

September 21, 2015

From: Alexandria Library Board
To: Alexandria City Council

Subj: Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2015 (7/1/2014 – 6/30/15)

LIBRARY BOARD MISSION

In accordance with an agreement with the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Library Board sets the policies, rules and regulations of the Library; submits a budget to the City for the operation and maintenance of the Library; and appoints and approves such personnel as are necessary to operate the Library. The Board also sits as the Boards of the James M. Duncan, Jr. Foundation and the Alexandria Library Foundation that monitors the investment portfolios and approves grants from these funds.

The Director's Annual report to the Library Board, which provides specific information about Library facilities, operations and services within the system, will be forwarded to the Council.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Library Board consists of 7 members: 3 appointed by City Council, 3 appointed by the Alexandria Library Company, and 1 City Council Representative. Kathleen Schloeder, Helen Desfosses, and Gwen Day-Fuller were reappointed to two-year terms by City Council and Anne Paul was reappointed to a three-year term by the Alexandria Library Company. Openings do not occur frequently on the Board, but Board members and Library staff are constantly on the lookout for potential new members as vacancies occur.

MEETINGS

The Board met six times during fiscal 2014: on September 15, October 20 and December 15 of 2014, and February 26, April 20 and June 15 of 2015. All members except Alison Silberberg exceeded the 75 percent attendance requirement set by the City.

OVERSIGHT

During these meetings Director Rose Dawson kept the Board abreast of major developments in operations, services, usage, facility conditions, personnel matters and all other significant developments in the Library system.

The Board continues to be impressed with Director Dawson's leadership. Her involvement with leadership positions in both state and national library

organizations continues to draw much favorable attention to the Alexandria Library system.

BUDGET

As has been the case for the past five years, the major challenge facing the Board was the tight City of Alexandria budget. At the December meeting Director Dawson reported that the city Office of Management and Budget had instructed departments to submit budgets with no more than a 3% increase. As part of the budget process Board members participated in Town Hall meetings sponsored by the city to receive input for the budget process. One of these meetings in January was hosted by the Library which highlighted the findings of the Needs Assessment and included participation by Board members.

The Board has been extremely gratified by the public support for the Library and particularly by the Friends groups that have consistently and forcefully opposed cuts in the Library budget. Nevertheless, the Library budget was cut by 3.5% including a \$25,000 cut in the materials budget.

FUND RAISING

Director Dawson reported to the Board that she had offered the City Council a 50-50-50 matching grant plan. City council agreed to match what the Alexandria Library Foundation raised in FY 2016 up to \$50,000. The Board was assured that if the Library could not raise its \$50,000 it would not affect the city match to the Foundation funds raised.

CHILLER LOCATION ISSUE AT BEATLEY LIBRARY

At the September 15th 2014 meeting of the Board the recently moved chiller for the Beatley library was discussed. The consensus of the Board was that the new prominent location on the edge of the roof facing Duke Street had an egregious effect on the overall design of the building which is one of the most important architectural sites in the city. The Board strongly recommended that General Services investigate moving the unit to make it less obtrusive. The Board agreed that trying to screen the unit would only make the chiller appear even more prominent. The Board suggested that General Services delay the relocation until a full cooling season had been completed, to ensure that the initial relocation performed as designed. General Services agreed and plans to relocate the cooling tower in Fall 2015.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS AT BEATLEY LIBRARY

The Board had major concerns about maintenance problems that continued throughout the year at the Beatley Library. In the summer leaks were caused by issues with internal gutters. In February a fire sprinkler went off as a result of a

heater failure. Fortunately, no Library materials were damaged and repairs were expeditiously performed personally by Director of General Services Jeremy McPike and his staff. The Library staff and the Board were very grateful for this extra effort that minimized damage to the Library. Still more leaks and water damage occurred in the spring due to heavy rains.

BURKE BRANCH SPACE UTILIZATION

As anticipated, the Alexandria City Public School Board vacated the first floor space in the Burke Branch Library which had once been part of that library. The Library submitted a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget request to fund a design study for the space. City Council included \$50,000 in the FY 2016 Capital Improvement budget for that purpose, and the Board assumes that the space will be dedicated to Library use.

ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL POLICY

The Board approved the policy which had been reviewed by the City Attorney's office that clarifies the roles of the Library's custodians and delivery clerk during emergencies such as winter weather events.

AUTHORITY TO OPEN AND CLOSE THE LIBRARY

The Board requested a clarification of the authority of the Library to open and close independent of what the rest of the city offices do. The City Attorney, Jim Banks, confirmed that the Library Board does indeed have this authority. At the request of Director Dawson the Board voted to close the Library on Saturday July 4th following the lead of libraries in surrounding jurisdictions. The Board also approved closing the Library on December 26, the day after Christmas, since all other city offices would be closed that day as well.

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

A new Volunteer Handbook was created by the Volunteer Coordinator, Samantha Palmieri. The City Attorney reviewed the handbook and gave Library staff kudos on the document, stating that it could serve as a model for other city departments. The Board unanimously approved the handbook with minor edits.

ALEXANDRIA LAW LIBRARY

The Alexandria Law Library closed temporarily in the spring and its three City Council appointed board members resigned. City Council was anxious to keep the Law Library open so funding was transferred to the Library and the Law Library reopened so as not to disrupt services and confuse customers any further. The Board has been concerned about funding for the Law Library in light of the tight budget that the Library system has experienced. Director Dawson informed city officials that the Law Library services will be limited, based on the reduced funding

that the Library received to operate it. The Law Library has been funded for the next three years, but Director Dawson reiterated and the Board agreed that reduced or eliminated funding would result in service reductions or elimination of services altogether.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The Board members participated in the Needs Assessment along with seven focus groups and others in the Library-wide needs assessment study. The Board received the report of the Ivy Group which was then used to formulate the next Five-Year Plan. The Five-Year Plan included seven focus areas: Support for learners of all ages; Library collections; Technology management and access; Library as community hub; Community relations, marketing and branding; Organizational health and development; and Fundraising and advocacy. Input from Board members was incorporated into the Five-Year Plan and the Board unanimously approved the plan.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Investment Review

The Investment Committee survey of competing banks continues with the goal of insuring that BB&T, which currently manages the various foundation funds under the Board’s purview, is the best choice for managing these accounts. Meetings with BB&T confirmed that this bank has demonstrated safe management of the Library’s portfolio but comparisons with other bank programs are ongoing. The Committee met with the City Treasurer, David Clark, and Laura Triggs, current Deputy City Manager and former Director of Finance, who suggested criteria for evaluating banks and recommended sections of the city investment policy which the Library Board might want to include in its policy.

KUDOS

The Board was unanimous in their praise of the success of the **75th Anniversary Commemoration of the Alexandria Library Sit-In at Barrett Library**. The celebration culminated with an August 21st public ceremony at the Barrett Library and the unveiling of an historical marker as a permanent reminder of this important event.

The Board wishes to recognize the following:

Category	Employees to Receive Award
Actions that result in a reduction in health or safety hazards	Patricia Amaya, Willie Seegars, Jason Harrison and David Thorne
Teamwork and cooperation in working with fellow employees to attain the goals of the organization	Leo Baca, Samantha Palmieri, George Combs and Lawrence Marshall

An innovative or creative approach to a project or assignment that results in successful project completion beyond normal expectations	Ginny Rawls, Rebecca LaPlante and Katie Dow
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Director's Awards 2015

Category	Employee to Receive Award
An innovative or creative approach to a project or assignment that results in successful project completion beyond normal expectations	Brittany Austin
Service to the public	Genelle Schuler
Teamwork and cooperation in working with fellow employees to attain the goals of the organization	Julie Downie
Efficiency, effectiveness and productivity in job performance	Kym Robertson
An idea or method that significantly improves the administrative or operational efficiency of a work group, division or department	Colleen Funkhouser

Finally, the Board would like to thank the new City Manager, Mark Jinks, for his continuing interest in the Alexandria Library.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Schloeder, Chair (City Council Appointee)

Oscar Fitzgerald, Vice Chair (Library Company Appointee)

Anne Paul, Treasurer (Library Company Appointee)

Gwendolyn Day-Fuller, Secretary (City Council Appointee)

William Brierre (Library Company Appointee)

Helen Desfosses (City Council Appointee)

Allison Silberberg (City Council Representative)