



West Georgia Regional Library System Board of Trustees Meeting

MINUTES

July 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

[This meeting was held via teleconference per O.C.G.A. 50-14-1(g).]

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Denney Rogers, Chairman.

Pledge of Allegiance

Trustees in attendance (county in parenthesis):

- Denney Rogers (Heard County) - Board Chair
- Denise Askin (Carroll County) - Vice Chair
- Beth Hammond (Heard County) - Secretary
- Elaine Stokes (Paulding County)
- Keri Perkins (Haralson County)
- Mike McPherson (Carroll County)
- Pat Rakestraw (Paulding County)
- Shannon Bentley (Douglas County)
- Tim Grizzard (Carroll County)
- Tracy Crooks (Incoming, Douglas County)
- Urshla Fouch (Douglas County)

Staff in attendance:

- Jeremy Snell, WGRLS Director
- Stephanie Irvin, WGRLS Deputy Director
- Neil Weathington, Manager, Whitesburg Public Library

Absent:

- Jenna Barton (Paulding County)
- Karen Tarpley (Haralson County)

Public Comments

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Motion to Approve Minutes from May 26, 2020, WGRLS Regular Board Meeting and June 9, 2020 Executive Committee Called Meeting - Grizzard; Second - Fouch; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 9-Yes, 1-Abstained**

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	ABSTAIN	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- **Motion to Approve Agenda - Askin; Second - McPherson; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 10-0**

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Status of Library Services**

Mr. Snell shared the status of services in the counties in WGRLS. Two libraries are providing limited services at the desk, four are allowing browsing and all are providing contactless/curbside services. The libraries are still providing programming in some form such as cooking segments, yoga, craft pickup bags, and storytimes. The state data

coordinator has given updated definitions for programming allowing digital programming to count in the same way as in-person programming does. All 62 library systems in Georgia have staff in the library. The level of services differs across the state with 55 offering curbside services and 36 open to the public. WGRLS has locations with buildings open to the public so they count with the 36 open.

- **Collection Usage in FY2020**

Mr. Snell shared a chart of materials usage showing there was a dramatic decrease in April when the libraries closed. The amount of holds sent and received is almost up to how it was prior to the closures. Materials checkout is trending upwards. eContent usage increased in April and the increase of circulation has continued. eRead Kids, a new service that focuses on eContent for children, had a big spike of circulation in April. There has been a drop with the start of summer. He then showed a chart with eContent circulation broken out by county. The biggest increase of eContent circulation was in Carroll County, Douglas County, and Paulding County.

Government Update

In early July, the Board of Regents released a map of broadband access in all service areas. Haralson and Heard Counties have not seen much of an increase in eContent circulation since the percent of households in those counties without broadband access is 60% for Haralson and 57% for Heard. WGRLS is considering how it can help bridge the digital divide for those counties. Since WGRLS received more from the state than planned, there was an increase in the system services grant and the materials grant.

- **FY2021 Policy Review Schedule**

There has been an update to the schedule during which we will be writing, updating, and passing policies through the board. The Code of Conduct, Exhibits, Telework (as a part of the Personnel Policy) and the Staff Development Policy are set to be sent to the board at the next meeting.

- **Neva Lomason Renovation**

The building, like the other centralized libraries, is still not open to the public. There are still a few foundation and tile repairs that need to be addressed, and they are investigating drainage issues. Some of the final signage was installed last week. Within the next three to four weeks the library should be ready to open provided everything goes according to plan. Mr. Snell shared images from the interior, such as the children's room and the special collections area.

- **Personnel Updates**

Luke Brown has joined the system as Marketing and Outreach Manager. The goal of this position will be looking for community partnerships and taking over social media. He previously worked at Southwest Georgia Regional Library System.

Mr. Snell congratulated Laura Buchanan, the manager at Ruth Holder Public Library in Temple. Ms. Buchanan has completed her MLIS with the University of Alabama.

- **Other Items in the Works**

Mr. Snell gave a brief description of other WGRLS projects

- The audit for FY2019 closed.
- FY2021 has begun, and WGRLS has migrated to a new accounting software: MIP. Business Manager Cherry Waddell is leading the process.
- Amy Mollekamp in Paulding County has worked with the Board of Education to receive a L4GA grant, which is to be used for children's early literacy services. They are looking at potentially providing library cards to preschoolers through community partnerships. He commended her work.
- Mobile printing services are currently being offered at several locations. Patrons can e-mail documents directly to a library's account to print remotely.
- Credit card payments through Stripe have been tested at Neva Lomason. The setup allows patrons to pay online after logging into their PINES account. There is a fee structure, but it has still been a good source of income, especially since taking cash is difficult for libraries at the moment. This will be expanded to other libraries.
- WGRLS is approaching time for its annual report and application for state aid. This project will be headed by Deputy Director Stephanie Irvin.
- Mr. Snell will update on the summer reading program at the next meeting as it is coming to a close.

Mr. Rogers said the Neva Lomason library is getting good press in the local paper, and that he hasn't seen negative comments about how the libraries are operating during COVID-19, He commended staff.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- **Action Item: FY2021 Revised Budget** Ms. Hammond said WGRLS has moved to new accounting software. The system has also received more money from the state. Ms. Hammond then turned it over to Mr. Snell for a detailed presentation.

Mr. Snell shared the big change is in state grants as more money has been received from the state than anticipated. There is also an approximate \$19,000 increase in internet costs locally, but this will be covered by Georgia Public Library Services (GPLS). Mr. Snell explained 80% of internet costs are covered federally, with the remainder being covered by GPLS. WGRLS pays for internet services, and then receives reimbursement from GPLS for the difference. There is a regional increase of system services grants (SSG). County and BOE revenue is unchanged. There is a small change in city income since one location is providing less. There is a planned increase in friends of the library support to make up for the decrease in the planned support for this city.

- The regional office has a small increase in materials, operating – because they're getting more SSG monies – and an increase in overall operating expenditures. They took some of the money they were going to locally spend and put it towards operating costs. Mr. Snell shared charts showing the revenues and expenditures. The updated budget has increased in areas previously cut, as well as increases in the new employee's salary, money added for insurance and vehicle upkeep so a new courier van can be purchased, and lines for advertising and printing. Some staff previously paid with state money will now be paid with local funds, and the janitorial position remains unfilled, so there are some funds from that. Technology has been cut by a third, but when the new budget was replenished, a line for software items was added to budget for items the system would like to purchase. A line was also added - \$1000 budgeted - to build a professional development collection at the request of the managers. Money for continuing education conferences has been replenished and is expected to be lower than previous years due to a lack of travel. WGRLS expects to pay the platform fee for cloudLibrary so all the libraries' money for cloudLibrary can all go to content. He then shared the breakdown of how much each member library gets from the grant. This makes the revised Regional Office budget \$54,297.25 with expenditures matching the increased revenue from System Services Grant and e-rate.
- Mr. Snell shared a chart showing the split of state materials monies by library. Carroll, Haralson, and Heard amounts come from a population based formula while Douglas and Paulding split evenly among their county libraries.
- Mr. Snell said that \$224,442.25 in more revenue on the state side and an equal amount of expenses.
- Ms. Hammond clarified there are no additional funds coming from WGRLS to this budget. The update is just accounting for extra monies coming in from the state.

Motion from Finance Committee to Approve Updated FY2021 Budget - Hammond; Second - Not required; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 10-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. Irvin shared the policies are the work of a representative from each county, and her representing the regional system.

- **Action Item: Internet Acceptable Use Policy - Revision**

Ms. Irvin asked if there were any questions about the policy. Ms. Hammond recommended wording changes related to the enforcement of prohibition of or termination of access. For clarity, she recommended using “no less than six months” rather than “no fewer than six months” when describing the period of time for which someone would be barred if they viewed material considered obscene. She also recommended that the second offense of a patron viewing obscene material should result in a bar from services within the PINES system, and to note that more serious offenses may warrant reporting to law enforcement. Ms. Irvin shared some offenses must be reported regardless, such as viewing child pornography. Mr. McPherson agreed that the statements are needed. Ms. Irvin and Mr. Snell asked for clarification that there should be just a first and second tier for offenses dealing with viewing material that is graphically obscene. Ms. Hammond said that is her opinion in order to keep things clear from a legal standpoint. Mr. McPherson agreed, and recommended adding in a process for appeal. Ms. Irvin said there was a right of appeal process in the revised policy.

Ms. Irvin asked if what the board was recommending was to clarify the use of different tiers for different offenses. Mr. Grizzard said he thinks it is sufficient for the appeal to end at the director, and Ms. Hammond agreed. Mr. Grizzard agreed two strikes for serious offenses is sufficient. Ms. Rakestraw agreed as well, and added she also supports having the final appeal be with the director. Mr. Rogers asked if the policy could be changed today or be sent back to the committee. Mr. Snell said both are acceptable. Ms. Bentley asked why patrons have a right to appeal if they have had two offenses. Mr. Snell said some of it is due process, and that there have been cases in other libraries where patrons have appealed on the

basis that they were doing research. Ms. Stokes asked if the ban would be for life, and Mr. Snell clarified that it would be. Ms. Stokes expressed concern about this.

Ms. Askin asked what other libraries do. Mr. Snell said the policy was originally passed in 2018 and was modelled after similar library systems. Ms. Irvin said the main change was more specific wording to clarify particular activities which are banned -- such as bringing in one's own computer and plugging it into the broadband connection -- and including the use of the library WiFi. She also said the policy was created with the stipulations for the Child Internet Protection Act in mind, and that the library computers have filters on them which are in compliance with the act. The biggest change to the policy was that it would allow patrons to use a computer even without a PINES card in good standing. This was done in order to eliminate a barrier to access. Mr. Snell asked if the policy was typical for other systems related to the escalation of bans, and Ms. Irvin said the policy was in line with what was typical at related systems. Ms. Irvin read a reworded segment of the policy, and asked if it was more in line with what the board wanted. Ms. Rakestraw recommended having it be two different paragraphs, and Ms. Irvin agreed to do so in order to increase clarity between levels of offenses.

Ms. Askin asked if the policy could be reviewed at a subsequent meeting in order to give time to consider it further. Ms. Irvin said it would be fine, and the board is welcome to reach out with any further questions or comments. Mr. Rogers asked if there was a motion to table the discussion until the next meeting. Ms. Hammond asked if they could also discuss the right of appeal going before the board. Ms. Askin agreed with the right of appeal ending with the director, as did Ms. Rakestraw and Mr. McPherson agreed.

Motion to table Action Item: Internet Acceptable Use Policy - Revision - Askin; Second - Hammond; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 10-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

- **Action Item: Unattended Minors Policy - New**

Ms. Irvin shared this policy is new. A version has been requested repeatedly by managers due to their popularity with young patrons, and which will create a standard of expectation for patrons, especially once school starts. It was created by looking at policies from similar libraries systems as well as recommendations from DFCS (Georgia Division of Family & Children Services) since there is not a state law regarding the age at which a child can be left alone. The specific breakdown of ages is taken specifically from DFCS recommendations. Ms. Askin said she appreciates that if there is only one staff member left with a child that they are to immediately contact authorities, noting it is a safety measure. Ms. Hammond recommended changing a usage of the word “should” to “are not” and said she found two sentences redundant.

Motion to approve Action Item: Unattended Minors Policy - Askin; Second - Hammond; Discussion: Ms. Askin said the employees have been waiting a long time for it and would like for them to have something to work with. Ms. Irvin asked for clarification that the passed version would be the one with the inclusion of the wording change from “should” to “are not.” Ms. Askin confirmed. Second - Fouch; No discussion. MOTION APPROVED: Vote 10-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

- **Action Item: In-House Technology Use Policy - New**

Ms. Irvin clarified that this document is more for procedure than a policy. Many libraries have items which are checked out for only internal use, such as laptops or STEAM kits. When staff check an item out to a patron, this document could be used as an overarching piece regardless of the type of technology, since it has a url for a price list which will be for the current costs for technology. The intent is to save time for staff and paper and to make it easier for them to circulate material.

Ms. Irvin said she had questions regarding where the IDs for the patron would be kept during the checkout. Staff would keep it in a safe place to be determined by the location such as a locked drawer. She also said the information for the patron would be confidential, since all staff members who access patron information on

the ILS must sign a confidentiality agreement when they join. Staff are aware patron information is not to be shared with others.

Motion to approve Action Item: In-House Technology Use Policy - Askin; Second - Fouch; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 10-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

There was nothing further from the policy committee. Ms. Irvin thanked the board for their input, and Mr. Snell thanked Ms. Irvin and the Policy Committee for their work.

OLD BUSINESS

None

(Note: Tim Grizzard had to leave the meeting at this time.)

NEW BUSINESS

- Election of officers for FY2021**

Ms. Askin, Mr. Grizzard, and Mr. Rogers were on the nominating committee. They nominated Tracy Crooks of Douglas County for secretary and Beth Hammond of Heard County for co-chair. As the current co-chair Ms. Askin will move to Chair. Mr. Rogers asked for nominations from the floor. Ms. Hammond declined the nomination for co-chair. Mr. McPherson nominated Tim Grizzard.

Mr. Grizzard was no longer in the meeting, so the nomination for co-chair was tabled until the next meeting.

Motion to nominate Ms. Askin as chair and Ms. Crooks as secretary - Bentley; Second - Fouch; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 9-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
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YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
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Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

Mr. Rogers said he has been with the system for several years and worked with many directors. He praised the board and Mr. Snell. He thanked the board for what they do for their region, libraries, and public.

Motion to adjourn - Fouch; Second - Stokes; No Discussion; MOTION APPROVED: Vote 9-0

Askin	Hammond	Stokes	Perkins	McPherson	Rakestraw
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Bentley	Grizzard	Crooks	Fouch	Barton	Tarpley
YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 am.

Minutes taken by Stephanie Irvin, WGRLS Deputy Director

Minutes approved by Beth Hammond, Secretary