

Minutes of the July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Meeting of the Oconee Library Board of Trustees  
4:00 p.m. Oconee Library  
Watkinsville, Georgia

Present: Adam Cain, Val Bell, Donna Butler, Mark Campbell, Deann Craft, Susan Curtis, Mike Eddy, Laura French, Cara Karnes, Jean Mead, Rubielen Norris, Dave Shearon, Susan Winstead, and Robert Wyatt

Robert called the meeting to order at 4:10, stating that a quorum was present. He asked for approval of the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Mike moved to approve, Mark seconded the motion. Robert asked that the phrase “surplus revenue” be replaced with the phrase “remaining funds” in the paragraph about Val’s summary of the financials. With that substitution the minutes were approved.

Cara began her Branch Manager’s report by noting that circulation was up two per cent over last year at the Oconee Library. Bogart saw their circulation increase by one-third. The Starlab Planetarium programs during the last week in May in both libraries were very well received as were other programs for children, teens and adults. The AARP Tax Aide volunteers processed over 200 returns and are considering adding another day next year due to demand.

Jean gave the Regional Services Report. She began by explaining that the state is launching the eRead Kids program August 1<sup>st</sup>. It will include 15,000 electronic books for kindergarten through fourth grade students. The library has passes for persons interested in visiting the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum and the Chattahoochee Nature Center. She reviewed various staff development attainments. A representative of the Census Bureau and others met to discuss how the Library can assist in promoting the forthcoming census to achieve a complete count in the Athens area. Jean’s survey about the feasibility of express delivery of materials to patrons found that potential users would pay \$6.00 per delivery for this service.

Donna reported that the Bogart Friends of the Library have reopened their store on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Cara noted that the Oconee Library Friends group has moved into the ESP room. They need volunteers to sort donations on Thursday and Sunday nights.

Val reviewed the financials. She noted that most increases are due to the two per cent increase in wages and benefits. Supply and equipment expenses were not as high as expected. The remaining funds can be used as part of a 50/50 share for major renovation and repair expenses. Rubielen moved that this money be put in the reserve fund, Mark seconded. The motion was approved. With respect to the 2020 budget, Val asked that the Friends groups tell her how much of their money is to go for material purchases.

Robert reviewed the Board members’ appointments and tenure, pointing out that many members will be going off the Board at the end of the year. At the October meeting the Board will elect a new chair, vice chair and secretary. Mark, Rubielen and Robert form the nominating committee.

The meeting turned to a discussion of the new Oconee Library. The Board of Commissioners purchased 7.6 acres of land off highway 441 and the Veterans Memorial Parkway near the fire

station for county offices. John Daniell and Chuck Horton met with Robert and Dave to propose that the complex also house the new library. The multistory building could accommodate a 20,000-square foot library on the first floor. There would also be some common space in the building which the library might avail itself of for special events. There would be an outdoor amphitheater as well as hiking trails around the multistory office building. Parking would be shared with the offices. Maintenance would be largely covered by the county. The Oconee Library has \$3.3 million to invest in the new library. At \$165 per square foot this sum would purchase 20,000 square feet.

Dave expressed his reservations. The City of Watkinsville hoped to relocate the library within the city limits. He feels that the library is a cultural mecca and that to locate it just outside the current city limits will limit community interaction. He admitted, however, that the City of Watkinsville cannot offer a tract of land to the Oconee Library at this time. Adam asked whether the city limits might be enlarged at some point given that this building will sit so near the current boundary. He observed that most people drive to the Library, even in its current location. Placing it in the proposed location will allow the Library to serve the greater county as a whole. Laura asked for examples of other public libraries coupled with municipal or other government offices. Donna knew of two instances in Georgia. Val pointed out that the Board does not have the money to purchase both land and build a library. The integrity of the library will be intact regardless of where it is placed due to its strong mission and the commitment of the staff. Rubielen observed that the County Commissioners are very supportive of the Library and would not do anything which they perceived was not in the Library's and the citizens' best interest.

Adam moved that the Board accept the Commission's proposal and allow the new library to become part of the administrative office complex. Mike seconded the motion. Robert called for a vote. Eight members approved, two dissented.

Cara asked that the Bogart Meeting Room Policy be tabled until the next meeting.

The next meeting will be October 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 in Bogart.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Curtis