

Auburn Public Library Advisory Board

Minutes from January 23, 2024

The Auburn Public Library Advisory Board met at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, in the Conference Room of the Auburn Public Library. The following individuals were present:

Board Members

Marcia Boosinger, Chair
Bonnie MacEwan, Vice Chair
Bernard Anderson
Karen Herring
Dan Surry

COA Staff

Tyler W. Whitten, Library Director
Luke Brown, Public Services Librarian
Leslie Johnston, Collection Development Librarian
Cynthia Ledbetter, Engagement and Outreach Librarian
Brandon Rowland, Digital Services Librarian
Keith Williams, Public Services Executive Director

Guests

Debra Beil
Carrie Hill
Harriette Huggins
Martha Shamp

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 21, 2023, meeting were distributed to Board members in advance of today's meeting. Anderson moved to approve the minutes as written. Herring seconded. None opposed.

CITIZENS' COMMUNICATIONS

Boosinger reviewed the procedures for Citizens' Communications from the Library Board Bylaws and reminded the attendees that visual aids must be submitted prior to the meeting. Whitten reported no materials were received prior to the meeting. Boosinger also reminded attendees that this is the sole opportunity during the meeting for attendees to speak.

The following individuals spoke:

- Martha Shamp shared concerns about the collections, staff, and services of the library.

- Debra Beil thanked the Library Board and staff for creating a warm environment for all in the community and read a passage from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," speaking to the dangers of oppression of races and groups.
- Carrie Hill thanked the Library for welcoming everyone and providing diverse and inclusive materials.

Surry thanked citizens for participating, and Anderson acknowledged the courage of speakers who state their opinions in the presence of those who don't agree.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Board reviewed the Collection Management Plan in advance of the meeting, with Boosinger reminding members that policies are reviewed at least annually.
 - Boosinger asked Board members if there were any points to bring forward for discussion.
 - Herring praised the great work that was completed on this lengthy policy last year. She noted the importance of the policy and read a few excerpts from statements in the current policy that speak to inclusivity and the need to provide diverse viewpoints in an effort to serve the whole community.
 - Herring read an excerpt from the Intellectual Freedom section of the policy that states, "The responsibility of the Library is to serve the entire community, not to promote – and above all, not to censor – any particular political, moral, philosophical, or religious conviction or opinion."
 - Another excerpt read from the Selection Criteria section of the policy states, "Selections will not be made on the merits of any anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of all the Library's patrons."
 - Herring also drew attention to the statement in the policy that clarifies the Board's support for including unorthodox and sensitive topics in the collection.
 - There being no further comments or suggested changes, Boosinger stated that the policy stands as is.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Impact stories included the following:
 - Public Services staff reported a variety of impact stories received through patron interactions from recent weeks.
 - Whitten received a letter thanking the Library for maintaining a collection of materials on LGBTQ+ subjects, as they have been invaluable to the writer's family.
 - Herring noted the value in hearing the many ways in which the Library is serving the community and asked that the impact stories be included in the minutes.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Herring reported that she wore her Library hoodie during a volunteer shift at the Community Market, which prompted opportunities to talk about the Library and its services.
 - Anderson requested a hoodie so that he could explore similar opportunities.

- MacEwan mentioned attending the APL Foundation's Board meeting and commended Whitten and Rowland for the excellent report they gave on current Library activities.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- Board Chair Boosinger conducted the Library Board's annual meeting to set the meeting schedule for the coming year and to elect members for the offices of Chair and Vice Chair.
 - Boosinger presented a draft of the proposed meeting schedule for February 2024 – January 2025.
 - In the draft, the Board continues to meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m., except for December 2024, during which the Board would not meet. Herring moved to approve the schedule as presented. Surry seconded. None opposed.
 - Boosinger reviewed the rules for the election of officers from the Board's Bylaws and asked MacEwan if any nominations had been received.
 - MacEwan reported that she would stand for the position of Chair and Herring would stand for the position of Vice Chair.
 - Boosinger asked if there were any further nominations. There were none.
 - Surry moved to accept the candidates by voice vote, and they were elected by consensus.
 - Surry commended Boosinger for her leadership as Chair and for promoting literacy in Auburn, with the remainder of the Board voicing their agreement.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 2023 Statistics

- The Board praised the continued upward trends in services and use of the Library.
- Herring noted the increase in youth audio-visual materials.
- Surry noted the slow but steady increase in Boykin micro-library circulation as we approach the Boykin campus branch project.
- Boosinger mentioned the number of website views, with Rowland noting changes in Google Analytics that he receives from the Information Technology Department.
- Whitten mentioned that holiday closures in November/December can skew statistics for those months.
- Rowland mentioned that he installed a basic foot traffic counter at the front entrance to provide metrics while issues with the security gates are being investigated.

December 2023

- Herring noted that audio-visual numbers were down, with Rowland stating that December tends to be the Library's slowest month. Ledbetter also mentioned that there is a 2-week programming break surrounding the holiday period.
- Rowland noted that digital usage has increased significantly, with database usage also being high.

Mission Alignment Plan Updates

- Whitten provided updates on projects slated for October – December 2023.

- Boosinger asked about the staff's decision not to import bibliographic records for titles on-order but not yet in-house, and Johnston reported that staff in Materials Management decided after testing to add on-order records on a case-by-case basis, rather than in bulk, as some titles that are on-order cannot be fulfilled.
- Herring asked about materials with dyslexia font, and Johnston explained that available materials are mostly for children but can be used by anyone. Rowland stated that these materials would be interfiled with other materials but would feature subject headings to identify them. Rowland also noted that eBooks have the dyslexia feature as a font option.
- Herring asked about progress toward technology classes at the Boykin Center, and Ledbetter responded that after analysis this initiative will likely be held until the Boykin campus library branch is in place.
- Anderson asked about the timeline for the Boykin campus branch, and Whitten responded that there isn't much new information, as the project is still on hold pending the relocation of Public Works and Environmental Services to their new facilities.
- Herring asked about the LX Starter project, and Rowland responded that this is a software solution that allows for modern email notices to library patrons.
- The Board expressed appreciation for the continued progress toward defined goals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ledbetter stated that the mobile library van has completed the customization process and has been released to the Library by Fleet Services. Ledbetter also mentioned that she received \$15,000 through a competitive LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant to outfit the van with supplies for outreach visits.
- Ledbetter announced that the Winter Learning Challenge has over 700 participants who have read over 630,000 minutes.
- Rowland announced that work continues internally within the Boykin Branch Subcommittee to develop ten advocacy points for the new branch and that a member of the APL Foundation Board, as well as a member of the Auburn University SGA has joined. Any further development of the subcommittee will be held until the Boykin campus project is officially underway.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other items of business, Boosinger adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m. and passed the gavel to MacEwan, who will assume the role of Chair at the February 20, 2024, meeting.

Respectfully submitted.

Bonnie MacEwan