



Richmond Public Library
Library Board of Trustees
 101 E. Franklin Street
 Richmond, VA 23219
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Library Board Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023

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

ABSENT: Barbara Burton, Attorney Shannan Fitzgerald

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Friends of the Library Chair Ruth DeBoer, Gianna Pack Cheryl Clarke, Susan Revere, Ben Himmelfarb, Phil Shephard

Meeting of the Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) was called to order by Chair William Yates at 11:46am at the Main Library located at 101 E Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219. 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.

Agenda	<p>Approve the September 27, 2023, Agenda. <i>Motion: Christine Peterson, Second by Janet Woody</i></p> <p><i>AYES: <u>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i></p> <p>Ms. Altman and Mr. Sawyer were not present for the vote.</p>
Consent Agenda	<p>Approve the July 26, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes, the Current Financial Reports, Statistical Reports, and Donations Report as submitted: <i>Motion: Janet Woody, Second by Gail Zwirner</i></p> <p><i>AYES: <u>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i></p> <p>Ms. Altman and Mr. Sawyer were not present for the vote.</p>
Public Comment Period	None.

REPORTS

<p>Friends of the Library (FOL)</p> <p><u>Ruth DeBoer</u> <u>Clay Dishon</u></p>	<p>Ms. DeBoer reported on the FOL operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 6, 7-9pm: 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. • October 14, 2-4pm: 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. • October 25: Concert and artist event "The Conjuror Revealed", a collaborative event with RVA Baroque and artists Coloratura. • November 3-4: Fall Book Sale in the Main library Auditorium. • The reorganization of the Friends sale sorting area in the Main Library Mezzanine – ongoing. • The Friends organization of a daily sales area at the Main Library is still in the concept stage. Working with an interior designer/volunteer is in process.
<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 Foundation welcomes their newest Board Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allan-Charles Chipman, with the United States office of Initiatives of Change • Jamie Isley with Leadership Metro Richmond • Mary Lauderdale of the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia <p>This incoming class is energetic and full of wonderful ideas and experience, so the Foundation is looking forward to working with them and continuing to strengthen its Foundation Board.</p> <p>Dontrese Brown was announced as the new Vice President of the Foundation Board.</p> <p>Grant Activity/Partnership Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mellon Foundation full proposal was submitted on September 13. Awaiting a decision after their November 9 full Board Meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Special thanks to John Ulmschneider and the Foundation for a letter of support, to Chris Peterson for her insight and guidance, and to Rich Peterson and Scott Firestine for their work on the budget documents. This has been a learning opportunity for all.
<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"> • Summer Reading Program numbers almost doubled over last year. Youth Services Staff went above and beyond to make this year a big success. Looking forward to a bigger and better program next year. • RPL partnered with the Childrens' Museum, which received a gift of 1,000 Lego sets and needed a place to store them. There was opportunity for RPL to help distribute them too. • Initiated Blood Pressure Awareness where individuals can conduct their own screenings. Instructions are provided on the table station along with a blood pressure cuff.

REPORTS (CONTINUED)	
<p>Advocacy Task Force</p> <p><u>Garrett Sawyer</u> <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u></p>	<p>Mr. Sawyer reported on how the members are going to reengage with their respective Councilmembers and representatives. He mentioned the next communication going out will focus on a recap of all the wonderful and amazing things RPL has been doing, as well as using this as an opportunity to prepare for our ask; noting “because of your investment, this is what RPL is accomplishing.” The goal is to make sure we are sharing with them so they are aware of what is going on and what can be done with more support.</p> <p>The <i>What's Happening</i> Magazine is being sent to all Councilmember Liaisons to be added to their newsletter.</p> <p>Members discussed next steps of working with City Administration.</p>
<p>Early Literacy Update</p> <p><u>Christine Peterson</u></p>	<p>Ms. Peterson reported on the Early Literacy accomplishments and future needs for this year’s Summer Reading Program (SRP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good summer performance in reading: Up by 20% versus last year, but not above pre-Covid numbers. • Every other Saturdays were open doing programing with Youth Services staff at Hull Street, Broad Rock, West End, and East End Branch Libraries. Very successful, but there was a need to have programs on Saturdays weekly. • Performers were scheduled at all branches instead of a few locations this year. • Maymont finally to the SRP was the best ever had and very successful. Planning more.
<p>Early Literacy Update (Continued)</p> <p><u>Christine Peterson</u></p>	<p>Future Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on Outreach into certain communities that have a need and can benefit the most from the programs, which is a continuous work in progress. • Interns: Provide a summer intern at every branch. Focus on providing no less than four interns to share among the branches, pushing for all nine locations if possible. • Have staff and/or performers to do programing every Saturday at every location. • Focus on partnerships to provide STEM and other special activities. • Need to make Ripple mascot more visible.
<p>Chair Report</p> <p><u>William Yates</u></p>	<p>Chair Yates commented on the following items in the Board Packet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. E-content moved up 62% over the same period a year ago. 2. Westover Hills Branch Library circulation passed the Main Library. 3. Strong program attendance. 4. Door count up even with e-content going up. 5. Law Library doing more programing and making good changes.
<p>Finance Chair</p> <p><u>Garrett Sawyer</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>No formal report since the new fiscal year just started.</p> <p>Mr. Firestine mentioned he was working to get the extra funding placed in the RPL budget at the beginning of the fiscal year activated and in place to use.</p>

REPORTS (CONTINUED)	
Facilities Chair <u>Janet Woody</u> <u>Gail Zwirner</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	<p>Mr. Firestine reported the East End Branch Library will begin planting trees on September 28. The Storm Water Beatification Project will be wrapping up at that location soon after.</p> <p>There was a discussion of the Master Plan process and funding opportunity for the CIP. Mr. Firestine recommended the Finance Committee discuss a strategy and bring information back during the December 6 meeting if possible. We need to keep the Master Plan on the Councilmembers' radar as well as City Administration's radar.</p> <p>Ms. Woody reported the Facilities Committee had finished visiting all of the branches. There is a definite need for a Master Plan for all the branches. The Committee is reviewing other Master Plans from other libraries to see how they were written.</p> <p>Ms. Zwirner shared with members that she is exploring federal funding opportunities to benefit RPL through Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan's office. The goal is to honor Congressman Don McEachin through an improvement to library or library services. This effort will be coordinated with Library Administration, Mrs. McEachin, and Congresswoman McClellan.</p>
Governance Chair <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 12:59pm by unanimous consent from the members that were present.

The next regular meeting of the LBOT will be held on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at the Ginter Park Branch Library located at 1200 Westbrook Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23227.

Approved: 
 Sheron Carter-Gunter, Vice Chair

Recorder: *Gianna Pack, CAP*
 Senior Executive Assistant