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AGENDA
RICHLAND LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
1431 ASSEMBLY STREET, BOARD ROOM
January 16, 2024
5:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Richland Library Board of Trustees was held on Monday, January 16, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Board of Trustees Present:

Lee Rambo, Chair
Erin Johnson, Vice Chair
Jon Robertson, Secretary
Brenda B. Branich, Treasurer
Burlean Moses
Cindy Cox
Chelsea Richard*
Tyson K. Brown
Valerie Byrd Fort
David Campbell

*Absent with notice

Library Representatives Present:

Melanie Huggins, Executive Director
Georgia Coleman, COO
Tamara King, Chief Equity & Eng. Officer
Dyan Bowman, CAO
Sarah Sullivan, Finance Director
Heather McCue, Children & Teen Services Mgr.
Wanda Taylor, Executive Admin. Assistant
Kristin Amsden, Board Librarian

Also Present: Rania Jamison (Chair of F + F), Councilperson Allison Terracio, Grant Davis (Mauldin and Jenkins), Mason Griffin, Tina Gills, Samantha Scott, Amanda Myers, Cep Cante, Melissa Drayton, Kai Tang, Anne Clifton Katz, Lisa Geiske, Crystal Mickle, Amy Teramoto, Dee Robinson, Sarah Seegars

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Lee Rambo, called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Rambo presented the consent agenda to include the full agenda for the meeting and approval of November Board meeting minutes.
(Chair called for objections; with no objections, the consent agenda was adopted.)

CITIZENS INPUT

None

FRIENDS + FOUNDATION REPORT

Chair Rania Jamison provided the report.

The Friends and Foundation Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, December 13th at noon. At the meeting, the Board unanimously approved two proposed actions.

First, \$50,000 will be provided to cover appearance fees and travel costs of two popular authors to visit Richland Library for Broader Bookshelf Reading Challenge events in 2024—one will be an emerging or regional author in the \$15,000-\$20,000 range for July 2024, and the second, will be a nationally prominent author in the \$25,000-\$30,000 range for November 2024.

The Broader Bookshelf Reading Challenge which started in 2017, encourages readers to expand their bookshelves and seek out new authors and challenging subjects. The program was started as a Library initiative and replaces the long-running community reading initiative, One Book, One Community, managed by One Columbia.

Second, Friends and Foundation will be providing \$5,000 as a match to the \$5,000 grant the Library received from the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina for bus passes for RL Social Work customers. The Sisters of Charity grant will be used to purchase 714 bus passes for Social Work and Business and Career clients at Main. The passes will alleviate transportation barriers these customers often face when seeking benefit assistance, applying for jobs, getting to the doctor, or making other appointments. The \$5,000 match from the Friends and Foundation will allow Social Work to distribute 714 additional passes between each of our 12 branch locations, meeting customers where they are. Traditionally, bus passes would be distributed at our Main location only.

F + F will hold the Winter Book Sale on Friday and Saturday, January 26th and 27th. The Friday sale from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. is the Private Sale for donors of \$25 or more in the past year, and the Saturday sale from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. is the Public Sale. As a reminder, the book sales are held at the Library's Operation Center at 130 Lancewood Road, across from Dutch Square.

The annual Employee Giving Campaign ran from November 27th through December 8th, with 100 employees participating, or 27% of our total number of employees making a gift or pledge this year. Last year there were 90 employees participating or 25% percent. The total amount of gifts and pledges this year was over \$20,500 compared to just over \$19,200 last year.

This year, employees who gave over \$26 will receive a campaign-themed retractable badge holder for their key fob, and those who gave \$52 or more will receive the badge holder and a telescopic umbrella with a campaign-themed case.

Chair Jamison was proud to report that 100 percent of Friends and Foundation Board members have now made a gift or pledge for the current fiscal year. Thus far, 80 percent of Library Trustees have made a gift. She expressed gratitude to those who have donated to the Richland Library Friends and Foundation. These gifts help support the Library's work in four crucial service areas: Literacy, Workforce Development,

Innovative Programming, and Social Services and Inclusion.

She requested if a Trustee has not yet done so, to please consider making a gift in any amount. It would make a powerful statement if F + F could tell potential funders that there has been 100 percent participation by both the Library Board of Trustees and the Friends and Foundation Board this year.

Ms. Huggins provided a \$10.00 gift certificate to the Trustees to be used at a book sale.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Brenda B. Branic, Treasurer, provided the report.

The treasurer reported that the Library received notification from the SC Insurance reserve fund regarding a claim for the roof damage at Main. The claim was denied and the damage will not be covered. As a reminder, the Board approved the cost of the repair at the November Board meeting. AquaSeal Manufacturing and Roofing won the bid for the work with an amount of \$112,524 which will be funded by reserves.

Balance Sheet

Cash and investments have decreased by \$4 million in October and November. This change is due to \$1.1 million in revenue deposits, \$2.3 million in payroll and benefit payments and \$2.5 million in vendor payments.

Income Statement

County property taxes received were higher than last year due to the increased budget and the timing of the amount collected by the County.

Investment earnings are higher than prior year due to the nature of the Library investment in Certificate of Deposits. The checking account earned \$8,140.49 in November and the bank fees were \$1,771.42.

Salaries and taxes are lower than last year due to a bonus that was paid in September, 2022. This bonus was approximately \$475,000.

General operations, contractual services, and technology expenditures are more than last year due to an increased budget for FY 2024 and the timing of the payment of invoices.

Facilities and maintenance expenditures include the payments for the escalator project of \$916,704.

Grant Income Statement

The Library is currently managing over \$824,000 in grant projects. The Library has received the following grants:

- ARPA funding from Richland County for hot spots (8/1/23 - 12/31/26) GF019 \$207,700

- CCCF The Academy of Columbia Foundation Education Studio (9/22/23 - 8/31/24) GL 104 6,000.00
- Sisters of Charity Bus Passes (10/16/23 - 7/31/24) GL105 5,000.00 5,000.00 - 5,000.00
- Dabo's All in Team Foundation Books (11/8/23 - 6/30/24) GL106 2,500.00 2,500.00 - 2,500.00
- Power Ed Career Online Scholarships (1/1/24 - 9/30/24) GL107 - 26,000.00... Not yet received but on the way!
- Lipscomb Foundation Safe at Home Programming (11/29/23 - 7/31/24) GL108 10,000.00

Capital Project Income Statement

We are closer to the closing out of these projects. There are still a few outstanding items to be finalized and paid. There are currently about \$2,800 of open purchase orders. These unpaid expenses are for the wayfinding project. There is also \$300,000 set aside for the purchase of Edgewood.

2 Year Monthly Cash Investment Statement

This chart shows the trends in balance of the Library's most liquid assets and the break out between cash and investment. Note that the balances begin to increase in the month of January, February and March. The balances begin to decrease in April. This trend shows how the revenue flows from the County as property taxes are collected and then submitted to the Library. The investments will always trend down starting in April/May through December. The reason for this is the timing of the payments from the County for the tax appropriation. The Library receives most of the funding in January and February which is invested. Then the money from the investment is used throughout the rest of the year to fund the Library operating expenses. You will see the investment increase this month when we receive the tax appropriation typically on the 15th of each month.

FY 2023 Investment Income

A chart was shown with the monthly investment income/loss from FY 2023. (Keep in mind that the losses were unrealized as of the end of the year). You can see this trend as the market declined in August through October 2022. The income picked up as the market shifted in November 2023 and continued to improve through the end of the year. We have added FY 2024 analysis as the year progresses. The September income was lower due to an unrealized loss recorded of \$32,000 due to a shift in the market. The revenue in November is attributed to a swing in the market.

Monthly Revenue

A chart was provided showing a monthly comparison of revenue collected. This is a fiscal year comparison. The chart also shows the property taxes being received from the County in December, January and February.

Monthly Expenditures

This chart shown is a monthly comparison of expenditures paid. This is a fiscal year comparison. Note that July expenses are typically lower than other months, due to accrued payroll in July. August through October typically sees a spike due to payment

of book leases and first of the year expenses. May and June spikes due to programming expenses (summer learning program) and year end journal entries to record accruals into the appropriate year. An additional spike in FY 2023 was due to the payment of retention bonuses to staff. Note that the FY 2024 expenditures are trending greater than prior year. This is due to the increased funding received from County property taxes.

General Fund Budget Spent

The chart showed each budget category for the General Fund and what percentage of the budget has been spent as of the financial statement date. Looking at this data using a timeline, an estimated target would be 5/12 or 42% of the budget spent. Some of the personnel spend is lower due to accruing the expense into the prior year. Other expenses have a higher percentage due to the timing of the expense payments...such as technology (timing of the payment for contracts).

Grant Fund Budget Spent

This chart showed each grant and the percentage spent of the budget and showed that many of the active grants have spent most of their funding as of November, 2023. The chart included grants that may have started in prior fiscal years but were still in progress as of July 1, 2023 (the start of the current fiscal year). There are some new grants that have not started expenditures as of November, 2023.

The Treasurer introduced Grant Davis, Partner with Mauldin and Jenkins, to provide the annual auditor's report. Mr. Davis provided an overview of the Auditor's Discussion and Analysis and the Financial & Compliance Audit Summary. This included engagement team and firm information, overview of the Auditor's Report and Compliance Report, as well as required communications under *Government Auditing Standards*. The result of the audit provided an "unmodified" or clean opinion.

Treasurer Branic also reported that

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Proposed Action Items:

Chair Rambo called upon Sarah Sullivan to present the action item below.

A. Travel Regulations Policy Update

Board approval was sought to update the Travel Regulations Policy. Richland Library follows the per diem rates used by Richland County. The County approved new rates in November and this would allow Richland Library's travel policy rates to align with the County's travel rates.

The policy update addressed alignment with the Strategic Plan via the Engage Our Team component of the plan to "create the conditions for a high-performing workforce, supporting the wellness, growth and development of our team". This policy update will provide staff with adequate funds to purchase meals for travel without personal hardship.

There is not additional budget impact as the current approved budget will be sufficient to manage this increase in expense, as the change is occurring mid-fiscal year.

Upon approval of the policy, the new per diem rates are in effect immediately.

The Chair called for a motion to approve as presented above.
(Motion: B. Branich; Second: B. Moses; Motion Carried).

B. Worker's Compensation Insurance

Board approval was sought to retroactively approve a change of vendors for the Library's workers compensation policy from the State Accident Fund to AmTrust North America.

The Library received an estimated premium for worker's compensation from the State Accident Fund in early November, with a premium increase of 31%. The SAF did not provide a reasonable explanation for the increase and provided no offer to adjust. RL staff obtained four estimate quotes from other vendors that were significantly lower than the quoted premium from SAF. The decision was made to move forward with AmTrust North America due to the significant savings to the Library and the need to obtain coverage beginning January 1, 2024.

The connection of this item to the Library Strategic Plan is to engage our team. Workers Compensation Insurance is required for the Library and is a staff benefit to protect from loss if an accident occurs.

Impact (Budget, Staff, Etc.)

The SAF premium was \$86,134 and the new premium from AmTrust was \$31,568, resulting in a budget savings of \$54,566.

The coverage began on January 1, 2024.

(Motion: T. Brown; Second: B. Branich and C. Cox, simultaneously; Motion Carried.)

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair called for reference to the last page of the Board packet relating to RL Trustee/County Councilpersons liaison assignments. Anika Thomas, Community Relations Manager, will contact the Councilpersons with introductions for their individual RL Trustee liaison.

Also, the Chair announced an annual change in leadership for Richland County Council on January 2, 2024. Jessica Mackey, District 9, was named Chair and Derrek Pugh, District 2, was named Vice Chair.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The ED expressed gratitude to the Board for their approval of her recent sabbatical.

The ED introduced and welcomed the new Donor Engagement Manager, Samantha "Sam" Scott, reporting to Tina Gills. Sam comes to Richland Library with experience and expertise in cultivating and stewarding donor relationships. She holds a B.A., in Communications, minor in English from Coker College.

Ms. Huggins called on Heather McCue, Children and Teen Services Manager to address sensory friendly hours at RL Main. The Board was informed of a forthcoming pilot project "Sensory Sunday", beginning at RL Main in January. This pilot program is a part of the efforts of RL to be an inclusive library for those of all abilities. Once per month, on the last Sunday of the month, RL Main Garden Level will open ninety minutes early at 12:30 p.m. for families seeking a sensory-friendly experience. Sensory-friendly programs support a sense of belonging and inclusiveness for individuals. The area will have reduced lighting and lower sound levels. The Library is working with other community partners who have similar programming to ensure calendars do not overlap, thereby providing more opportunity for those in the community. RL Southeast was designed with a multi-sensory room with highly trained staff. If the pilot program is successful, consideration will be given to expanding this service to other locations.

Tamara King, Chief Equity and Engagement Officer shared that this week is Racial Justice Week, an initiative started by Richland County Council in 2022. One of the events promoted by the Library is Let's Talk Race: Just Action; a conversation with Richard and Leah Rothstein to be held on Thursday, January 25 at 6:00 p.m. at RL Main.

The ED reported that Diane Luccy, Business and Careers Manager, attended the Sharjah Library Conference in November. She co-presented with Sherine Eid, Bibliotheca Alexandria. Diane's individual session, *How to Create a Business, Careers and Research Center in a Library*, was requested by the Director of the Sharjah Public Library. Ms. Huggins, as a former attendee of this conference, stated that the conference is held in conjunction with the Sharjah International Book Fair which is one of the world's largest book fairs.

Also, Ms. Luccy, along with co-authors Julie Brophy (Baltimore Public Library) and Bland Lawson, RL Business and Careers librarian, have written a peer-reviewed article – "Building Thriving Communities: The Library's Role in Economic Development which will be published soon in the *Journal of Library Administration*.

The ED announced Eisner-award winning comic writer Chuck Brown as the new artist-in-resident. His residency will run January – June 2024. He has written *The Punisher*, *Wolverine*, and *Black Panther* comics for Marvel, *Superman*, *Black Manta* and *Aquama*, for DC Comics. He is currently writing *Disney Villains* for Dynamite Entertainment. He was raised in Latta, SC where one of his first jobs was with a public library. He attended college, and resides, in Columbia. On Friday, January 19 at 7:30 p.m. he, along with guest author Andrew Aydin, will present *A Comic Conversation*. A reception celebrating the newest art exhibit featuring graphic novel *The Wonders of an HBCU*, a project led by Benedict College resident artist Sanford Greene will be held prior to the main event.

The ED closed her report directing the Trustees to a flyer for the 2024 Broader Bookshelf Challenge, which was explained in the Friends and Foundation report. She encouraged participation in the annual program.

DATE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

The Board will meet on February 12, 2024.

ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Robertson, Secretary