

CALS Board of Directors Meeting

February 26, 2026, 12 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting: Main Library & Zoom Video Call

Board members in attendance were Karama Neal, Madhav Shroff, Luke Underwood, Alexis Sims, Dustin McDaniel, Ginann Swindle, Audrey Evans, Denise Ennett, Jennifer Jamison, and Ryan Davis. Esperanza Massana-Crane, David Finkbeiner, and Joyce Elliott were absent.

Staff in attendance were Jo Spencer, Nathan Smith, Andre Thornton, Hannah Saulters, Ray Terry, Amanda Orgel, Heather Zbinden, Nate Coulter, Sarah Jane De Young, Eliza Borné, Ellen Samples, Priscilla Barnes, Pam Estes, Kate Matthews, Joe Hudak, Glenn Whaley, Gonzalo Hernandez, Heather Pressgrove, Chloe Kilcrease, Mark Hotchkiss, Tameka Lee, and Eva Englert-Jessen.

Others: Daniel McFadin with the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Neal thanked Underwood for chairing the January meeting and welcomed Ennett to the Board.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes

Neal asked the Board to approve the January Minutes. Jamison mentioned an error in the minutes, regarding her presence at the meeting.

Underwood moved to approve the January Minutes, with the corrections made. Swindle seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

2. Approval of January Financials

Underwood reported that as of January 31, 2026, CALS total income amounted to \$28,596,661. Total assets amounted to approximately \$111,000,000. Underwood added that CALS has \$3,900,000 in cash and \$7,600,000 in reserves. Underwood described tax revenue from January as "flat."

Neal filed the January Financials for audit.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Director's Report

Coulter highlighted a few items from his written report:

- Coulter mentioned that the number of people voting early at branches has increased. Hudak added that the shortest lines for voting are at Children's Library and Williams Library.
- Coulter described his recent meeting with Jacksonville Mayor Elmore and Chief of Police Hibbs as "constructive." He mentioned the need for increased community service opportunities, like trash pick-up, at that location.
- Coulter noted the upcoming Congressional field hearing on Friday, March 13, in the Darragh Center at Main. The title of the hearing is "Broken Promises: Failures of the Little Rock Housing Authority and the Impact on Residents." Coulter added that this would be good exposure for Main.
- Barnes described the new HR system, BambooHR and reminded the Board that this was approved in the 2026 budget. Barnes added that this would centralize employee information in one place and would help with the onboarding process for new employees. She noted that this system is used by other libraries in Arkansas and that the phased rollout would begin in March.
- Coulter informed the Board that Avian Flyway had returned to Roberts Library to fix an area of their deterrent system where pigeons were roosting. They were able to fix the problem quickly and worked overnight.
- Evans asked why the circulation numbers went down 3%, even though CALS spending on digital resources has increased. Coulter mentioned that he would meet with Coffey and Blanchard to gather more information.
- Ennett asked about audits of CALS, specifically how often they happen and what the findings show. Spencer replied that CALS is audited every year by an outside, independent agency, and that the audits have been "clean."

- At 12:39 p.m., the Board entered executive session. At 12:57 p.m., the executive session ended. Neal noted that no action was taken during the session and that the Board heard updates on a personnel issue.

MOVE TO ADJOURN

Jamison made the motion to adjourn. Shroff seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. Neal called the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.