



## **West Georgia Regional Library System Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

### **Minutes**

July 23, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

WGRLS Administration Building - Conference Room  
124 W. Chandler St. // Carrollton, GA 30117

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Denney Rogers, Chair.

Trustees in attendance (county in parenthesis):

- Denney Rogers, Chair (Heard County)
- Beth Hammond, Secretary (Heard County)
- Denise Askin (Carroll County)
- Mike McPherson (Carroll County) (Arrived at 10:15 am)
- Shannon Bentley (Douglas County)
- Keri Perkins (Haralson County)
- Karen Tarpley (Haralson County)
- Jenna Barton (Paulding County)
- Pat Rakestraw (Paulding County)

Trustees absent:

- Elaine Stokes (Paulding County)

Staff in attendance:

- Jeremy Snell, WGRLS Acting Director
- Cherry Waddell, WGRLS Business Manager
- Britton Ozburn, WGRLS Asst. Director of Materials Management
- Lee Dollar, WGRLS Facilities and Construction Manager

Guests present:

- Jim Cooper (Former WGRSL Director)
- Lisa Walton-Cagle (Manager, Warren P. Sewell Memorial Library in Bremen)

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Jeremy Snell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comments** (please limit to 2 minutes)

- No comments

**Approval of May Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Hammond, Secretary, requested that the minutes, as presented, be amended on Page 3, in the last paragraph, second sentence, to read: “No ~~found~~ **formal** action was taken.” This request is to correct a typographical error.

**APPROVED as one item. Motion to Approve Amended Minutes-Askin; Second-Bentley; Vote 9-0.**

<b>Rogers</b>	<b>Hammond</b>	<b>Askin</b>	<b>McPherson</b>	<b>Bentley</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

<b>Perkins</b>	<b>Tarpley</b>	<b>Barton</b>	<b>Rakestraw</b>	<b>Stokes</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Absent

**Approval of Agenda as Amended**

Mr. Denney Rogers stated that the Finance Committee did not meet prior to the regular Board Meeting. Mr. Rogers advised the Board that Mr. Ronnie Pate, a member of the Finance

Committee, submitted his resignation from the WGRLS Board of Trustees last week. With Mr. Pate’s resignation, the Finance Committee did not have a quorum and could not conduct any official business. Thus, the Finance Committee did not meet today, and there will be no report presented today.

Mr. Rogers also informed the Board the election of new officers will be delayed until the September 2019 meeting as Mr. Pate was also one of the Nominating Committee’s recommendations for an officer position. Given Mr. Pate’s short resignation notice, the Nominating Committee did not have time to prepare new recommendations. Therefore, the appointment of officers will be tabled until the September 2019 meeting.

Mr. Rogers asked for a motion to accept the agenda as amended.

**APPROVED as one item. Motion-Bentley; Second-Tarpley; Vote 9-0.**

<b>Rogers</b>	<b>Hammond</b>	<b>Askin</b>	<b>McPherson</b>	<b>Bentley</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

<b>Perkins</b>	<b>Tarpley</b>	<b>Barton</b>	<b>Rakestraw</b>	<b>Stokes</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Absent

We have had a number of Board member changes as this is the first meeting of the new fiscal year. Chairman Rogers introduced himself and asked that everyone on the Board and from the Regional Office do the same.

**Acting Director’s Report**

Mr. Jeremy Snell announced the addition of two full-time Regional Office Staff. Stephanie Irvin began on June 24th as Assistant Director of Library Services, and Lee Dollar, who we had shared with another regional library system, became full-time with us as Facilities and Construction Manager on July 1.

Mr. Snell shared library statistics from Fiscal Year 2019. WGRS Libraries circulated over 1.2 million items, and were open to the public over 44,000 hours. Ms. Denise Askin pointed to the fact that this included Neva Lomason Library's two temporary satellite locations, and Mr. Snell added the closure of the Warren P. Sewell Memorial Library in Bremen in February for flooding. Mr. Snell added that circulation is down around four percent, which is consistent with other public libraries in Georgia. Books comprised 72 percent of items circulated, four percent were eBooks, 19 percent were DVDs, with other items being Audiobooks and Park Passes. It was noted that over half of the items checked out were Children's materials. There were over 4,600 free programs offered at WGRS Libraries, with over 72,000 attendees. WGRS Couriers drove over 112,000 miles, making 5,304 stops, and delivering 105,086 holds.

Mr. Snell stated that the Neva Lomason Library Renovation is expected to be completed near the end of February 2020. Mr. Snell shared pictures of the renovation progress. Mr. Lee Dollar stated that the slowdown of the demolition stage is partially due to the Neva Lomason building being five separate buildings, which was not apparent during the initial planning stages. This issue led to more unplanned consultations with structural engineers. These issues have been resolved and progress should be faster moving forward.

Mr. Snell updated the Board on the finances of Phases I and II of the construction project. The funds allocated for Phase I, the construction of the Regional Office building, is \$700,000, with the remaining \$4.3 million allotted to the Neva Lomason renovation. We are \$85,000 under budget for Phase I. Phase I is drawing to a conclusion, and there are only a few remaining expenditures. Phase II is over budget by \$244,000, but this amount should be reduced by cost savings in other areas. Overall, we are still \$38,000 under budget on the total contracted price for Phase II.

Mr. Snell announced that WGRS will be restarting the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. The aim of the program is to have children reading at grade level upon entering Kindergarten. Library Managers and Children's Librarians overwhelmingly endorsed restarting the program. A committee of Library employees is considering prizes to offer for reaching milestones in the program, such as books, stickers and stuffed animals. Libraries will be promoting the program which will begin in October along with Library Card Signup Month for September. Mr. Mike McPherson asked if the program can be promoted in the local business community. Mr. Snell said that while he likes the idea, some Libraries have trouble justifying the idea to their funding agencies due to public perception. Mr. McPherson mentioned the idea of Libraries hosting events such as ice cream parties for kids that complete the program. This would bring the kids and parents back into the Library, potentially leading to more family involvement and more books checked out. Mr. Snell said that some Libraries already use coupons for things like free ice cream, but that a systemwide reward program can be considered.

Mr. Snell updated the Board on the development of a program to issue library cards to all students in first grade. Mr. Snell shared that implementing this program statewide has proven to be difficult as each school system tracks their students differently. However, he would like to pilot the program in the WGRLS area to see if it would be feasible to pursue further. He has spoken with officials at the Carrollton City School system, they are willing to work with WGRLS on this project. He is also proposing working with the Heard County School System if they are amenable to work with us on the project. These two school systems are smaller systems. Mr. Snell will be speaking with Heard County School System officials soon. He is proposing this initiative for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mr. Snell shared that the Audit for FY19 has been scheduled for October 21-23, 2019. Data for the Annual Report and Application for State Aid to Georgia Public Library Service is being compiled and prepared by Stephanie Irvin, WGRLS Assistant Director of Library Services. WGRLS Staff Development Day is scheduled for October 14, 2019, and staff input is being sought for topics to be covered.

Ruth Fuller, Whitesburg Public Library Manager is retiring. WGRLS is currently in the process of hiring for this position. The City of Centralhatchee has also created an additional part-time position at Centralhatchee Library. The library now has a 29.5 hour per week Manager, and two 15 hour per week employees. Neva Lomason Memorial Library is also in the process of filling a full-time position.

Mr. Denney Rogers commended Mr. Snell for a thorough report to the Board.

### **New Business**

- Amanda Wilson, Auditor with BatesCarter, reviewed the FY18 Financial Auditor's Report. The FY18 Report includes the Library Collections, not included in previous Auditor's Reports. Ms. Wilson also noted that the TRS Pension and OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits, including State Health Benefit Plan) expenses in the deferred inflows and outflows are outside of WGRLS control, subject to TRS regulations. The General Fund has remained consistent from FY17, with a higher amount for cash on hand and local funds. Ms. Wilson commented that the one finding in the FY18 report was regarding internal controls, and it applies to the internal policy leading up to the end of June 2018. With a small Regional Staff, separation of duties is very difficult. Substantial improvements have been made, and it is a work in progress. When Ms. Wilson asked for any questions, Mr. Mike McPherson asked if a person that has worked

under TRS for less than 10 years, and then leaves, can collect that money upon leaving, and if the Regional Library System is responsible for this money. Ms. Wilson confirmed that this is true. When Mr. McPherson asked if the Regional Budget includes this, Mr. Jeremy Snell stated that it does not. After asking if there were any more questions, Mr. Denney Rogers thanked Ms. Wilson for taking the time to review the Auditor's Report with the Board. Ms. Wilson complimented the Library System and commended Mr. Snell and the Regional Staff.

- Ms. Denise Askin asked about the status of the unpaid AT&T invoice from FY17. Mr. Snell said that our attorney has written letters requesting all communication from USAC. USAC is not responding. It has been determined that the issue surrounding the initial unpaid AT&T invoice came from a paperwork filing error, preventing the Library System from receiving reimbursements for Internet service from AT&T. Legal representation for AT&T has also written USAC requesting a response. The funds for this invoice and legal fees, totaling almost \$200,000, is included in Fund 100, resulting in a negative balance. However, AT&T is currently not making an active effort to collect these funds, and legal counsel has advised that WGRLS should remain in negotiations with AT&T until more verification can be obtained or AT&T actively pursues collection. The money is available for this payment should payment become necessary.
- Ms. Askin asked if accumulated vacation time is included in the Auditor's Report. Mr. Snell stated that it is not yet. The WGRLS Personnel Policy did not carry over vacation time from year to year until FY19. The Auditor's Report for FY19 will include vacation time rolled over. Mr. Mike McPherson pointed out that under TRS, up to 40 percent of accumulated vacation time can be applied to retirement, not 100 percent.
- Mr. Denney Rogers stated that the Auditor's Reports have greatly improved. Mr. Rogers stated he had spoken with the legal counsel, who stated to disregard the AT&T invoice for the time being.

### **FY20 Budget Amendments**

- Mr. Jeremy Snell recommended that no action be taken on the included FY19 Year End Statements, pending the actual closure of FY19. The Statements given in September will have greater accuracy as FY19 is anticipated to be closed during the month of August.

- Amendment 2020-01: Compliance with State Salaries Grant
  - Mr. Snell reported that Georgia Public Library Service recommends that 11 MLS (Master of Library Science) or professional service positions be funded with State Grant money. Flexibility is allowed, including at least half of the 11 positions be filled with MLS staff. To allow for this, five part-time positions were moved from State to Local funds, or Fund 100 (Shared Services). These positions are four Couriers and the ILL Coordinator position. In order to cover the salaries for these five employees, reductions in the following funds were made and monies moved to Fund 100: advertising, software, expendable equipment, and professional dues and fees. Ms. Beth Hammond observed that there is no change in actual expenditures which Mr. Snell confirmed.
  
- Amendment 2020-02: Pay Increase for Neva Lomason Library Staff
  - Mr. Snell stated that this amendment would raise the hourly pay for part-time staff at Neva Lomason Library to \$9.50 per hour, full time pay to \$10.50 per hour, along with a salary raise for the Library Manager. This would actually be a decrease in the overall salary expenditure. There would also be an increase in grounds maintenance at the Library. Mr. Mike McPherson asked if there were any staff retention problems with the current staff at their current hourly rates. Mr. Snell said that he was not aware of any issues. Full-time staff tend to stay long term, and most part-time staff have been employed for over a year. Ms. Hammond stated that there was no change in the overall expenditures which was again confirmed by Mr. Snell.
  
- Mr. Denney Rogers asked for a motion to approve both budget amendments as presented.

**APPROVED as one item. Motion-Askin; Second-Hammond; Vote 9-0.**

<b>Rogers</b>	<b>Hammond</b>	<b>Askin</b>	<b>McPherson</b>	<b>Bentley</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

<b>Perkins</b>	<b>Tarpley</b>	<b>Barton</b>	<b>Rakestraw</b>	<b>Stokes</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Absent

Mr. Rogers commended the Neva Lomason Construction Committee for keeping costs low.

**Appointments to Standing Committees**

Mr. Denney Rogers stated that the Finance Committee is full, with one person per County represented. Other open Committee positions will be filled as the open positions on the Regional Board from Carroll and Douglas counties are filled. Ms. Jenna Barton asked when the Finance Committee regularly meets. Mr. Jeremy Snell said that the Finance Committee meets at 9:00am, before the Regional Board meeting. Mr. Rogers mentioned that all Committee meetings are open, and that outside input is always welcomed.

Mr. Rogers asked for a motion to adjourn.

**APPROVED as one item. Motion-Bentley; Second-Tarpley; Vote 9-0.**

<b>Rogers</b>	<b>Hammond</b>	<b>Askin</b>	<b>McPherson</b>	<b>Bentley</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

<b>Perkins</b>	<b>Tarpley</b>	<b>Barton</b>	<b>Rakestraw</b>	<b>Stokes</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Absent

The meeting was adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Next meeting: September 24, 2019 at WGRS Administrative Building  
9 a.m. Finance Committee // 10 a.m. Full Board

Minutes taken by Britton Ozburn.

Reviewed and presented to the WGRS Board by Beth Hammond, Secretary.