

Minutes  
Board of Library Trustees  
October 16, 2014  
Dallas Graham Branch Library  
2304 North Myrtle Avenue

Board Members Present:

Erin Vance Skinner, Chair  
Guy Anderson, Vice-Chair  
Jackie Perry, Secretary  
Brenda R. Simmons-Hutchins,  
Foundation Liaison  
Tim J Anderson, Trustee  
Sybil Ansbacher, Trustee  
Marc Hardesty, Trustee  
Ronnie King, Trustee  
Charlie Kleeman, Trustee  
Joshua La Bouef, Trustee  
Gerald Reid, Trustee

Board Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Barbara A.B. Gubbin, Director  
Carolyn Williams,  
Deputy Director, Public Services  
Kathy Lussier,  
Manager, Community Relations &  
Marketing  
Julie McNeil,  
Assistant Director, Public Services  
Gretchen Mitchell,  
Assistant Director, Support Services  
Richard Mott,  
Manager for Strategic Initiatives  
Lisa Petersen,  
Technology Systems Administrator  
Karen Walker,  
Manager of e-Services and Digital Access  
Marshelle Berry, Webb Region Manager  
Jane Harris, West Region Manager  
Mitesh Sangani, Conference Center Manager  
Roberto Ortiz,  
Contract Administration Coordinator  
Eric Lawrence,  
Assistant Director, Planning & Facilities  
Aubrey Winship,  
Facilities Manager  
Andrew Herron,  
Exec. Assistant to the Director

Jackie Spiritas,  
Branch Manager,  
Dallas Graham Branch Library  
Suzanne Hudson-Smith,  
Foundation

John Sawyer,  
Office of the General Counsel  
Paul Martinez,  
Office of Intra-Governmental Services  
Larry Roziars,  
Duval County Public Schools  
Brittany Jones, Action News

Roxanne Henkle,  
Friends of the Willowbranch Branch  
Library  
Virginia Maxted,  
Friends of the Beaches Branch Library

### Call to Order

Chair Erin Vance Skinner called the meeting to order.

### Introduction of Guests

Chair Skinner welcomed Jim Robinson, Director of Public Works for the City of Jacksonville, who came to speak about the condition of the Willowbranch Branch Library. She also welcomed Dan MacDonald, Executive Assistant to Council Member Denise Lee, who represents the eighth district in which the Dallas Graham Branch Library is located. She then recognized Celia Miller of the Friends of the Dallas Graham Branch Library, in her absence, for her support of the library.

Brittany Jones of Action News was in attendance and filmed portions of the meeting. There were no comments from members of the public.

### Awards and Honors

Chair Skinner honored three past and present members of the Board: a) Mark Wood, who recently concluded eight years of Board service, including two as Chair, b) Jim Selzer, who recently concluded six and a half years of Board service, including two as Chair, and c) Brenda Simmons-Hutchins, who remains on the Board and recently completed two years as Chair. Mr. Wood commented on his warm relationship with the family of author Charles Martin, whose personally autographed book, *A Life Intercepted*, was dedicated into the library's collection in Mr. Wood's honor. Mr. Selzer, echoing sentiments expressed by Mr. Wood, noted that the demands of library Board trusteeship came to him as a joy and not a burden, thanks largely to Director Gubbin's solid leadership. Dr. Simmons-Hutchins lauded the library staff and emphasized the importance of relationship building in fostering a healthy library system.

### Approval of Prior Minutes

**Trustee Sybil Ansbacher moved to approve the Board minutes for September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Trustee Jackie Perry seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.**

### Staff Presentation—Dallas Graham Branch Library

Jackie Spiritas, Branch Manager of the Dallas Graham Branch Library, discussed the challenges and successes of the branch. Though located in an often dangerous neighborhood, the branch stays busy by being a safe, educational place for neighborhood teens and children. It also provides a digital outlet for nearby residents who may lack other options. As an example of the branch's innovative programming, Ms. Spiritas joined efforts with other branches in the Urban Core and with Career Source Florida to attract ten different business and career partners to participate in last summer's Job Fair For Teens, involving the US Military, Job Corps, Walgreens, and the Jacksonville Zoo. The job fair included preparatory sessions, thus offering participants much needed coaching, practice, and experience in how to interview for jobs. While not every teen of the 33 participants was placed, the goal of teaching proper job-seeking protocols was, in noticeable ways, an end in itself.

Trustee Gerald Reid expressed gratitude to Ms. Spiritas for her efforts. Trustee Simmons-Hutchins and Board Member Ex-officio Larry Roziers, themselves customers of the branch in their teen years, expressed joy that the branch remains a positive, safe place in a challenged neighborhood.

### Strategic Discussion—Willowbranch Branch Library

Jim Robinson, Director of Public Works for the City of Jacksonville, discussed his department's appraisal of the physical condition of the Willowbranch Branch Library. After water intrusion in September caused the branch's temporary closure, Mr. Robinson had expressed pessimism that the branch could return to full working order in the near future. However, Mr. Robinson now believes that the building can be fully operational by early 2015. His change of opinion comes from the discovery that hydrostatic pressure, a difficult to solve problem that was initially thought responsible for the damage, was not in fact to blame, but rather, that water was entering on a downward path via other avenues, including a stairwell. New gutters are being attached to the building and new concrete patios poured to take water away from it. The project was originally bid for roughly \$195K, but an additional \$129K has been added to address the additional issues.

Mr. Robinson discussed the prospective timeline for completion. Large windows in the upper story may need to be removed or rehabilitated. If the city determines that this is not necessary, a determination which should be reached within the next two weeks, then a mid-December completion is possible. If, however, the windows do have to be removed or rehabilitated, mid-January is more likely. Roxanne Henkle of the Friends of the Willowbranch Branch Library stated that local historic contractors have recommended not removing the windows at all, due to possible problems associated with re-affixing them. Mr. Robinson believes that advances in sealing practices have made this problem moot. Eric Lawrence, Assistant Director for Facilities and Planning, asked about the status of roof leaks found last month. Robinson's understanding is that there was some sweating of walls.

Chair Skinner asked how much of the library could be reopened at such point as the air quality is confirmed. Mr. Robinson believes that the safest plan is to leave the water-damaged basement closed for the time being but that the remaining building can be brought back into service pending air quality tests. This prompted Trustee Ansbacher to ask if the presence of customers would slow down renovations. Mr. Robinson believes that the construction activity's location behind the building would make such interference a minor concern, but he will inquire with the contractor.

Trustees Marc Hardesty and Tim Anderson asked if it makes sense to order the requisite environmental testing now, so that the branch can be returned to service as soon as other obstacles are surmounted. Mr. Robinson believes that the environmental testing should be timed to occur two to three weeks before the Board's preferred re-opening date. Therefore, the date should be determined before ordering testing. Trustees Marc Hardesty and Tim Anderson pushed to test now to see if it is necessary to remediate and repair before re-opening.

Director Gubbin queried the certainty of the forecasted timetable for repair, noting that, over the last five years of the branch's life, difficulties associated with prior renovations have led the children's room to be open for only one. Mr. Robinson expressed confidence in the timeline.

Chair Skinner confirmed that Mr. Robinson that he will follow up on the following issues and communicate what he learns to the library: a) Do the windows on the upper floor

need to be removed to be repaired, and what impact would this have on the schedule for completing the work? b) What action is being taken to address the leaks in the roof? c) What does Public Works plan to do to return the children's library and the meeting room to a state in which they can be used by the public for library services and how much time this will this require? d) Once the above items are known, what is the schedule for re-opening the library for library services? Finally, Mr. Robinson will see to it that: e) An air quality test is completed soon to see if remediation and repair are necessary before the building can be used again as a library.

### New Business

- a) Richard Mott, Manager for Strategic Initiatives, introduced the library's proposed Annual Plan of Service, which must be approved and submitted to the Florida Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services as a pre-requisite for receiving State Aid. The proposed plan involves strategies and tactics to aid staff in fostering: outstanding customer experience, maximum value, team engagement, technological success for customers, educational success for customers, and economic success for customers. Many strategies aimed at reaching these goals will involve outreach. A full redesign of the website is upcoming. A survey of lapsed users will gain information to aid staff in stemming declines in usage. All full time librarians will be required to attend a community organization meeting throughout the year, and partnerships with schools will be stressed.

**Trustee Ronnie King moved to approve the proposed Annual Plan of Service for FY 2015. Trustee Simmons-Hutchins amended the motion, requesting that the library partner where possible with the Foundation in meeting the goals of the plan. Trustee Gerald Reid seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.**

- b) Trustee Ronnie King discussed guidelines for the proposed Jean Brinkman GED Scholarship Fund, a subject recently tackled by the Governance Committee he chairs. Money has been raised by the church of Jean Brinkman, the creator of Jacksonville Public Library's Center for Adult Learning (CAL), who recently passed on, to assist those who cannot afford to take the GED. Because the donated monies were placed in the Board Trust Fund and not in the Foundation, they are City funds. As a result, to be fiscally responsible, these guidelines need Board approval. Proposed guidelines are: The first 25 students to successfully complete the library's upcoming GED-Prep classes will be offered pre-paid GED vouchers. Recipients will be required to be Duval County residents, to satisfactorily complete at least 3 GED workshops and to meet CDBG/federal guidelines as "low income." The program will not be advertised, as funds are limited, and a lottery may be necessary if more than 25 students from the classes qualify.

**Trustee Tim J Anderson moved to approve the proposed guidelines for the Jean Brinkman GED Scholarship Fund. Trustee Marc Hardesty seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.**

### Old Business—Memorandums of Understanding with Friends Groups

Deputy Director Carolyn Williams updated the group on the progress of talks with Friends groups on the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) regarding their reporting and adherence requirements. Three MOU's remain outstanding for the Bradham Brooks, Murray Hill, and Willowbranch Branch Libraries.

### Chairman's Report

Chair Skinner reviewed recent events. On Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, the City Council approved the Fiscal Year 2015 budget, restoring the previously approved budget lapse, which would have meant 349,638 fewer spendable dollars for the library. An across-the-board cut of \$30,883 to the overtime budget and of \$136,274 to the part-time budget remains. The Maxville Branch library remains open, and overtime dollars will be funded with monies taken from other personnel line items, since no lapse has to be met, so that the Main Library and all four other libraries that are open on Sundays can remain so. Chair Skinner encouraged trustees to attend a public meeting to be held that evening on the physical condition of the Willowbranch Branch Library.

In other news, Chair Skinner has introduced herself to the City Council as the Board's new Chair. The Pablo Creek Regional Library celebrated its ten year anniversary on October 9<sup>th</sup>, with Senator Aaron Bean, Councilman Stephen Joost, St. Johns Riverkeeper Executive Director Jimmy Orth, Trustee Guy Anderson, Trustee Charlie Kleeman and Virginia Maxted of the Friends of the Beaches Branch Library in attendance. The University Park Branch Library celebrated its ten year anniversary on October 4<sup>th</sup>, with Council President Yarborough, Council Members Bishop and Crescimbeni, Trustee Brenda Simmons-Hutchins, and President Gail Hunyar of the Friends of the Jacksonville Public Library in attendance. The library hosted incoming Symphony Director Courtney Lewis on September 24<sup>th</sup>, and a standing-room-only crowd attended an Immigration and Naturalization Ceremony at the Main Library on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Brenda Simmons-Hutchins received the "Women of Color" award from the Women of Color Cultural Foundation on October 4<sup>th</sup>, and the library recently received a copy of a resolution read into the Congressional Record by Congresswoman Corinne Brown commending the Library for the centennial of its participation in the Federal Depository Library Program, making it a vital repository of government documents.

### Trustee Reports on Contacts with Elected Officials

Trustees shared details of their recent interactions with the city government. Trustee Guy Anderson noted that the Task Force on Consolidation, of which he was a participant, has released its report, recommending that the library be allowed to keep monies collected from fees and fines – some \$900K per year. This, Trustee Anderson believes, deserves the trustees' advocacy. Chair Skinner alerted trustees to the updated contact lists of elected officials and candidates, which can be found in their binders and on their website, and urged them to build working relationships with these individuals.

### Foundation Report

Suzanne Hudson-Smith, Executive Director of the Jacksonville Public Library Foundation, discussed the Foundation's recent activities, noting that the Foundation is looking to become the umbrella organization for Friends Groups that are not already 501(c)(3) organizations.

## Committee Reports

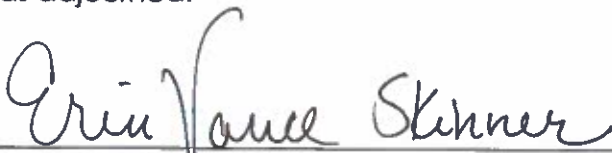
- a) Finance Committee - Trustee Guy Anderson, Chair of the Board's Finance Committee, reported on the meeting of his committee. Revenue totals in the General Fund are at 89.51% of budgeted amount. Discretionary expenses are 99.82% spent or encumbered, well on target for this moment in the year. The Conference Center received \$20,529 in revenues during the month and will exceed its annual targets. Activity in State Aid consisted of expenditures of \$1,737. The Library Board Trust received \$1,952 from various donors, while in-kind donations amounted to \$18,295. The library is working independently to develop a web site, using Drupal. Meanwhile, Director Gubbin has met with Vince Cavin of the Friends of Hemming Park, which has recently moved into the G5 Promenade at the Main Library.
- b) Governance Committee - Trustee Ronnie King, Chair of the Board's Governance Committee, reported that its recent meeting was principally concerned with matters already discussed in this session: a) progress of the Memorandums of Understanding with Friends Groups, b) proposed guidelines for the Jean Brinkman Scholarship Fund, and c) the FY 2015 Annual Plan of Service. The committee also discussed data on customer satisfaction collected from the "Counting Opinions" software program.

## Ex-Officio Member Reports

Larry Roziers, Board Member Ex-officio, Duval County Public Schools, thanked library staff for participating in the planning of DCPS's "Parent Academy" for the upcoming year.

## Adjournment

The next meeting of this body will be on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Main library. The meeting was adjourned.



Erin Vance Skinner, Chair, Board of Library Trustees



Jackie Perry, Secretary, Board of Library Trustees

11/13/2014

Date Approved by the Board of Library Trustees