

Minutes for Board Meeting of January 24, 2017
Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Library Board Meeting / April 25, 2017

Members Attending: Anna Brown, John Clements, Sherrysue Davis, Ben Jacobs, Mayor Mark Masee, Marsha Stenbridge, Chairman Steve Taylor and Virginia Watson. Staff Attending: Director Martha Powers-Jones.

The Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman John Clements.

Chairman John Clements welcomed board members. Clements also gave a special welcome to new board member County Commission Chairman Steve Taylor.

Minutes were presented for the October 25, 2016 meeting. Virginia Watson moved to accept the minutes and Sherrysue Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The first order of business regarded the 2016 Final Local Financial Report and the 2017 Quarter 2 State Financial Report as presented by Powers-Jones. Powers-Jones noted that the original 2016 Local Funds Budget allowed for an \$11,000 deficit to be covered by our fund balance. She reminded the Board about the additional SSG funds from the end of the State fiscal year helped alleviate the burden on our fund balance. Powers-Jones noted that the State funds deficit was largely due to grants that still need to be reimbursed, but anticipated falling within budget before June 30, 2017. Clements asked about the overage on the Building supplies line; Powers-Jones noted that she had under-budgeted when she recommended that line item be reduced from \$2,000 to \$500 in October. Mayor Mark Masee asked about the under-spending in the Utilities line item; Powers-Jones noted that Utility costs have gone down a bit due to the change in lighting and the roof improvement, but overall Utility costs have not decreased that dramatically; the SSG funds were applied to Utilities lowering the reliance on local funds. Masee moved to accept the report and Ben Jacobs seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

Clements asked Powers-Jones to highlight any notable items presented in the Director's Report. Powers-Jones discussed the Black History Month partnership with the Arts Council, Blue & Gray Museum, Grand Theatre, Fitzgerald Tourism, and the Development Authority of Ben Hill County and thanked the Library Foundation for their \$1,000 contribution towards the events. Masee emphasized how important these partnerships are and noted that due to this level of participation from so many organizations, this will be the best Black History Month event schedule the community has had in recent years. Powers-Jones also noted the addition of the AWE Literacy Stations and highlighted that the Friends of the Library provided the funding for these stations. She said that statistics show an increase in patron visits, circulation, and Internet usage and hoped that this trend continued. Masee noted the agenda item under New Business for the Spanish Language Program and that it was also mentioned in the Director's Report. The Board agreed to go ahead and discuss this under the Director's Report. Powers-Jones said that Clements had shared some studies with her on the benefits for young children learning a foreign language, including improved literacy readiness. She thought this was a great program for the Library and found a suitable person to run this program on Saturday mornings, Ruth Carreno. Unfortunately, Carreno called Powers-Jones earlier this afternoon stating that her Saturday schedule had changed and she was no longer available. Powers-Jones is looking into other possible people who could assist with this program, but for now, it is temporarily postponed.

In Unfinished Business, Clements presented a proposal on allowing MoneyTree ATM of Georgia to install an ATM machine at the Library. This proposal will not cost the Library and the Library Foundation would receive a portion of the service fee for each transaction. Watson expressed concern that there might be people who

falsely assume that Library staff have access to the money in this machine or the cash used to keep it stocked. Clements said that, while there are robberies of these machines, they are very few. He also noted that it being inside the building would help limit usage to Library patrons. Clements emphasized that he thought this would be an added service for Library users and would not hinder staff. Masee moved to accept the proposal on the condition that Powers-Jones find a suitable placement for the machine and that there be a trial period where the Board or MoneyTree could revisit housing this machine contingent on any issues that arise; Chairman Steve Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed with five “Yay” votes; Watson and Anna Brown voted “Nay” and Clements abstained.

Clements asked Powers-Jones to present the 2017 Local Funds Budget. Powers-Jones noted that Kathy Young had notified her that the City and County would be increasing their contributions by \$3,470 each, from \$127,714 to \$131,184. Despite this increase, she noted that the Library was still running around a \$12,000 projected deficit. She pointed out that this is largely due to their substantial personnel expenditures and that the changes the Board approved at the July meeting to the salary schedule would help keep those costs in line in the future. She said that she was working on ways to cut costs, especially supply costs. She was also looking at approaching the Friends of the Library for funding to help cover the cost of programming. Powers-Jones noted that approaching the Ben Hill County School System for funding should be considered as most of the Library’s programming expenses and around half of materials expenditures directly supported school-age children in the county. Masee suggested that Powers-Jones build a case for this support and then try to set up a meeting with the Superintendent and School Board Chairman. Powers-Jones agreed and said she would contact the Board when this was ready. Jacobs moved to approve the 2017 Local Funds Budget as presented and Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The last item under Unfinished Business was the Fine Forgiveness plans for 2017. This item was tabled until the next meeting.

The first item under New Business concerned the Fee Schedule. Clements asked Powers-Jones to present the proposal to add 3D printing charges to the schedule. Powers-Jones said that the new 3D printer was up and running. Each Board member received a Chicken bookmark printed with this printer; she noted that the teens from T.A.C.O.S. (Teen Advisory Council of Students) had designed these bookmarks. Powers-Jones stated that the STEAM grant covered the purchase of the printer and related equipment and supplies, including several rolls of filament. To that end, she suggested allowing patrons to print their first item free of charge, with subsequent items be listed at a \$1.00 base charge with an additional \$0.10 per gram. Powers-Jones said that the Board could revisit these charges when the filament purchased with the grant funding runs out. Taylor moved to approve the proposal as presented and Jacobs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Clements asked Powers-Jones to present the proposal on the Spring Staff Training Day. Powers-Jones said that she wanted to hold the spring staff training day on Friday, March 17th. Taylor noted that this was St. Patrick’s Day and the day before the Wild Chicken Festival. Masee asked if that would change the Library’s usual participation in the Festival; Powers-Jones said it would not. Masee moved to close on March 17, 2017 as presented and Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Also under New Business, Powers-Jones discussed the Prime Time Family Reading Time Program. This program targets low-income, low-literacy families with children who are elementary school aged. The program focuses on engaging the whole family in the practice of reading and removes barriers to attendance by providing transportation if needed, meals, and activities for younger siblings. It will be held on Thursdays from 5:30-7pm from February 9 – March 16. Powers-Jones stated that it was a standard practice when the

program was offered in previous years to close the Library at 5pm on program days to allow these families unfettered access to resources and provide additional safety for the children to explore the Library. Masee moved to close at 5pm on program days and Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Last on the agenda under New Business was Patron Concerns. Clements mentioned that someone had told a family member that they had concerns about our movie rating system, but that he had yet to receive a formal contact on the subject. Powers-Jones noted that they follow the MPAA guidelines and did not feel the Library was in a position to provide their own ratings at this time. She also reminded the Board that there was a Materials Reconsideration process should a patron feel the need to express concerns about a particular item. Jacobs said that the Library should not engage in censorship. There was general consensus to revisit this topic if a formal complaint is made in the future.

Clements also presented an email he received from Cheryl Cotherman concerning library closures and notary services availability. Cotherman expressed concern that the Library was closed when students were on their breaks, especially on Saturdays. She specifically mentioned the long closure over Martin Luther King Day weekend (Friday – Monday). Cotherman also noted that she felt a notary should be available on Saturdays. Clements asked Powers-Jones to talk about the closure process and the notary services as a refresher for the Board:

- Powers-Jones stated that the Library Board votes on the library closure dates for holidays at the October Board meeting for the coming year every year. The practice is to close for nine days each year for holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. This closely follows the practices at the city, county, and state level. Furthermore, when a holiday closure falls on a Friday, Sunday, or Monday, the Library closes on that Saturday. This is due to the low attendance recorded for these Saturdays in the past (less than a third what can be expected on a normal Saturday). She noted this practice had been in place for several years with only minor variances.
- Powers-Jones also stated that the state staff who run the state-wide circulation system do major upgrades twice a year, over Labor Day weekend and over Martin Luther King Day weekend. When they do these upgrades, they pull the system down Thursday night and do not put it back up until Tuesday morning. Since the Library relies on this circulation system to check out materials and Internet service, she noted that the Library would not be able to provide those services during these times. Therefore, the practice has been to close during these upgrades. She also noted this practice has been in place for several years.
- As for the Notary services, she stated that the website services page noted that the Library's notaries (her and Sue Hostetler) were typically available from 9am-4pm Monday through Friday and that they may be available outside of those times by prior arrangement or appointment. She noted the website encouraged patrons to call ahead to verify availability.

Watson stated that she felt the current practice was sufficient. Clements concurred. Board members were in agreement that the practice was sufficient. Powers-Jones noted that she would see what she could do to make sure the notary information was more visible to patrons. Masee asked Clements to respond to Ms. Cotherman and provide her with the information as presented by Powers-Jones.

Clements noted that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at 5pm. The meeting was adjourned.