>Gail Zwirner</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	Ms. Woody reported the Facilities Committee along with Mr. Firestine, Ms. Clarke, and Ms. Revere has visited all of the RPL branch libraries. They have focused on Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan: Increase access to library locations and ensure availability of information and resources to residents.  Mr. Firestine also reported there was about \$1M in the CIP to replace boilers at the Main Library. \$85K is included to add security cameras across the RPL system. The camera project will start at the Broad Rock Branch.
<b>Governance Chair</b> <u>Emily Altman</u>	No formal report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No Unfinished Business discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No New Business discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:34pm by unanimous consent from the members that were present.

There is no meeting in August. The next regular meeting of the LBOT will be held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at the Main Library located at 101 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Approved:   
Mr. William Yates, Chair

Recorder: *Gianna Pack, CAP*  
Senior Executive Assistant