**CROSS COUNTY LIBRARY**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**January 19, 2016**

**Call to Order and Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 4:02 by Board Chair Reta Ragland. Trustees in attendance: Joy Shepherd, Reta Ragland, Jerry Harvey, George Anne Draper, and Kitty Bingham. Library Employees present: John Paul Myrick, Executive Director; Claire Miller, Deputy Director; Asti Ogletree, Youth Services Coordinator; and Sherry Reynolds, Library Technical Assistant.

Public attendees were Mayor Bob Stacy and Cross County Judge, Donny Sanders.

Reta asked that the trustees approve the minutes from the December 17, 2015 meeting. Kitty moved to approve the minutes and Jerry seconded the motion. All trustees voted to approve the minutes. All aye, motion carried.

**Financial Reports, November 2015 and December 2016:** John Paul pointed out that the library was carrying over $30,000 into 2016 rather than the budgeted $2,500. This is always a good thing. Jerry Harvey asked about the Joanna Block funds and John Paul said that it wasn’t reflected on these reports as of yet.

Kitty pointed out that there were several line items over spent on the December spending report. John Paul said that he had already spoken to Reta and she approved them moving funds from underspent columns to cover the deficits. John Paul also made the recommendation that they approve the reconciled reports at the next meeting.

Reta returned to the November 2015 financial reports and asked for the trustees to approve them. Joy moved to approve the November 2015 financial reports as presented and to table the December 2015 financial reports until the next meeting. George Anne seconded the motion. All trustees voted to approve the minutes. All aye, motion carried.

**Operations and Staff Reports:** The Trustees were presented with the Operations Reports for December 2015 and the year-end report for Cross County Library. John Paul pointed out that there were some improvements on the year-end report. Reta pointed out that computer usage and program attendance was down. John Paul said yes but total circulation was up. Reta asked why the program attendance was down and Claire said that quite a few times, we had planned and advertised a program and found out the night of that something else was going on. John Paul said that the lack of attendance at Cherry Valley this summer did effect the number but we would get those back. Hickory Ridge is not worth our time. John Paul also highlighted the reference question statistics and how successful our staff are out helping our patrons. They have a 98% success rate. That is high across the state. Claire gave a summary of what had gone on in December. There were no questions.

**Unfinished Business – Big Green Switch Project:** Reta turned the floor over to John Paul for this discussion. John Paul reminded the board that one building had been purchased for this project and two others had options. We probably need to get the options or purchase the buildings. Mayor Stacy reminded him that Downtown Revitalization had purchased the Burnett Drug Building. The appliance center is listed for $25,000. Mayor Stacy said that he would recommend that the Economic Development Board purchase the appliance center for the project. The owner wants to sell now. Joy said that she was concerned about the legality considering that the County hasn’t given the okay to switch. Why should we buy a building if they aren’t behind it? Kitty said that the library should wait. Joy said it’s not smart to make a purchase without the backing of the county. Mayor Stacy pointed out that the appliance center is not super critical to our plans, it’s at the end. Burnett Drug and Little Village are what we planned to work on first.

Jerry said that we need to do the project wholesale, because we need more room. Maybe we only do pieces to create a new children’s library. We need to move forward to show our commitment. Mayor Stacy said that Jerry was right, you’ve made the commitment, if the money isn’t secure, it’s hard to negotiate. You need to raise money so people can see you’re actually going through with the project. Some City Council members are getting cold feet as more time passes. They need to see things moving.

Joy said that she had received a phone call about setting up Friends of the Big Green Switch. There are people who support it and there are those who don’t. She didn’t know if the library should be the one to raise funds. Mayor Stacy said if people want to get it done, they’ll support it financially. John Paul asked George Anne if the Friends of the Library are waiting for the Trustees to say go fundraise. George Anne said that she thought it would be a good idea to print an article in the people listing names of the people in the community that are for the project so that others can see who supports it. Jerry said that the Friends of the Library have experience fundraising and they are known in the community for supporting the library. He asked George Anne if she would be willing to bring it up at the next meeting. She said she would but she wanted to make sure what to say.

Big Green Switch is about progress in the city of Wynne as a whole, not just the library. Friends of the Big Green Switch is a better idea.

Someone asked when the Farmer’s Market Square was supposed to be completed and Mayor Stacy said that they plan to start this Summer and definitely complete it this year.

Jerry suggested that the library take the Joanna Block Trust and one of our CDs and lay it on the table for Future Library Growth. George Anne talked about having different levels of donors, gold level and silver level.

Joy said that we have to be careful with our plans to move forward without the Quorum Court. George Anne said that some people won’t donate if it may go to the Big Green Switch Process. Joy said we say that we are raising money to expand the library. Kitty brought up the fundraising group and Reta said that we should let the Quorum Court decide if they will support us.

Mayor Stacy said that the library has options, we don’t know what we’ll do exactly, raise the money or you can’t do anything. Give people options and let the people do the right thing. We have a good reputation in the community.

Judge Sanders said that the Trustees need to decide over the next 10 or 11 months what they’re going to do about their utilities. They got them paid for with a grant this year but it’s a one year agreement. He asked why we want to move the library? The Trustees said that space is our major issue. Judge Sanders said that the library will have to sell it to the Quorum Court. He recommended that the library meet individually with the building committee members. We have not convinced the community or the Quorum Court. If we move, the insurance and utilities are going to cost more. What will that cost the County? We have to start moving. Get on the agenda at a Quorum Court meeting. Judge Sanders state, “If you’re passionate about this move, if you do it right, then you can win people over. The Quorum Court was blindsided by the idea. Two or three are going to be a very difficult to sell. Their minds can be changed. If you can convince me then I will go forward.”

John Paul said that he appreciated the road map that he gave for approaching the Quorum Court. Joy said that it’s taken the Trustees a long time to develop a vision for this project. As time goes on, there will be more “yeses.” She does believe there are people that can be convinced. $20,000 is a great bargain for a county library system. Judge Sanders reiterated that the library has to find a way to sell what they want to do. One of the strongest opponents is on the building committee. Joy said that she wants to ask those opposing the project “why not?” George Anne said you have to be careful but she has often wanted to ask “Do you come in the library?” She also asked how many people pay $250,000 for building a new wing on a library they don’t own and then deed it over to someone else? Joy said we have to decide what we’re asking for. Judge Sanders recommended that the library move be sold as the library move, not the Big Green Switch. To change convictions, we have to make people see through our eyes. Where could we move where it would most benefit the community? Joy said that it would mean a lot of the Judge said that he was for this project. Judge Sanders said “Convince Me”.

John Paul made some official recommendations at this point.

1. Allow John Paul to put the Joanna Block and Monsanto grant into an interest bearing account or money market account as allowed by law. – Jerry moved to put the Joanna Block and Monsanto grant money into a money market account. Kitty seconded the motion. All aye, motion carried.

2. Let John Paul continue to talk to the Quorum Court Members and bring the Trustees along as the need arises. – no vote required.

3. Let George Anne go to the Friends of the Library about fundraising. – George Anne clarified that they would be fundraising to address space issues of the library. – Kitty moved to allow George Anne to go to the Friends of the Library about fundraising. Jerry seconded the motion. All aye, motion carried.

**New Business – Library Funding:** Joy said that the Quorum Court meeting went better than she expected. They used an ordinance from 1978 to say that they were breaking the law by paying for the library’s utilities. The ordinance does not specifically say that. It was presented in a wrong way. The grant is a temporary fix. Joy has talked to several people and their recommendation is to create a new ordinance where the county will agree to pay utilities up to a certain amount. Joy said that the way things were going at the Quorum Court Meeting, she didn’t feel like she needed to get up and say anything. She had plenty of conversations on the front end.

George Anne said that research needs to be done on the ordinance. John Paul said that he could talk to the Arkansas State Library and see what libraries around the state have in place.

Lynn Blake and Jerry Brewster were our heroes at the Quorum Court Meeting. Judge Sanders said that that Quorum Court Meeting was the largest attended meeting in the 4 years he’s been involved. The majority of the people who were not regular attendees were on the Library’s side.

**Trustee Comment Period:** Jerry said there had been lots of trustee comments already. Everyone else agreed.

**Adjournment:** Kitty moved to adjourn the meeting. George Anne seconded the motion. All aye, motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Miller, MLIS

Deputy Director