



Richmond Public Library
Library Board of Trustees
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Library Board Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2024

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

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

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, Attorney Shannan Fitzgerald, 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 Christine Peterson at 11:49 a.m. at the Hull Street Branch Library located at 1400 Hull Street, Richmond, Virginia 23224. 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	Approve the October 23, 2024, Agenda as submitted. <i>Motion: Gail Zwirner, Second by William Yates</i> <i>AYES: <u>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> Mr. Graves and Ms. Altman were not present for the vote.
Consent Agenda	Approve the September 25, 2024, 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>6</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</i> Mr. Graves and Ms. Altman were not present for the vote.
Public Comment Period	No Formal Public Comment.
Friends of the Library (FOL) <u>Ruth DeBoer</u> <u>Clay Dishon</u>	No formal report in Ms. DeBoer's absence. Mr. Dishon reminded the Board of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• November 1st, 2nd, and 3rd: Fall Book Sale to be held with the following hours:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Friday: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (members only); 12 – 5 p.m.; and 7 – 9 p.m.○ Saturday: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.○ Sunday 1 – 4 p.m.• November 1st: Friends Annual Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Reports (Continued)

<p>Library Foundation</p> <p><u>Susan Revere</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u></p>	<p>Foundation Update:</p> <p>The 2023-2024 Impact Report will be mailed by the end of October, with an electronic version scheduled for release in early November. This version will be distributed to the library community of advocates through the Foundation's email list and Library Aware.</p> <p>The Annual Fund campaign is set to begin in early November. Ms. Revere expressed her gratitude to recurring donors and encouraged the LBOT to consider making a year-end gift if they have not already done so. She highlighted that a walk through the Main Library and the Branches will demonstrate the tangible impact of their contributions. Ms. Revere also recommended asking local Branches about their summer interns and programs. For those visiting the Main Library, Ms. Revere invited them to check out the ongoing renovations, including an upgraded Young Adult area and a new Learning Center in the Children's area. She encouraged everyone to talk about these exciting new efforts with friends and family. Recently, an individual donor increased his contribution from \$2,500 to \$10,000 upon learning about these developments, underscoring the importance of sharing the library's progress and growth.</p> <p>A special note of appreciation was extended to the Herndon Foundation for their generous \$10,000 gift toward the renovation of the Children's area. Their support will play a key role in continuing improvements in that space.</p> <p>Lastly, an email invitation was recently sent out with a link to review the new Digital Collections page. Feedback and suggestions are welcomed to help ensure the page serves as a user-friendly, public-facing resource for the community. Comments may be directed to Chloe McCormick, Marvin Hicks, or Susan Revere.</p>
<p>Branch Report</p> <p><u>Meldon Jenkins-Jones</u></p>	<p>Library/Community Services Manager Meldon Jenkins-Jones gave an overview of the Hull Street Branch Library. She mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Improved Security:</u> Notable increase in safety over the past two years, contributing to a safer work environment for staff. • <u>Strategic Plan Focus:</u> Ongoing efforts to align library services with the Strategic Plan, in collaboration with the Youth Services Librarian and Intern. • <u>Teen Engagement Challenges:</u> Low attendance from teen patrons at the Hull Street Branch, posing a challenge for engagement. • <u>Increased Outreach Efforts:</u> Expanding outreach initiatives, particularly aimed at engaging the Spanish-speaking community. • <u>Diverse Collection Needs:</u> Acknowledgment of the need for more African-American literature to enhance circulation and meet community demand. • <u>Senior Book Club Success:</u> The Senior Book Club is thriving and remains a popular program at the Branch. • <u>Parking Issues:</u> Growing concerns about parking availability, with increased incidences of vehicles being towed. • <u>Community Partnerships:</u> Strengthening collaborations with local community organizations to enhance library services and programming.

Reports (Continued)	
Administration <u>Scott Firestine</u>	<p>Director's Report: In addition to the items submitted in this month's report, the following comments were made:</p> <p>Mr. Firestine noted that circulation is up by about 20% compared to this time last year, and tracking is going very well. He expressed hope that the library would reach or even surpass the 1 million mark in circulation this year.</p> <p>Ms. Pack sent individual portraits to the LBOT for review. Mr. Firestine will arrange for the photographer to come back for a rescheduled makeup session. If any touch-ups are needed or if there is a desire to retake the photos, this will be the time to do it. The goal is to ensure that board member portraits are available for the website.</p> <p>October has been a successful month overall. The ReadUp event, held for the first time ever on a Sunday, was well-attended, with over 100 people participating. The discussion was lively and received many positive comments.</p>
Advocacy Task Force <u>Christine Peterson</u> <u>Sheron Carter-Gunter</u>	<p>No Formal Report.</p> <p>The Advocacy Taskforce members will meet with Mr. Firestine on November 8, 2024, to begin drafting an advocacy plan that all LBOT members will follow. The plan will be discussed at the December 4th meeting. Chair Peterson opened the floor to members, inviting them to suggest any items that may require special attention. Mr. Yates suggested focusing on Finance.</p>
Policy Taskforce <u>Emily Altman</u>	<p>No Formal Report.</p>
Chair Report <u>Christine Peterson, Chair</u>	<p>Chair Peterson reported on the following:</p> <p>Based on the LBOT's decision to have Senior Staff give an update at upcoming meetings, Chair Peterson announced the Senior Staff members who will be presenting in 2025:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jenn Deuell, Library/Community Services Manager, Outreach and Engagement 2. Barbara Crump, Management Analyst Associate, RVA Reads 3. Genevieve Gray, Librarian Senior Young Adults 4. Danielle Howard, Librarian Senior, Specializing in Innovation Center and Technology at the Main Library 5. Patrick DeRoche, Librarian Senior, Art and Music <p>Chair Peterson mention upon her arrival at the Hull Street Branch Library, she was greeted warmly by everyone—from the staff to the security guard to the front desk staff. This welcoming atmosphere is exactly the kind of environment we should strive to create, where every patron feels valued and appreciated.</p>

Reports (Continued)	
Chair Report (Continued) <u>Christine Peterson, Chair</u>	<p>Additionally, Chair Peterson and Ms. Carter-Gunter attended the Urban Fiction Event at the Hull Street Branch Library, which she characterized as outstanding. She asked Ms. Jenkins-Jones to extend her gratitude on behalf of the LBOT to the staff members who played a role in organizing the event.</p>
Facilities <u>Janet Woody, Chair</u> <u>Scott Firestine</u>	<p>Ms. Woody reported that the survey has been launched. Ms. Revere will resend the survey link to the LBOT members who have not yet completed it. Ms. Woody also requested that the survey be shared on social media, with friends and family, or through any other means to help spread the word.</p> <p>Mr. Firestine explained that the purpose of the survey is to gather feedback. He also mentioned that the second phase involves conducting focus groups, starting with the staff. Additionally, he noted that a facilities assessment inventory is being conducted. Mr. Firestine and Ms. Clarke are collecting data on all the library locations.</p>
Governance <u>Garrett Sawyer, Chair</u>	<p>No Formal Report.</p>
UNFINISHED BUSINESS	
<p>No Unfinished Business was discussed.</p>	
NEW BUSINESS	
<p>Approve the 2025 Library Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2025, as submitted. Motion: Sharon Carter-Gunter, Second by William Yates AYES: <u>8</u> NOES: <u>0</u> ABSTAIN: <u>0</u> Approved Unanimously.</p>	

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:47 p.m. by unanimous consent from the members that were present.

There is no meeting in November. The next meeting of the LBOT will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at the Westover Hills Branch Library, 1408 Westover Hills Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23223.

Approved: _____

Christine Peterson, Chair

Recorder: Gianna Pack, CAP
Senior Executive Assistant

12/4/2024