

Jasper Municipal Library Board Meeting
April 15, 2025
Held at
Carolyn Stewart Public Library

M I N U T E S

Call to Order. With a quorum present, the quarterly meeting of the Jasper Municipal Library Board was called to order by Chair Sally Moore at 5:00 p.m. The following members were present: Sally Moore, Chair; Les Price, Vice Chair; Amy Fowler, Secretary; Anne Brown, Greg Hutchins, Ben Bumpus, and Carolyn Stewart. All were present. Others present: Kate Huddleston, Stones River Regional Director, Ann Gray, Director of CSPL, Milly Echevernia and Chris Van Hamersveld, Friends of the MC Libraries. (FOL).

Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting. The minutes of the January meeting were approved as read. Ann Gray reminded everyone that while the library board minutes are always available at the library, they will also be posted on the <http://www.jasper-tn.com> website under the department tab – Municipal Library – and under Municipal Boards thereby keeping the library board compliant with openness and transparency in accordance with state law.

Reports. Stones River Regional Library. Kate Huddleston distributed and reviewed information/data for the board. Everyone received a copy of the *Tennessee Standards for Public Libraries*. This document covers professional standards for all public libraries by defining the requirements each must meet to reach a specific level; standards for governance; budget; planning, personnel, etc. As a Level III, CSPL follows these guidelines. Since our board members are new, an answer to the question “how do public libraries work” will be found here. “Data Collections Report” and “Library By the Numbers Infographic” are two (2) compelling pieces of information that are specific to our library. The use of highly visual graphics makes it easier to see CSPL data by specific categories. Kate Huddleston suggested that this report is best used for “telling our story”. It is exclusive information for CSPL thereby reflecting the work of the library. Lastly, the CSPL 2022-23 and 2023-24 Collections Report were distributed. One can see how CSPL compares to the other libraries within the Stones River Region regarding population, funding, per capita giving to the library, program attendance, card holders, library visits, physical collections, electronic collections, wireless use, etc. Great information. For example, Library visits at CSPL was 6x greater than South Pittsburg and 8x greater than Whitwell last year.

Reports. CSPL Director. Ann Gray presented the last quarters (month by month) Library Collections Report. These are the same report given to the Jasper Board of Mayor and

Aldermen because it summarizes our monthly library activity as well as runs a cumulative accounting for the fiscal year. Interestingly, the March 2025 report shows that we increased participation in EVERY category with the exception of Boat testing – and that specific number is high for the month of April. The library continues to grow in library patrons, collections used, etc. as reflected in the numbers - Jasper had 3x the number of card holders of South Pittsburg and Whitwell.

2025 Summer Reading Program. The theme this year for public libraries across the state is “Color My World”. CSPL always asks -and receives -community support to help with the reading program’s budget for this 6-weeks endeavor. Individuals, businesses and various grant vendors are asked. So far, we have received \$500 in grants and have an outstanding request amount of \$1,500 (to be announced in May), and received approximately \$1,100 each from individuals and local businesses. The 2025 goal is \$6,000 – the same goal as 2023 and 2024. This annual sponsorship ask should be completed by May.

Library Improvements/ Changes. CSPL will have a new library Logo! With the library changing its administration from county to municipality, now is the time to reflect that change – brand the library as evolving. It is anticipated that the design proposals will be complete before the next regularly-scheduled meeting, so there may be a special-called meeting (duly advertised) to review and recommend to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen the new library logo in May or June. Site Plan. The town of Jasper has recently executed a contract with OLG Engineers, Tullahoma. The library needs a site plan of the entire block. With the recent relocation of Town Hall to the courthouse square, extra parking will be needed. The library has more space around it that has not been fully developed. In addition, this is an opportunity to relocate the book drop to be more accessible. This is part of the library’s new long-range plan: library expansion both indoors and outdoors. Tennessee Arts Commission. Ann Gray has reached out to both the Arts Commission and the Southeast Tennessee Development District. She will attend a zoom workshop in May to evaluate and determine if there is an opportunity to apply for a wall mural grant – with placement on the rear wall of the library. T-Mobile. Ann Gray wrote a grant to the T-Mobile’s “Home Town Grants” program and requested four (4) solar powered charging benches. One (1) or two (2) to be placed outside the library and the others in the city park. Grant announcements will be in May. If this is awarded, it will be another exterior improvement that shows that CSPL is changing/ expanding.

Financial Matters. Ann Gray reported on the current financial status of the library. When Jasper voted to form its own library board in October 2024, the county library board took two (2) actions that impacted our financial stability: (1) they confiscated \$17,800 from our library business account that was established in 1972 now held by Builtwell Bank. The county library board continues to claim that this account belongs to them. Recently, the Town of Jasper hired an attorney to file a law suit against Builtwell Bank and the county library board to reclaim these funds. For clarification, this account was comprised of income generated solely by CSPL – including patron donations earmarked for CSPL, in house book sales, and the collection of fines

and fees (i.e., late fees, copying and faxing fees). At the request of the Marion County Commission (MCC), a workshop was held on March 11, 2025 that discussed the library situation. Jasper informed the MCC that they honestly couldn't move forward, primarily with a library expansion, under the county library board. The focus was not here. Hadn't been here for over 25 years. Therefore, the library and the town made an appeal to the MCC to continue their financial support of CSPL by reallocating our equal share of monies given to the public libraries for fiscal year 2025-2026. CSPL provision of services has not changed – still serving the majority of unincorporated Marion County people. (2). CSPL lost 2023-2024 county funding (with the exception of the first quarter – July-October2024) because the Marion County Library Board (MCLB) kept it. The Town of Jasper has generously paid the difference (over \$60,000) and has allow the library to continue without missing a beat. Attached to and made of these minutes is the current MCC. Ann Gray asked everyone to please contact anyone on the commission they know (or not) and request their consideration to reallocate county funds to be given directly to CSPL so that it can continue to operate. And, in all fairness, help support the vast number of unincorporated county residents that rely on this library for resources. It truly is a public service with the financial responsibly belonging to both the town and the county.

Attached to and made part of these minutes is a draft copy of proposed new library policies for the library board. After a brief discussion, in which everyone acknowledged that they had read and understood the proposed policies and acknowledged that they were clear and concise, a motion was made to adopt these library policies as the CSPL Policies with only minor edits to ensure that the document is appropriate to Jasper.

Motion: Les Price

Second: Amy Fowler

Vote: All voted yea.

There were no public comments.

Next regularly-scheduled meeting is Tuesday, July 15, 2025.

With no further business, the meeting was adjointed.