



Regional Board Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2025

Board President Ruth O'Loughlin called the Southeast Arkansas Regional Library Board meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Those in attendance in person and via Zoom were board members Kim Forrest, Cecilia Whittemore, Judi Fava, Ruth O'Loughlin, Vertie Staples, Larry Alexander, Mary Jo Tucker, Gaynell Jamison, Reathel Privett, Elgenia Ross, Vickie Ross, Vernestine Wilson, Sandra Crofford, Cristy Dunnahoe, Regional Director Hunter Bennett, and SEARL Digital Coordinator Jennifer Knight. Visitors included East Central Arkansas Regional Library Director J.P. Myrick.

Ruth O'Loughlin passed the gavel to the new Board President Larry Alexander. Minutes from the November 2024 regular board meeting and the December 2024 specially called board meeting were presented for approval. With no corrections or additions, a motion to approve the November minutes was made by Ruth O'Loughlin and a second by Cecilia Whittemore, and the motion passed. A motion to approve the December minutes was made by Cristy Dunnahoe and a second by Sandra Crofford, and the motion passed.

Financial Report

The financial report was presented in printed form. A correction to the financial report was given by Regional Director Hunter Bennett for the Library Management Systems line item. Kim Forrest made a motion to approve the corrected financial report with a second by Judi Fava, and the motion passed.

Director's Report

Regional Director Hunter Bennett read the final Director's Report from former Director Judy Calhoun. Mrs. Calhoun included an update on her final few months as director. She gave an update on the Collection Developer Kristin Finch, citing Jennifer Knight took on the bulk of the book purchasing responsibilities. Director Bennett informed the board on the current situation regarding Ms. Finch. Other updates included the new mural at the Monticello Branch Library in honor of Elgenia Ross, Craftstravaganza workshop hosted by the Arkansas State Library, and workshops and meetings attended.

Director Bennett also updated the board on her acceptance into the MLIS program at the University of Oklahoma, which will begin in the fall.

Committee Reports

The 2025 budget revision approved at the December 2024 meeting was handed out for all board members.

The MOU between SEARL and East Central Arkansas Regional Library Director J.P. Myrick stating him as the director of record was announced, and he was introduced to the board.

Old Business

The FMLA Policy vote was tabled. More research into the FMLA law is needed before the Region issues a new policy for staff.

New Business

First on the agenda for new business was the selection of a new Vice President. Traditionally, the Vice President is chosen from a rotating selection of each county. The current President is from Desha County, so the Vice President should be chosen from Drew County. A motion to accept Reathel Privett as Vice President was made by Sandra Crofford with a second from Vernestine Wilson. The motion passed.

Next on the agenda was the approval of Felicia Kozubski as the new Dumas Branch Manager. Ms. Kozubski applied for the position upon the promotion of the former Branch Manager Hunter Bennett to Regional Director. Ms. Kozubski did not have the required Bachelor's degree for the position, but she is already enrolled online to start her degree. A motion to approve Felicia Kozubski as the Dumas Branch Manager with the stipulation of degree completion within eight (8) years and regular progress updates given to the board was made by Ruth O'Loughlin with a second by Cristy Dunnahoe. The motion passed. Ruth O'Loughlin made a motion to add Felicia Kozubski to all Dumas Branch Library accounts, which includes access to a debit card for said accounts, as the new manager. Judi Fava made the second. The motion passed.

Correspondence

Thank you letters from Hermitage Branch Manager Lynda Green and Lake Village Branch Manager Sandra McAllister were shared with the board.

Public Comment

Roger Davis requested time to address the board.

Announcements

The next Regional Board meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025, at the Monticello Branch meeting room. A motion to adjourn was made by Ruth O'Loughlin with a second by Vertie Staples. The meeting was adjourned.