

Auburn Public Library Advisory Board Minutes from February 21, 2023

The Auburn Public Library Advisory Board met at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, in the Library Conference Room. The following individuals were present:

Board Members	Marcia Boosinger, Chair Bonnie MacEwan, Vice Chair Betty Burgess Karen Herring Daniel Surry
APL Staff	Tyler W. Whitten, Library Director Ashley Brown, Public Services Librarian Manager Luke Brown, Public Services Librarian Kari Carpenter, Collection Development Coordinator Daisy Griffin, Library Assistant Tonya Hood, Library Assistant Kim Hudson, Library Assistant Leslie Johnston, Collection Development Librarian Cynthia Ledbetter, Engagement and Outreach Librarian Brandon Rowland, Digital Services Librarian
Guests	Bill Sherling, Library Board (former member) Martha Shamp James Newton Elizabeth Yost Kirstin Yost Elizabeth Garrett Sue Ann Balch Anna Mehta Beth Saba Debra Beil Gale Hooper Robin O'Bryant Jane Turnbull

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Boosinger at 10:02 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The minutes of the January 17, 2023, meeting were distributed to Board members in advance of today's meeting. Herring moved to approve the minutes as written. Surry seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- Boosinger presented an overview of proposed updates to the Board's bylaws that provide greater detail within Article IV, Section 5, that govern the Citizens' Communications portion of the agenda. Changes include but are not limited to the following:
 - Each speaker will be granted up to three (3) minutes to present comments.
 - Citizens' Communications is not a forum for debate.
 - Speaker comments must use a civil, respectful tone.
 - Organized groups should select a single speaker.
 - Speakers should address the Board as a group and not individuals.
- Surry moved to adopt the revised bylaws, effective immediately. MacEwan seconded. None opposed.
- The Board discussed the article "A Love Letter to Libraries, Long Overdue" by Elisabeth Egan and Erica Ackerberg, published in the *New York Times* on February 14, 2023.
 - Surry mentioned the variety of unconventional collections that are offered in libraries to meet community needs.
 - Rowland and Carpenter briefly discussed unconventional collections currently at APL and plans to expand these in line with patron feedback.
 - Board members also mentioned the role that public libraries play in the lives of those who are homeless.
 - Staff pointed out that libraries are safe, welcoming, inclusive spaces in communities, and that type of atmosphere resonates with this group.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Whitten shared thank you notes that Library staff received in response to author Malcolm Mitchell's visit on February 14.
- Ledbetter explained that this event was part of the Library's Third Grade Reading Dragons outreach program, in partnership with the Auburn City Schools.
 - Mitchell spoke to all third graders at the Auburn Junior High School auditorium about the importance of reading and exploring different types of stories to find those that are most meaningful for the individual.
 - The program included a magician, and Mitchell read his title *My Very Favorite Book in the Whole Wide World* as students in the audience followed along in their copies.
 - As part of this program, all students received a personal copy of the book, with the book purchase being funded largely by the Auburn Public Library Foundation.
- Whitten played a video overview of the event produced by Cynthia Bean, the City's Public Affairs Multimedia Specialist, who was also in attendance at the event.
- Boosinger shared excerpts from emails the Board has recently received from Auburn residents advocating for continued equity, diversity, and inclusion in all Auburn Public Library collections. At the time of the meeting, over fifty (50) emails of support had been received.

- Surry moved to enter all emails into the record in their entirety. Herring seconded. None opposed.

LIBRARY SERVICES PRESENTATION

- Public Services staff provided an update on Library display philosophy and readers advisory activities.
 - D. Griffin discussed the Library's philosophy of building displays that offer something for everyone and the need to keep diversity in mind so that all visitors can see themselves reflected in offerings. Attention is also devoted to covering current events, a variety of world holidays, and appealing to the interests of various age groups.
 - T. Hood spoke about readers advisory interactions, including discussing reading interests with patrons and accompanying them to the stacks to review options. Brown also mentioned the importance of reviewing displays with patrons, as good choices often come from there. Brown stated that the approach has to be tailored to patron needs, such as strategies being adjusted to maintain relevance among different age groups. Brown also discussed passive forms of readers advisory, such as shelf talker cards, for those who enjoy browsing uninterrupted. A primary goal of this work is for patrons to leave satisfied. Brown also serves as a staff mentor with the Library's Teen Advisory Board, which has nineteen (19) members.
 - K. Hudson spoke about designing shelf talker cards that accompany displays with ease of use in mind. QR codes on these cards can be customized as displays rotate, and the code can lead to further resources or supplemental information about featured events, holidays, etc.
 - A. Brown mentioned that Public Services staff recently went on a field trip to local book stores and libraries to see how they build their displays, with that information being evaluated as part of the Library's upcoming Visual Merchandising Plan.
 - In response to a question from Herring, staff stated that displays are typically planned about three (3) months in advance, and staff pass information along to the Engagement and Outreach Librarian so that displays can be publicized through the Library's social media channels.
 - L. Johnston stated that Materials Management staff assist through ordering materials requested for displays.
 - Board members stated that the success of displays speaks to good communication and a good value added to Library services.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Board members discussed the importance of the support demonstrated for the Library and the Third Grade Reading Dragons outreach program.
- Boosinger mentioned a similar children's program being offered by Auburn University at the Gogue Center, in which all attendees will receive a copy of the featured book. This could be a possible partnership opportunity in the future.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Whitten and the Library Management Team provided a statistical report for January 2023.
 - Board members noted that all numbers are up for the month, and staff stated that this was the busiest January on record.
 - Rowland noted that digital circulation was above 10,000 for the first time.
 - Board members noted that responding to purchase requests, developing displays, creating shelf takers, etc., all play a role.
 - Staff stated that the visitor count was unavailable due to needed software upgrades in the gate management software.
- Whitten and the Library Management Team presented updates from the Mission Alignment Plan for January - March of 2023.

CITIZENS' COMMUNICATIONS (3 minutes per speaker)

- Boosinger recognized the following speakers:
 - Martha Shamp spoke in opposition to LGBTQ+ materials being included in the Library's collections.
 - Debra Beil spoke in support of all community members being represented in the Library's collections.
 - Sue Ann Balch expressed concerns about young people being influenced by various types of media that includes LGBTQ+ representation.
 - Anna Mehta spoke in support of the Library having materials representing all members of the community.
 - Robin O'Bryant expressed appreciation for the Library having resources for all ages that represent all community members.
 - Jane Turnbull spoke in support of the Library and having materials for all community members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further items of business, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler W. Whitten & Bonnie MacEwan