

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, January 24, 2022

4:30 P. M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) Board of Trustees (BoT) was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by the Board President, Mr. Christopher Mulliens.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Christopher Mulliens, President; Roy Jones, Vice President; Morris T. Porter; Brenda Garman; Beatrice F. Green; Kimberly Brown; Kigwana Cherry; Anna Reeves; Beverly Tarver; Lillie Hamilton. Members absent: Kenneth L. Johnson; Cher Best (excused). Ex-Officio members present: Commissioner Catherine S. McKnight; Leon Maben, Friends of the Augusta Library President.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Faith McCormick (Artistic Director) – Shine the Light Dance Collective

A handout was given to each board member explaining the partnership Ms. McCormick proposes with ARCPLS.

Ms. McCormick explained the plan to include several dance events that will be held at ARCPLS. The events will be free and open to the public. The first event will be a “Read and Move” workshop. This event will be geared towards elementary aged children, and involves having a dance themed story read to children which is then interpreted through movement. Ms. McCormick would like this event to be held in the ARCPLS “Bowling Alley” in the Children’s Department. Ms. McCormick described the second proposed event as a Dance Showcase. This is an all-ages performance and will require use of the ARCPLS auditorium. Finally, Ms. McCormick proposed a rotating schedule of regular dance classes at one or more of the ARCPLS branches. These classes will be given on “pay what you can” basis.

In terms of a partnership with ARCPLS, Ms. McCormick stated that her goal is to promote and raise awareness in the community about Shine the Light Dance Collective, which will hopefully increase membership in the organization. She would also like the partnership to allow for fundraisers to support the organization.

At the end of Ms. McCormick’s presentation, Mr. Mulliens asked the BoT if they had questions. None were asked.

Ms. Shirley Norman (Owner) – Tia’s Corner, Inc. “A Safe Place for Children to Grieve”

A handout was provided to each board member detailing the partnership Ms. Norman proposes with ARCPLS.

Ms. Norman requests access to a space in one of the ARCPLS six libraries (preferably Wallace Branch, Headquarters, or Friedman Branch) to conduct eight grief support sessions (Saturdays) for children, ages six to sixteen, who have experience grief and loss. The topics of the sessions will change and the activities will vary, but the format will remain the same. The plan for each session is detailed in the handout provided to the BoT.

Following her presentation, Ms. Norman asked the BoT if they had questions. Mr. Mulliens asked what personal information will be collected about the participants, and how will it be collected. Ms. Norman answered that the first meeting will be an informational session, and identifying information will be entered on a form. The information will be kept secure.

Commissioner McKnight asked when the sessions will start and Ms. Norman replied that it depended on an agreement with ARCPLS but March 2022 was the proposed date. This will give them time to promote the program.

Mr. Jones asked Ms. Norman if she was requesting library space for the sessions and which of the ARCPLS six libraries did she prefer for the program. She replied yes regarding a request for library space, and also added she believes the program will bring a sense of community to the library. In terms of the space, she is amenable but prefers Wallace Branch.

Ms. Tarver asked if ARCPLS was prepared to promote the sessions, and Ms. Fashion said the program would be promoted on all ARCPLS social media platforms, and posted in the quarterly programming booklet. Ms. Tarver asked if Tia’s Corner, Inc. would be producing promo to advertise the events, and Ms. Norman replied, yes. The material will be sent to ARCPLS to be promoted. Ms. Tarver clarified that the program promo would be communicated by ARCPLS and not generated. She also asked whether both organizations (Shine the Light Dance Collective and Tia’s Corner, Inc.) carried liability insurance. Ms. Norman responded yes, and Ms. McCormick replied no, but the organization does require waivers (participate at your own risk) to be signed by the parent or guardian of the participants.

Ms. Norman referred the BoT to the last sentence of the handout, and stated that Tia’s Corner does not provide therapy to those suffering from grief but does make referrals. This concluded her special presentation.

MINUTES

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2021.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The Local and State Treasurer’s Reports for November and December 2021 were included in the Board of Trustees’ packets. Ms. Fashion detailed expenditures for the ARPA Tech grant from Georgia Public Library

Service (GPLS). In November 2021 we spent approximately \$300,000.00 in payments to Richmond County. In December 2021, one payment of \$162,927.17 was paid to Richmond County. Item #45 Library Receipts (November 2021) have increased due to fines, fee, etc. Also, in November ARCPLS received a check for \$5000.00 for facilities maintenance at Appleby Branch. A donation for books in the amount \$4,910.63 and 115.00 meeting rooms. The first payment of \$90,390.50 was made towards the purchase of the ARCPLS book mobile. ARCPLS will not be reimbursed until the bookmobile is delivered.

Ms. Fashion reviewed the banking statement for November and December 2021.

REPORTS

A. Presidents Report: Mr. Mulliens urged BoT members to begin visiting the branch libraries. He discussed a recent trip to Wallace Branch with Ms. Fashion during the Saturday, January 15th ARCPLS vaccine event. Board members Mr. Morris Porter and Ms. Cher Best were there. Mr. Mulliens said it is the BoTs responsibility per the ARCPLS blue book to engage the public and advocate for ARCPLS. Also, attending BoT meetings is required to remain in good standing. Mr. Mulliens requested the BoT discuss placing a former library employee or employees on the Board as a possible consultant. Mr. Mulliens thanked the BoT for their continued support.

B. Director's Report:

Ms. Fashion reported the following:

ARCPLS owes Richmond County \$1,197,767.57. For FY 2021, ARCPLS has paid, \$1,463,776.01. A payment of \$61,371.21 for salaries; \$19,572.07 miscellaneous; \$19,572.07; \$46,098.38 for security; \$34,028.20 for custodial services. ARCPLS will soon receive a new quarterly billing statement from Richmond County.

Banking statements were received from Wells Fargo; South State Bank Checking, Savings and Snapshot; and the Community Foundation Capital and Library Fund for November and December 2021. The Bankers Life Broker Account Statement was received with an ending account value of \$10,365.12.

- The BoT was provided an updated list of ARCPLS Board of Trustees monthly regular meeting dates. Juneteenth changed the date of the June 2022 BoT regular meeting.
- The BoT was provided a copy of the Writer in Residence/Yerby Institute Report for November 2021.
- Ms. Fashion completed the **Wells Fargo Certification of Official Custodian(s) – Government Depositor** form, which confirms to Wells Fargo the official custodian(s) of the government depositor listed on the form.
- ARCPLS received its Fiscal Year 2022 – 1st Quarter SHBP Audit Findings which stated that “the health insurance membership and accounting records of the 72122 Augusta Richmond Library appears to be in adequate condition for the proper administration of the SHBP. There was no significant discrepancy discovered during the validation and verification of the ADP Premium Billing Voucher, Payroll Summary report, LWOP/hourly documents, employee deduction

employer contributions calculations of amounts owed, and amounts paid.” (July, August, September 2021)

- ARCPLS was awarded the Community of Immunity Grant for \$55,569.38 from the Association of Science-Technology Centers, a Maryland non-profit corporation. This project is in support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Award. The grant funded a vaccination drive/clinic at the Wallace Branch Library on Saturday, January 15th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Attendance was high. BoT member Ms. Cher Best, and BoT president Ms. Christopher Mulliens attended the event.
- Appleby Branch Library Branch Manager, Nicole Davis sat on the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) panel that participated in an IMLS-funding project about Libraries in Community Systems.
- ARCPLS received two (2) signed grant contracts from GPLS; one for the Digital Inclusion grant for \$183,909.32 and the other for the ARPA Tech Grant in the amount of \$12,200.11. ARCPLS paid \$90,000.00 to Matthews Specialty Vehicle from Greensboro, N.C. to begin the bookmobile sketch and design. The project must be completed and delivered to ARCPLS by October 2022.
- ARCPLS circulation increased for the months of November and December 2021, and computer and Wi-Fi usage are also increasing. Evening and Sunday hours continue to lag behind. Hits to the ARCPLS website decreased in November, but increased in December.
- ARCPLS completed three (3) Emergency Connectivity Fund applications. The first for laptops (\$4,000.00), the second for hot spots (\$1,600.00), and the third for hot spot services (\$1,300.00.) ARCPLS was awarded all three.
- Ms. Fashion attended a virtual Director’s Meeting on December 2-3, 2021. The meeting was held in Savannah, Georgia. Topics discussed: Continuity of Operations Planning; Library Funding; Lawsuits against Public Libraries; Communication.
- ARCPLS received a donation of \$9,821.25 from Mr. Cecil Hatcher. The donation will be split between the purchase of new library materials and deposit (\$4,910.62) into the ARCPLS endowment fund.
- ARCPLS received a \$5,000.00 check from the Northern Trust: The Scott B. and Annie Appleby Charitable Trust for facilities maintenance at Appleby Library.
- Currently, there are 52 staff member, 33 full-time and 19 part-time employees. There were two (2) full time resignations: custodian and public relations assistant. There was one part time resignation: library assistant IV. The library has three (3) temporary employees.
- The full FY 2021 financial audit has begun, and must be completed by mid-March 2022. The deadline for the accounting firm is no later than February 25, 2022.
- Ms. Fashion completed the Beazley Insurance Renewal Questionnaire for 2022.
- Clean Cut will be the new ground service maintenance contractor for FY 2022.

Mr. Mulliens discussed the reopening of Friedman Branch Library, but noted problems with the renovations. Ms. Fashion notified Ms. Takiyah A. Douse, Director of Central Services and the contractor has been called as well. Mr. Mulliens also discussed the new partnership between Friedman Branch and Copeland Elementary School.

C. Friends of the Library Report:

Mr. Leon Maben (President) reported the following:

- The Friends did not meet in December 2021

- A two (2) day book sale was held on December 10th and 11th, 2021. Mr. Maben thanked all the Friends' volunteers who participated, and discussed options for dates of future book sales.
- The Friends book store is currently open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Ms. Vivian Ransom is the new Friends treasurer.

D. Committee Reports:

- a. Library Director's Evaluation: It was moved, seconded, and carried to move the BoT meeting into closed session at 5:24 pm to discuss the Director's evaluation. The closed session ended at 6:03 pm.

Mr. Mulliens (President) informed the BoT that Ms. Fashion has announced her retirement, effective June 30, 2022. An interim director will be appointed and a hiring committee selected. Mr. Mulliens thanked Ms. Fashion for thirty-eight (38) years of excellent service.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Incident Reports from Mid-November 2021 – January 4, 2022: Ms. Fashion discussed the incident reports for the dates listed.
- B. Update on Appleby Branch Renovations: Renovations have been cancelled due to compliant submittals exceeding the allotted budget in an excess of twenty percent. It was in the best interest of Augusta-Richmond County to cancel the bids. Ms. Fashion discussed how to proceed in light of the cancelled bids, suggesting ARCPLS focus on the ADA compliant items, including the elevator, restrooms, and moving the public service desk. A new request proposal has been written. No timeframe has been provided.
- C. Update on the Friedman Branch Renovations: Friedman Branch reopened on January 3, 2022. The staff lounge is not complete. ARCPLS is waiting for quotes for cabinets from Central Services and for them to complete the punch list provided. The new shipping date for the circulation workstation is February 2022.
- D. Update on Wallace Branch Repairs: Quintech Solutions from Lithonia, Georgia will replace the flooring in the atrium and meeting room, and painting in the coming weeks. All outlets have been changed to three-prong.
- E. Revised Strategic Plan for ARCPLS 2022-2027: The BoT was provided with an updated copy of the Strategic Plan for ARCPLS 2022-2027. Committee members will be assigned for each key initiative and meeting dates are on the way.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Amended ARCPLS Budget for FY 2022: The amended budget reflects the accurate allotment of \$2,616,100.00 from Augusta-Richmond County. Total revenue including the state is \$3,082,220.33. It was moved, seconded, and carried to amend the budget for FY 2022. Ms. Tarver ask if ARCPLS could expect an increase in state funding from GPLS, based on the county budget. Ms. Fashion said it is not likely, but there could be an increase which would mean another amended budget.
- B. Funding Agreement Between ARCPLS and Richmond County (Ratify): It was moved, seconded, and carried to ratify the agreement.

- C. Appointment of Attorney to Represent the Board of Trustees: Mr. Steve Sanders has been the ARCPLS attorney for three (3) years, and Ms. Fashion recommended reappointing him. It was moved, seconded, and carried to appoint Mr. Sanders to represent the BoT. Ms. Garman asked if Mr. Sanders is paid a retainer, and Ms. Fashion stated that Mr. Sanders is not paid a retainer but for his services.
- D. Approval of Accounting Firm to Conduct Library 2022 Financial Audits: It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve Bedingfield, McCutcheon and Perry as the accounting firm to conduct ARCPLS 2022 financial audits.
- E. Approval of the ARCPLS Filming (Media) Policy: (Reviewed by Mr. Sanders) It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the media policy.
- F. Approval of the Partnership with the Shine the Light Dance Collective: It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the partnership with the Shine the Light Dance Collective.
- G. Approval of the Partnership with Tia's Corner, Inc.: It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the partnership with Tia's Corner, Inc.
- H. Memorandum of Understanding between Richmond County Government for MRR Reimbursement to SPLOST Funds: It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the MoU between Richmond County and ARCPLS.
- I. Approval for ARCPLS Social Media Management Proposal: Ms. Cheryl Corbin has submitted a social media management contract to ARCPLS. Ms. Corbin proposes to manage all ARCPLS social media platforms for a period of six months at a cost of \$5,760.00 for twelve (12) hours per week. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the contract.
- J. EMCOR Services Estimate to Replace a Liebert System (HVAC) for the Server Room: This is to maintain proper temperature and humidity levels. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the replacement.
- K. Augusta Janitorial Services LLC Cleaning Fee Increase for Wallace Branch: It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the cleaning fee increase.

Ms. Fashion addressed the BoT regarding her upcoming retirement, stating that the decision was a difficult one. She said the last few years have been challenging and stressful, but she believes ARCPLS is in a stable place, and hopes to pass the directorship on to someone who will continue moving forward with the library system. Ms. Fashion thanked the BoT for their continued support.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.