

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
October 18, 2021  
Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS)  
4:30pm

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:41 pm by Board President Christopher Mulliens.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Christopher Mulliens, President, Brenda Garman, Beverly Tarver, Anna Reeves, Roy Jones, Vice President; and Beatrice F. Green. Members absent: Cher Best, Lillie Hamilton (excused); Morris T. Porter, Kigwana Cherry, Kenneth Johnson, Jr. (excused); Kimberly Brown (excused). Ex-officio Present: Mashell Fashion, Library Director; Commissioner Catherine Smith-McKnight, Leon Maben, Augusta Friends of the Library President. Ex-Officio Members Absent: N/A

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A quorum was not present due to absences. The board agenda was not approved

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

Mr. David Scott, the Young Men's Library Association President, informed the BoT the association is 168 year old organization that started in the 1840s. For the first 80+ years, it was a subscription library that could only be accessed by dues-paying members. Though the name is Young Men's Library Association, women can participate in YMLA.

In 1853, the YMLA fund was established as a trust. It cannot be dissolved unless all the descendants of the YMLA receive a portion of the trust. It identifies the library as a 501c3. Since YMLA cannot be effectively dissolved, Ms. Fashion and Mr. Scott discussed the YMLA be the basis of an endowment. YMLA has two accounts with the Community Foundation, a brokerage account YMLA money and a savings account. The investment accounts do not have any guarantees of return and are not FDIC insured.

The last YMLA meeting two years ago determined the average age of its members is 81 years. Mr. Scott suggests creating a three-person committee to be the board of the YMLA. A President, Secretary, and Treasurer must be named on that report. A simple report must be filed with the IRS at the end of the fiscal year. In late winter/early spring, a report must be filed with the Secretary of State of Georgia. Mr. Scott asks that new YMLA officers be found for succession planning purposes. These three members should be named in January 2022.

Ms. Bradwell has done financial classes and workshops at the Wallace Branch. Ms. Bradwell would like to create a series of financial classes. The target audience is 18-25, but it is for any age group. The classes would a total of 10 weeks. If approved, the workshops would start at the beginning of 2022. These classes would last an hour and would be held on Saturday's mid-afternoon. The programs would be marketed by the library and through Ms. Bradwell's connections. She intends to limit the size to no more than 10-15 for safety reasons and to accommodate tables. There will be no fees for the materials or costs for the program as she has received a grant to cover the costs. She would like to do preregistration. If the board approves this partnership, she would set up an online registration form. The class would be during library hours.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Vivian R. Ransom, of the Laney-Walker Neighborhood Association, spoke with a representative from the Richmond County Marshal's Office who quoted the cost of a marshal staffing after hours events is \$30/hour with a minimum of 3 hours. The cost of marshals for after hour's events is too costly in her opinion for the organizations that come to use it, which are often small. This is the only library meeting room with a separate entrance. Her organization has always kept the meeting room clean and been responsible users of the room. She expressed support for keeping meeting room fees at \$10.

Mr. Johnny Holmes, resident and Lucy C. Laney Alumni, spoke of the hour marshal fees for the use of Wallace Branch meeting room. Many classes from Lucy C. Laney use this branch. Wallace was once a segregated library for African American residents. He has not heard of any problems with the use of the meeting room.

### **Discussion**

Ms. Tarver asked would people consider meeting at the Headquarters Library during regular hours. Mr. Mulliens noted that after hour's events are a liability for the library system. Ms. Fashion said there have been lost keys and groups locked in the building, stolen furniture, but no major incidents. After hours marshal policy is a preventative measure to avoid serious incidents. Mr. Maben noted working people cannot meet during library hours and need a space where they can meet after the workday. Mr. Mulliens noted some library locations have had theft and vandalism and leadership needs to consider the possibility of something similar happening at Wallace Branch. This issue could not be voted on today, but the BoT would take the time to consider options for use of the Wallace Branch meeting room.

### **MINUTES**

A Quorum is not present due to absence. The August 2021 and September 2021 minutes were approved. Mr. Mulliens asked any changes be sent to Ms. Fashion. The October 2021 minutes cannot be approved because a quorum was not present.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

- A. The Local and State Treasurer's Report for October 2021 were both included in the Trustee's packet. The Library Director provided the dollar amount the library spent for

the month of October. The library collected in fines and fees totaling \$6,889.05 for the month. The Library Director reviewed the State Treasurer's Report.

- B. The following items were reviewed: Wells Fargo State/Local Government Checking 09/30/2021, Well Fargo Advisors Snapshot (CD) 09/01/2021-09/30/2021, South State Business Choice Summary of Account 8/31/2021, Community Foundation Augusta Library Fund 09/01/2021-09/31/2021, Community Foundation Augusta Library Capital Fund 09/01/2021-09/30/2021, Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System Income Statement FY 2022, Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System Balance Sheet As of September 30, 2021.

A Richmond County bill totaling \$59,185.45 was paid. The library owes 1,058,785.52 to the Augusta-Richmond County Commission. Mr. Odie Donald, the County Administrator, is to present a draft for FY2022 Richmond County Budget.

- C. The Library Director reviewed the ARC Library billing and payment reconciliation statement, which was included in the Trustees' packet.

## REPORTS

### A. President's Report

Mr. Mulliens spoke with the County Administrator, Mr. Odie Donald, at the Commission August 17, 2021 meeting. Mr. Mulliens spoke with Deputy Administrator Jackson that the library did want the increase. Neither Mr. Donald nor Mr. Jackson have responded whether the county would provide additional funds to sustain the pay increase for employees. Mr. Mulliens informed The Administrator and Deputy state positions are required, and local government cannot make changes to them without ramifications at the state level.

Ms. Fashion, Ms. Smith McKnight and Mr. Mulliens met with the Finance Department and two Deputy Administrators. The Library may have to close branches one day a week, cut staffing hours, and reduce operation hours, a move that would not be popular with the community.

Most of the library grants are project specific. The grants awarded have not supported the library's operational budget. Commissioners, County Administrator, Deputies and Finance Department's offices have been invited to come see the libraries and attend meetings. It was suggested board members contact their commissioners to extend the invitation.

### B. Director's Report

- a. Ms. Fashion provided a copy of the current BoT roster and requested that it be reviewed for accuracy. The library owes Augusta Commission \$1,058,785.51. ARCPLS will pay \$59,186.45 on Friday, October 15, 2021 for the pay period February 6, 2021-February 19, 2021, for the pay date February 26, 2021. The library received a new quarterly billing for \$422,748.86 for staff salaries.
- b. The Board members were provided with additional banking at the meeting for Wells Fargo, South State Bank and Community Foundation Capital and Library Funds. .

- c. Ms. Fashion provided a copy of the library's quarterly newsletter for October, November and December 2021.
- d. The library completed the 2021 Georgia Public Library Annual Report that contained 531 questions. BoT members were provided a copy of the ARCPLS Georgia Annual Report and Application for State Aid.
- e. The BoT was provided information for the FY2022 Budget Work Session. The library is requesting an additional \$300,000 dollars.
- f. Star War Reads was October 9-15, 2021. The event went well
- g. The Department of Community Health (State Health) performed an administrative and financial review of the library's contributions for and employees' deductions. The library's membership and records appeared to be in adequate condition. There was not significant discrepancy discovered.
- h. It is Open Enrollment time for full-time employees to make their elections for the 2022 year. The deadline is November 5, 2021.
- i. The library's circulation, Wi-Fi and computer use did increase for the month of September.
- j. There may be a Richmond County mask mandate for all local government building. Decision will be made on at the next Commission meeting.
- k. The annual review of all the library's current insurance was completed with Mr. Mike Taylor at Dawson and Taylor, now called Assured, for the collection, vehicles, dishonesty bond and coverage for the library director and board of trustees. Ms. Fashion is contacting other insurance companies for prices for the vehicles.
- l. Friedman Branch Library will be used for the November 2, 2021 election day. The election will take place in the meeting room.
- m. The Central Services Department has worked on several projects at Wallace Branch – electrical outlets were upgraded to three prongs, a bid out for LVT flooring, main library parking lights were replaced and Diamond Lakes had a new air conditioner installed in data room.
- n. The library has been awarded a Digital Inclusion grant under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the full amount of \$183,909.32 for the bookmobile.
- o. Public Library Consent Form allowing the school community from designated schools and/or school districts sign on credentials to be authenticated and borrow Digital content from the library's overdrive digital collection.
- p. The Library has completed the registration process for the System Award Management (SAM) to apply for federal grants.
- q. Five core members of Strategic Planning Committee met in October 5, 2021 to list the initiatives, goals, and objectives for the 2022 plan.
- r. Library staff are still working on the following library policies: Blue Book, Collection Development Policy, Filming Policy, Public Relation Procedures Manual, and Fiscal Officer Procedures Manual.
- s. Currently, there are 54 staff 34 full time and 20 part-time employees, for a grand 57, including three temporary workers from staffing agencies. There are three library employees who completed their Master's Degree in Library Science and two who are currently enrolled in the program.
- t. There were eight staff members who received COVID pay. In the second phase of COVID pay, each full time employees will received 500 and the part-time will receive 250. There has not been a set time for the 2% increase.

- u. A \$15 minimum hourly wage for Richmond County would go into effect on November 19. Part-time employees will receive an email letting them know their hour will be reduced from 17.25 hours to 12 hours. The BoT will have to vote by email about \$15 pay and reduced hours for PT employees.

C. Committee Reports

Committee Reports were tabled due to the lack of a quorum.

D. Augusta Friends of the Library Report

Friends of the Library Report was tabled due to the lack of quorum.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

All unfinished business was tabled until the next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

- A. August and September 2021 Incident Reports
- B. Update on the Appleby Branch Renovation
- C. Library Reopening Phase
- D. Library Endowment Account Information -Wells Fargo, Queensborough, Fifth-Third, South State Banks (Discussion and Vote)
- E. Approval of the ARCPLS Endowment Policy (Vote)
- F. No Use of Wallace Branch Meeting Room After Hours (Vote)
- G. Minimum Wage Increase per hours, 2% Increase for Remaining Staff Members, and COVID19 Payout (Ratify)
- H. Approval of Guitar Donation from Kids Rock the Nation (Ratify)
- I. Memorandum of Understanding with Augusta-Richmond County Government and ARCPLS for Appleby and Friedman Branch Libraries for Reimbursement to SPLOST (Accept as Information)
- J. Approval of the Girl Scout Partnership with Wallace Branch (Vote)
- K. Approval of the Furniture Package for the Friedman Branch Library (Vote)

### **NEW BUSINESS**

All new business was tabled until the next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

- A. Reassembling of Shelving at the Friedman Branch Library - Carter Home Improvement (Ratify)
- B. COVID19 Environment Policy
- C. Revised Meeting Room Policy
- D. Passenger Elevator Vandal Resistant Push Button (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)
- E. Reduced work hour for Part-time Employees to 12 hours (Ratify)

It was discussed if a board member is removed, the requirements for quorum would be lowered. A letter for board member who have missed more than three meetings will be drafted for the BoT President. The letter will be mailed to the appointing commissioner and state legislatives.

Library Director's evaluation should be returned to Ms. Garman.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public comments were moved to the Special Presentation due to the lack of a quorum.

**ADJOURMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 pm.