

**West Georgia Regional Library System  
Regional Board of Trustees Meeting  
Lithia Springs Public Library  
September 26, 2017**

**Minutes**

The West Georgia Regional Library System Board of Trustees met at Lithia Springs Public Library on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 9 a.m. Members present were, Clint Chance, Joe Phillips, Keri Perkins, Shirley Vassy, Tracy Scaglione, Johnny McBurrows, Roberto de Jesus, Donette Lee, Denney Rogers, Shannon Bentley, and Beth Hammond. Linda Carnes and Katie Gibson were not in attendance. Also present were, Interim Director Steve Schaefer, Assistant Director Martha Goodson, Business Manager Ashlie Stewartson, Facilities Coordinator Lee Dollar, Technical Services Coordinator Melissa Gearhart, Children's Services Coordinator Teresa Jones, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator Jeremy Snell, and Bremen Library Manager Lisa Walton-Cagle.

Clint called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Interim Director, Steve Schaefer, offered a brief autobiography including his 40 years of experience as a very successful library director in Georgia.

The July 2017 minutes were approved with the following corrections:

1. Under Centralhatchee: Two typographical errors including the removal of the letters "di" and the replacement of the word "begin" for "being."
2. Under Finance Committee, Director's Salary: Add "approved \$15,000 local supplement."
3. Under New Business: Correct "FY 2018 ADA Officer."

It was noted by Steve that a non-director position should take minutes, so Martha will take minutes with approval by Tracy.

**Director's Report:**

**Finances and Budget**

Each attendee received a packet of library financial documents, including sample reports from URRLS that provide an example of what the board can and should expect to receive at future meetings and/or when requested, and a draft FY 2018 budget. Steve noted that all financial documents are still under review and might very well change.

Steve noted that we are from now on referring to our 18 facilities as Member Libraries rather than branches, because we no longer have a main library and all facilities will be equal and able to stand alone in regard to revenues and expenditures. Similarly, each county is a Member County, and our system name will be West Georgia Regional Library System rather than West Georgia Regional Library.

Referring to WGRLS financial documents, Steve reported that in the past the Extension Services Department received Board of Education (BOE) revenues but that BOE funds do not cover the cost of Extension Services so it will make more sense for the money to be credited directly to each member county in the future.

Steve noted that the regional library staff is here to provide service to member libraries, rather than directly to patrons. He also noted that Neva Lomason and regional library salaries have been co-mingled in the past and will not be any longer. There has been no formula in the past to govern the

distribution of funds regionally, and Steve has worked out a formula that distributes equitably the assets and liabilities of the system.

Clint and Steve have worked out that each member library must be \$7,000 and .20 per capita each year for regional library service. Steve noted that it is expensive to open a new library, and that in the future all prospective member libraries will be required to pay the above-mentioned fee as well as getting an agreement from their home county to increase funding appropriately so as not to drain funding from existing libraries in the county. Clint clarified that now the board will actually be able to see what each library is paying for service.

Steve informed the group that Ashlie and he have experienced great difficulty untangling WGRSL finances and have spent much time consulting with Patty Alligood, the state's accounting consultant.

In regard to the current financial state, Whitesburg and Mount Zion Libraries are operating at a deficit, Heard and Haralson Counties has several deficits to be resolved, and Douglas County is showing negative numbers as well due to minimal regional support, but for both Douglas and Paulding Counties this will be easy to fix by re-allocating a portion of their materials monies. Steve also mentioned that the actual breakdown of monies per branch in these two counties will be decided by their county coordinators. Steve explained that Franklin Library is running at a deficit, but that much of their funding is in-behalf of the library and support them directly.

Beth reminded the group that the Franklin Library was the only one for a long time, and is still referred to as Heard County Public Library, and that explains the larger degree of county funding received by Franklin. Lisa added that many counties had only one library originally, and that as additional libraries have been added the funding has never been corrected to reflect the growth.

Steve reported that WGRSL is operating at a net deficit of \$87,072 regionally and that in-behalf accounts for almost half of the system's funding. The proposed formula is designed to be adjusted as populations change and grow. In answer to a question, Steve explained that the Paulding County population was divided without including the division of unincorporated Paulding because the money is divided very simply.

Steve concluded his description of WGRSL finances by reporting that we don't have enough money and that it will be difficult to figure out how to make things work. We have a very small cash reserve at this point, and will aim for approximately \$375,000 of reserve funds in the future. We can now start to build toward that goal.

Steve also reported that funding for electronic materials will no longer be solicited by donation from member libraries. There is now a distribution formula based on usage.

A motion was made by Joe and seconded by Shannon to approve the new funding template presented by Steve. The board approved this motion unanimously.

A motion was made by Denny and seconded by Johnny to approve the draft FY 2018 budget pending the verification of actual revenues. The board approved this motion unanimously. Clint, Steve and Ashlie will work together to align the budget with the new funding formula.

### Construction

Steve explained that he and Lee have discovered serious problems with the original plans for the renovation of the Neva Lomason/Regional Office building and strongly recommend both the physical and fiscal separation of Neva Lomason and the regional office. Lee added that after a thorough examination of the original plans, they are proposing a very efficient and inexpensive separate facility

for the regional office. The cost will be less than it would have been to renovate the existing space – Hauser Walker estimated \$150 per square foot and the new building can be completed for approximately \$90 per square foot not counting furnishings. The all-in figure for construction is approximately \$650,000-700,000.

Lee explained that the new building would be a 4-sided brick building (Barker House brick) with wood frame and shingle roof. This will give Neva Lomason the entire 28,000 square foot building for library space, rather than the 17,000 allotted in the original plan. The regional office will be furnished by GCI which is less expensive than average and local for maintenance and repair.

Lee and Steve are re-evaluating the original plan with a consultant to decide whether to move forward with Hauser Walker or go elsewhere. Hauser Walker designed the UWG library renovation and came recommended, but have balked at the questions and push-back offered by Steve and Lee. They propose a charge of \$110,000 to make the requested changes to the original plan which seems much more expensive than necessary.

Shirley asked if there is enough money to renovate Neva Lomason with the existing plans and Steve responded that there is enough money.

Due to the Director and the Facility Coordinator working with the state to seek and utilize all possible construction grant funds, an additional \$462,500 were found to fund the HQ building.

Regarding the construction time frame, Lee reported that it is a design-to-build project, so it is quicker and can be started at the same time the design process is continuing, and that they RFQ will be sent out very soon but must be advertised for 30 days. He concluded that we should be able to break ground within 60 days.

Roberto asked where the funding for this project is coming from in light of WGRS' financial difficulties, and Steve explained that the construction project is funded by capital project money that is separate from operating funds. According to state law, at least 10% of the Neva Lomason construction budget must be used for the regional office. Lee also reported that \$400,000 of the funding for the Carrollton project is coming from the state in additional funds.

A motion was made by Johnny and seconded by Denny to approve the new construction plan pending approval by the Carrollton construction committee. The board approved this motion unanimously.

As a member of the Carrollton construction committee, Shirley requested that all donations to the renovation are respected in terms of specific naming and space requests in any new plans for the library renovation.

Roberto asked how we might be able to expand the regional offices in the future. Steve responded that it is likelier the regional staff would shrink in size rather than expand. Lee added that there is room to add office in the new space if necessary, and that there is also additional property owned by the library for potential expansion.

A motion was made by Joe and seconded by Shirley to transfer the \$150,000 originally intended for Villa Rica to the Carrollton project. The board approved this motion unanimously.

Donette asked about the status of a possible new Hiram library facility. Lee reported that Cherry is reaching out to local boards and the Paulding County commission to secure funding and a location. Steve has spoken with Cherry. Funding is needed prior to a decision on a new location for the library.

Library Domain and Branding

The library will from now on be called West Georgia Regional Library System, and as a result the website has a new domain: wgrls.org. The old domain will forward any users to the new domain name. Jeremy reported that he is working on a new logo for the system related to our geographic location in the west of the state, as well as a new color scheme and website re-design. Three ideas are being developed right now:

1. 5 counties
2. Compass
3. Google map icon

Beth suggested that the system consider a public logo design competition.

Steve reported that the library regional office had a new phone system installed today with voice mail and call forwarding.

#### Annual Customer Service Star

The board voted to award DeWayne Brown Customer Service Star of the Year and Lisa DeNapoli and Gloria Reed runners up. Each will receive a monetary prize.

#### Committee Assignments

Several changes to the roster of committee assignments have been made. Beth has been added to the Personnel Committee, Donette has been added to the Policy Committee, and the new Haralson County representative will serve on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

After considerable discussion, the board decided to table the question of a Shared Leave Policy. This motion was made by Beth and seconded by Johnny. The board approved this motion unanimously.

Clint requested that the board approve new signatory authorities related to the change in library leadership. The motion for approval was made by Shannon and seconded by Tracy. The board approved this motion unanimously.

Clint asked the board to go into executive session. The motion to do so was made by Joe, seconded by Denny, and approved unanimously. The board went into executive session at 11:50 a.m.

Following executive session, Johnny made a motion that the board return to regular session. Joe seconded the motion. The board approved this motion unanimously. The board returned to regular session at 12:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Beth and seconded by Shannon to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between WGRLS and Interim Director Steve Schaefer. The board approved this motion unanimously.

A motion was made by Denny and seconded by Johnny to approve a salary increase to \$100,000 minimum to accompany the job ad for the new WGRLS director. The board approved this motion unanimously.

A motion was made by Donette and seconded by Denny to include WGRLS library managers in the hiring process for the new director. The board approved this motion unanimously.

A motion was made by Johnny and seconded by Shannon to adjourn the meeting. The board approved this motion unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Goodson, Assistant Director