



Fairhope Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting  
Monday, October 16, 2023

**Attendance:** Jimmy Conyers, Tamara Dean, Debra Langham, Andy Parvin, Dan Stankowski, Randal Wright, Tut Wynne (Legal Counsel for the Board)

Absent: Anne Johnson

Also present: 18 Fairhope citizens seated inside the conference room; large group of citizens standing outside the room (both doors open to allow group to hear)

**Called to order** at 4:00pm by Vice-Chair Andy Parvin who presided over the meeting

**Minutes** of the 8/21/2023 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

**Reports:** The Board reviewed the information available in the Monthly Statistical Report which covered the entire fiscal year from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. The Trustees as a whole were impressed with the total number of visitors to the library for the year 182,358, the number of participants in children's programs, 10,169, and the book circulation number of 140,928. Moving on to the Financial Statement the Board was thrilled to note that the city had approved the budget submitted by Ms. Dean with no questions or suggestions. The new budget includes an increase in the library's entry level salary which will help retain new employees. A look at the Employee Report showed 2 new hires, one in the Youth Services Department that makes the department at full employment. A new hire for Circulation will help, but this department still needs 2 more people to reach full employment. Tamara and Rob Gourlay, Assistant Library Director, are conducting interviews in the coming week and hope to have the number of circulation employees completed soon. The library is also advertising for a new administrative assistant position. There being no further discussion of these three reports a motion to accept the reports was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

**New Business:**

Randal reported on the status of the Capital Campaign for the Building for the Future upstairs renovation. We have exceeded the expected total with \$1,052,752.13 raised for the project. The City of Fairhope has promised \$350,000, Fairhope Single Tax Corporation has donated \$300,000, Fairhope Library Foundation has donated \$206,000. Mott MacDonald, the architectural firm that created the plan for the upstairs is also managing the construction phase of the project. They have put out details for the renovation to 7 contractors and 6 have indicated that they will attend the required meeting on Wednesday, October 18. After this meeting, where the contractors will

visit the library and see the space that will be renovated, they will have until November 8 to submit their bids for the work. The winning contractor will be announced on November 10. Randal expressed excitement and enthusiasm for the success of this project and mentioned how excited the staff is by the news that work will begin in January of the new year.

Randal also reported that the planned Bay Breeze Bash II was cancelled due to poor ticket sales. She feels that the Friends did not plan far enough in advance for the fund raiser and she did not do a thorough search about other activities occurring that weekend. It was Fall Break for the public school system.

After a brief discussion about the December meeting a motion was made to change the date from the third Monday to the first Monday, December 4. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Vice-chair Andy Parvin requested that Tamara read the list of books that were requested for reconsideration along with the date they were first added to the library's collection and how many times they have been checked out. Andy then pointed out how few times most of the books have been borrowed.

Tamara shared how books are selected for the library's collection. She explained that the library has a stated policy for book selection that is available for anyone to read. The policy can be accessed online through the library's website or patrons may ask for a copy at the circulation desk. She also discussed how the placement of a book (adult, young adult, teens, youth, etc.) is determined using guidelines from publishers, other libraries, the Library of Congress and recommendations from other librarians. Board members and visitors were reminded that a public library must serve everyone in its community and while we might not agree with or like a book we see on the shelf; it might be just the book someone else needs and wants to read. Patrons can always choose not to check out a book that does not interest them.

### **Old Business:**

Andy requested that Tamara update Board members on the Reconsideration Forms that had been submitted in September. The accepted policy for reconsiderations states that there be one form for one book. The library had received 3 forms with lists of multiple books. Letters were sent to the people who had submitted reconsideration forms pointing out that the library's policy is to accept one form for one book and requesting that they resubmit their request following the library's policy. She has received 13 reconsideration forms at this time. The staff had decided to read each book on the list so a more precise, thoughtful, assessment can be made of the books. Each Department Head has chosen 3-4 books to read and report on to the library director. The people requesting the reconsiderations have not read the books. Reconsideration forms are processed by the Library Director and she does a thorough investigation of reliable, trusted literary reviews, conversations with other librarians, research with the Library of Congress, and if necessary she will read the book before a decision is made concerning the book in question.

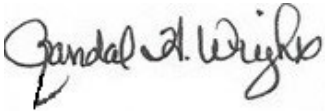
The business portion of the meeting adjourned at 5:05.

**Comments:**

Using the public participation sign-up sheet, Andy called on each person on the list. Randal used a timer to allow each speaker 3 minutes to talk. 15 citizens requested time. 11 spoke in favor of the library and spoke out against censorship. 4 people spoke against the library calling the books obscene and pornographic

**Meeting adjourned:** 6:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randal A. Wicks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.