



State Library Board

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 26, 2022
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Location: 1500 Senate St.

Board Member Attendance:

Ms. Martha Murtiashaw, Chair	Present
Ms. Deborah Hyler, Member	Present
Ms. Anna Claire Dando, Member	Present
Ms. Loretta Green, Member	Present
Mr. Marty McKenzie, Member	Present
Ms. Alanna Wildman, Member	Present
Mr. Mark Herring, Member	Present

Other Attendees: Ms. Leesa Aiken, SCSL, Ms. Breanne Smith, SCSL, Ms. Mary Elizabeth Land, APLA liaison, Mr. Blair Hinson, APLA President, Ms. Mary Jo Dawson, ABBE Library Director, Ms. Kelley Poole, Lexington County Library Director, Mr. Bruce Heimburger, Lee County Interim Director, Ms. Deborah Pack, SCSL, Ms. Wendy Coplen, SCSL, Ms. Patricia Sinclair, SCSL, Ms. Virginia Pierce, SCSL, Ms. Tiffany Hayes, SCSL

Board Business and Approval of Minutes

1. Motion: Martha Murtiashaw called the meeting to order. Debbie Hyler made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the March 24, 2022 board meeting. Marty McKenzie seconded the motion; all present approved the minutes.

II. Director Report

Agency Administration

1. Aiken discussed the Legislative Oversight schedule and process.
2. Aiken discussed Senate Amendment No. 32. The conference committee met on 5/24 but did not discuss the amendment. Public Library directors have been making contacts with their Representatives and Senators regarding Amendment No. 32.
3. Aiken mentioned that 530 people visited the library in March 2022. 208 new library cards were issued in February and March. Aiken mentioned that these new cards were

likely legislative staff as the State Library has been pushing out resource information to the General Assembly.

4. Aiken mentioned that the State Auditors have been in the building this week requesting information related to the annual audit. Everything is going well.

Partnerships

1. The State Library is working with the Department of Mental Health to assist with library services. This partnership is part of the State Library mandate to serve institutional libraries.
2. Aiken is a partner in the First Five Early Childhood Advisory Council. There are 10 agencies involved in this partnership to engage families and impact literacy and school readiness.

Projects and Programs

1. The virtual Notable State Documents Awards Ceremony was held April 13 with 12 agencies participating and 68 attendees.
2. The TBS Let's Talk about Art Ceremony was successful. Board members Mark Herring and Marty McKenzie were in attendance. The art is displayed on the 1st floor of the State Library.
3. Aiken discussed the Read-In 2022 and publicity that the agency received about the program. 500 children were in attendance with 4,000 attending virtually.
4. The State Library's first in person event, SC Writing Contest ceremony, was held on March 28.
5. The State Library has added a new legal resource called Fastcase.
6. The "Discover the South Carolina State Library" webinar series has been very popular. One webinar had over 125 attendees.

III. Personnel

1. Alexandra Sanders has been hired as the Grants Administrator.
2. There is currently an opening for the Digital Projects Coordinator.
3. Desire'e Thomas in the Electronic Resources Department was named Employee of the Quarter.
4. The State Library recently held Employee Appreciation Day on-site. This day is designated by the Governor to recognize the contributions of State Employees. There was a painting session where staff painted lions.

IV. Public Libraries

1. A New Director Orientation was held on May 23, 2022. There were 5 library systems in attendance including Lancaster, AHJ, Horry, Dillon, and Lee.
2. The IT Department has been assisting with ARPA funded projects at Allendale Hampton Jasper Library. Paul Harmon has also been working with Dorchester County Library on a new branch project that is a shared space with a local elementary school.

3. There is currently one director vacancy in Dillon County. Christina Fowler is currently serving as interim director. The county has no plans to advertise the position at this time.
4. Spartanburg County Library is adding a planetarium to their main branch.
5. The Library Director in Clarendon County is leaving at the end of June. The library has several construction projects in the works including 2 new buildings and a renovation of the main library.

V. Finance

Aiken discussed the SCSL Financial Report. We are working on setting the budget for next year.

VI. APLA Report

1. Land mentioned that at the county level, libraries are working on closing out their budgets for the end of the year. County libraries are beginning work on summer reading.
2. Land discussed the article Mr. Herring wrote regarding Amendment No. 32. Land's comments included:
 - A. Librarians are professionals who are trained in collection development. Libraries take their collection development policies very seriously. Librarians work to ensure that books are housed in the correct locations and have measures in place to field complaints or requests for reconsideration. Land stated that Herring's article was not necessary or appropriate. County libraries are requesting their representatives back the House version of the budget.

VII. Open Discussion

1. Open discussion focused on Herring's article related to Amendment 32. Five public library directors were present and wanted an opportunity to address the article.
2. Mary Jo Dawson stated that libraries have policies and reconsideration processes regarding collection development. Dawson relayed a recent example of this in action in Aiken County. An issue was brought up by an attendee of a County Council session regarding an inappropriate book downloaded from Hoopla. Dawson asked the patron to fill out a reconsideration of materials form. The reconsideration request was reviewed and the book was removed from the offerings in Hoopla.
3. Aiken stated concern with Herring's article related to members of the LGBTQ+ community and staff of the State Library. Some of the statements could be considered discriminatory and thus damaging to the work culture of the State Library. Aiken noted that the State Library Human Resources Department has fielded several complaints regarding Herring's article. The article has been disruptive to the work environment at the State Library. Aiken fears that these articles will open the State Library up to a Title VII discrimination lawsuit. Aiken mentioned a recent Supreme Court case that addressed transgender discrimination. The State Library Leadership Team discussed the article and the negative ramifications it has had on the work culture and staff of the State Library. Aiken previously voiced concerns about Herring's comments related to LGBTQ+ at a special board meeting held in February 2022.
4. Aiken reminded the Board of the mandatory federal and state laws and reporting related to Equal Employment Opportunity. The Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission notes four types of discrimination: racial, sex/gender, age, and disability. The State Library must submit information related to positions posted internally and externally and the number of applications, interviews, hires, and promotions with the corresponding race, gender/sex, etc. of applicants for each position, annually. Additionally, each year state agencies must submit an Affirmative Action plan to the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission and the South Carolina General Assembly noting any areas of underrepresentation and a plan to address those areas. As Herring serves on the State Library Board and is responsible for approving policies, the article could be problematic for the State Library if a potential or current employee finds the comments discriminatory and uses them for leverage in an employment discrimination claim.

5. Aiken stated that she contacted the Attorney General's office for a legal opinion on the matter and is awaiting approval to engage counsel. The State Library currently has \$15,000 worth of legal coverage. It would cost the State Library an additional \$7,000 to obtain \$50,000 worth of legal coverage. If a Title VII lawsuit were to be filed, the legal expenses would most likely far exceed the \$50,000 coverage. The State Library has not previously budgeted for a larger insurance policy or legal costs as it has not been seen as necessary as the State Library holds itself to a high standard related to issues of employment. Aiken plans to seek legal counsel to determine the appropriate course of action to protect the State Library from litigation and ensure a work culture of equality. Additionally, Aiken discussed the State Library Affirmative Action Policy and measures the State Library takes to prevent discrimination of any kind.
6. Murtiashaw discussed the Board approved Social Media Policy for State Library employees and the belief that State Library Board members should be obligated to follow the Board approved policies as representatives of the State Library. Murtiashaw mentioned specifically the following sections of the policy:
 - “If you publish content to any website outside of the State Library’s official online presence and it has something to do with subjects associated with our agency, provide a disclaimer such as this: “The postings are my own and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the South Carolina State Library.
 - Never use or reference your formal position when writing in a non-official capacity. Do not use your official email to establish a private social media presence.
 - Those with leadership responsibilities, by virtue of their position, must consider whether the personal thoughts they publish, even in clearly personal venues, may be misunderstood as expressing the position of the State Library. They should assume that those outside our agency will read what is written. Be aware of your State Library association in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a State Library employee or have a prominent position in which your association with the State Library is known to the general public, ensure your profile and related content (even if it is of a personal and not an official nature) is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a professional, appropriate with the public trust associated with your position.

- To others online, there is no clear distinction between your work life and your personal life. Always be honest and respectful in both capacities.”
7. Discussion occurred which included the following:
 - Murtiashaw mentioned the previous discussion with Herring about articles written at the February 2022 board meeting. The discussion with Herring was about his articles and the association with the South Carolina State Library Board and the concern that they would affect the library negatively. Herring volunteered at that time to remove the South Carolina State Library Board from his bio line. The association with the State Library was present on the article related to Amendment No. 32.
 - Herring discussed the article he wrote about Amendment No. 32 and that he retains his 1st amendment right. He said that his article discussed legislative intent and are his personal opinions.
 - Land suggested that Herring use “my statements reflect only my own views” when writing articles.
 8. Hinson stated State Aid provides most of the materials budget for Oconee County. Losing State Aid funds would be detrimental. Books are purchased based on the needs of his community and collection development policy which is set by the Oconee County Library Board. Libraries strive to have a balanced collection and what is right for one child/family may not be for another child/family. Librarians believe parents have a right to choose what their children are checking out from the library.
 9. Dando stated that it would be helpful to have a “behind the scenes” look at how libraries operate and their policies.
 10. Land shared that she has only had 3 complaints about materials in almost 20 years of service. Hinson shared that he has had 2 complaints since becoming director. Dawson mentioned that she has only had 3 complaints in over 20 years.
 11. Aiken reminded the Board that the State Library nor the State Library Board sets collection development polices at the public libraries. Local Library Boards are responsible for approving collection development policies. Amendment No. 32 would be in conflict with South Carolina Home Rule.

VIII. Election of Officers

1. Alanna Wildman, Vice Chair, will assume the role of Chair upon Martha Murtiashaw’s departure from the Board.
2. Anna Claire Dando was nominated as Vice Chair. McKenzie made a motion to elect Dando as Vice Chair; Hyler seconded the motion; all present were in favor.

IX. Adjourn

Murtiashaw made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for July 28, 2022

Attachments: Board Minutes 3/24/22, SCSL Budget Report