

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Monday, March 21, 2022

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 Vice President, Mr. Roy Jones.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes (with corrections) from the February 21, 2022 BoT regular meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Ms. Alicia Markyna, CPA with Bedingfield, McCutcheon and Perry Public Certified Accounts of Augusta, Georgia presented the ARCPLS FY 2021 Financial Audit. Ms. Markyna discussed the Independent Accountants' Report and Financial Statements for June 30, 2021. She pointed out two sets of financials included in the booklet; Government-Wide Financial Statements, which are accrual basis financials for non-profits and includes compensated absences and fixed assets (collections, depreciable assets less the depreciation.) The second set is Fund Financial Statements, which are modified accruals because they don't include the fixed assets or compensated absences, but do include accounts payable.

Ms. Markyna focused on the Government-Wide Financial Statements that showed expenses and charges for services, operating grants received, and showed grants received from Augusta-Richmond County Government as well as investment earnings, and other miscellaneous income. It showed Change and Net Assets, which are profit and loss calculations is a loss of \$391,367 for the year ending June 30, 2021.

She remarked on differences from the previous year; ARCPLS received less in general revenues but allotments from Richmond County Government stayed the same which is necessary for GPLS grants to be distributed to the library system. Richmond County Government has to stay the same or increase. ARCPLS did not receive SPLOST funds this year as opposed to last year, but did receive an increase in state funding from GPLS, which has to be expensed by the end of the fiscal year.

With COVID, she says it is hard to project what the future will be. She suggested looking for other funding and donations that do not require all funding to be expensed by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Fashion responded to a question whether funds from Richmond County Government can be rolled over year to year. They can. She responded to a question whether the state provides funding increases every year. She explained the state's funding depends on the county's population.

Special Presentation

Mr. James Aaron Snow presented a proposal for National Poetry March and becoming the Poet-In-Residence for ARCPLS. Mr. Snow considers himself a product of the local library. He would like to see the poetry community continue to grow, especially with children and adolescents. He sees the potential of being able to do that at the library. In reading the strategic plan, he sees that the library would like to do new things. There are not very many Poets in Residence in public libraries in the country. He would like to be here on site during the week and have an open door policy for people to talk to him. He would also like to provide different programs, like an open mic night at the library, bringing local poets from the CSRA and hold discussions. He would like to learn everything that the library is doing in order to better collaborate with the library so he can add value to our current services and avoid duplicating other efforts that the library is doing.

Mr. Snow responded to questions from the floor about open mics, hosting events at other locations, the costs for some events, and virtual engagements. He would like to hold the open mics on second Tuesday evenings. He is open to hosting programs at different locations throughout Richmond County though his base of operations will be the Headquarters Library. He plans to cover expenses for the two large events by talking to other community members and businesses to get competitive prices He would like to have some ticketed events to raise funds. There was a suggestion to look at southarts.org for a grant. Mr. Snow said he has applied for a Porter Fleming grant and would be interested in applying for that again. He is also comfortable with virtual engagements.

Mr. Snow says there are children and adolescents who are writing who do not have a platform for their work. Mr. Snow thinks the library is a perfect place for them to grow as poets –to read poetry and to perform their works.

Mr. Snow responded to a question whether there was a patron increase with the Poet-in-Residence. He was not able to find anything like that on the library websites he surveyed. He would like to do a library card campaign. He believes that the community doesn't know everything that the library offers. He sees the open mics as a good opportunity to promote library resources.

Treasurer's Report

The state and local treasurer's report were provided to the trustees in their monthly board packets. February 2022 banking statements for Wells Fargo, South State Bank, the Community Foundation, the Community Foundation Library Fund and the Augusta Library Capital Fund were provided to trustees in their monthly board packets. . As required for the library's financial audit, you will received a copy of the library's income and balance statements in the month of May. Fines and fee revenues are increasing, the Friends have provided donations to the library, and some meeting room revenue is coming in.

There was a request about the cost of the administrative fees for the Community Foundation. Ms. Fashion will contact that the Community Foundation representative come to speak to the board about the fees.

President's Report

No report.

Director's Report

The library owes Augusta Commission \$1,178,689. For salaries for the Fiscal Year 2021, the Library paid \$884,575.57. One payment has been made to Augusta-Richmond County Government for the month of March 2022 for \$59,913.15. The library plans to make another payment this week of over \$60,000.

Clean Cut Lawn Service made it first cut of the year last week. Each manager has been asked to monitor the lawn service for any issues.

The Board received an updated copy of the ARCPLS Library System Board of Trustees Member's Listing. There are four board members' terms expiring this month: Ms. Greene, Mr. Jones, Ms. Hamilton, and Ms. Cher Best. It has been a request of the board of trustees to ask the rotating members to remain on the board until a new appointment has been made by that county commissioner or legislative representative. Ms. Fashion asked the members that are rotating off of the board to reach out to their appointing commissioner or Georgia Legislature member.

The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) issued notification waiving and extending the service delivery date from June 30, 2022 to March 30, 2023 for all applicants for the full twelve months of services. The library is waiting for reimbursement from ECF for their hotspots.

A Marketing LSTA Grant was completed through Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS). The library was awarded \$2,000.00. ARCPLS was one of 22 libraries to receive this grant. The proposed marketing campaign is to reach potential new patrons via a PINES library card registration drives and to encourage existing cardholders to discover all of their benefits throughout the month of April.

A Community Foundation Grant was completed for \$6,500 for the continuation for the partnership with the Harrisburg Community and Lamar Milledge Elementary. No funds have been awarded as of this meeting for the grant.

Raeshond Moore, the Fiscal Officer will participate in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government Library Financial Management Certification Program at the University of Georgia that begins in April and ends in December.

Ms. Fashion received an official notification from Matthews Specialty Vehicles dated February 22, 2022, stating the bookmobile must be received by Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System on or before September 1, 2022. Engineered drawings are expected to be released May/June 2022 and the bookmobile can be slotted for production by the end of August.

The library's circulation, computer uses and Wi-Fi continues to increase gradually.

Ms. Fashion received the Augusta-Richmond County and the Library's signed agreement for the FY 2022 funding for \$2,616,100.00.

Library staff are still working on several library's policy and procedure manuals: Flood Plan, Blue Book, Technology Plan, and Fiscal Officer Procedures Manual. GPLS passed a rule that all policies must be no more than five years old.

Currently, there are 55 staff, 35 full time and 20 part-time staff. There was one part-time staff resignation. A new head custodian has been hired through Central Services who began this month.

Because of the change in board members, Ms. Fashion suggests the three board members be added to the signature cards for the banking accounts, including the President, Treasurer, the Vice-President, and the Library Director. Two signatures must always be on the checks, and there may be an issue where the Treasurer or other board member is unavailable, which is why she suggests there be three board members added as signers.

Committee Reports

Personnel Committee:

No report. Ms. Fashion noted the Library Director's position deadline ended and the Human Resources Department should forward applications soon. The applications will be provided to the personnel committee members.

Nominating Committee:

The nominating committee informed the board Ms. Anna Reeves accepted the nomination as President for the BoT. Mr. Morris Porter accepted the nomination as Vice-President. Ms. Brenda Garman accepted the nomination as Treasurer.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the nominees as the new officers for the BoT.

Friends of the Library Report

Mr. Leon Maben informed the board the Friends are meeting monthly. The bookstore is open every Tuesday and Wednesday and other days when volunteers are available. There will be a spring book sale April 22, 2022 from 9-5 and April 23, 2022 from 11am-3pm in the Headquarters Auditorium. Fliers will be provided to the members and information will be provided to Ms. Fashion for the library's social media and website.

Unfinished Business

- A. Incident Reports from Mid-February 2022- Early March 2022
The incident reports involved inappropriate patron behaviors. A patron refused to leave the building, a patron had a mental breakdown, and a patron who seemed to stalk a library employee.

- B. Update on the Appleby Branch Renovation
Augusta-Richmond County has put out a new request for proposal (RFP) for the Appleby renovation. The focus is on the ADA compliance—adding an elevator and an accessible restroom and moving the circulation desk so that the staff can see who is coming off the elevator. The budget is roughly \$425,000 for the work. Ms. Fashion spoke with Mr. Rawls at GPLS to get the current balance of what is left in the Maintenance, Renovation, and Repair (MRR) funds for Appleby, Wallace, and Friedman. The balance of the MRR funds is \$405,037.86.

- C. Update on the Friedman Branch Renovation
Friedman Branch is still having issues with furniture installation. The outlets on the furniture do not match what was ordered and there is a missing power component source. The wiring is not complete as a result. The company expects 10-12 days for delivery. Friedman will reopen while the library waits for these parts and inform patrons that no public computers are available.

- D. Update of the Wallace Branch Repairs
Wallace has been painted on the outside. Flooring has been installed. There are three prongs installed in the building. Some funding remains. The Library wants the entire building painted, both inside and outside. Ms. Fashion is also requesting LED lighting be installed in the inside and outside as well as new gutters.

- E. Strategic Plan 2022-2027 Update
Library staff are working on the Strategic Plan Initiative for 2022-2027. Groups have met for the following initiatives: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Meeting notes were in your board packet. Initiative # 1 is the only group who has not met. The BoT president is the chair of Initiative #1.

- F. Young Men Library Association Brokerage Account/2022 Registration Fee
Mr. David Scott agreed to pay the annual registration fee for the YMLA of \$ 30.00. Ms. Tarver, Ms. Reeves and Mr. Mulliens have agreed to be added to this YMLA account. Initiative #1 includes starting an endowment, and the committee can begin the endowment with this account. Ms. Reeves, Ms. Tarver, and Ms. Garman will be added to the signature card for the account once Mr. Scott reaches out to the bank.

New Business

- A. Services of Library Attorney
Ms. Fashion was told that the Board President should be the person who reaches out to the Library Attorney. However, this has not worked out well in practice when the Library needs prompt legal advice. Ms. Fashion requested that the Library Director receive authority to contact the Library Attorney while still notifying the BoT of what the Director plans to discuss with the Attorney.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to grant the Library Director authority to contact the Attorney regarding matters related to the Library.

B. Online Banking Access for Fiscal Officer

Ms. Fashion suggested the Fiscal Officer be given rights to see the online bank account. If there is a gap between when the current Library Director leaves and the new or Interim Director or Director comes on board, the Fiscal Officer will need to know the account balance is prior to processing payments for the Library's bills.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to grant the Fiscal Officer permission to have access to the Library's online banking portals.

C. Approval of Mr. Aaron Snow Proposal for Poet in Residence at ARCPLS

It was moved, seconded, and carried to accept Mr. Snow's proposal to become the Poet-in-Residence at ARCPLS.

D. Approval of \$5,000 Cost of Living Adjustment for State Reimbursed Positions

It was moved, seconded, and carried to provide the cost of living adjustment for the Library's three state reimbursed positions.

E. Engagement Audit Letter for Fiscal Year 2022

Ms. Fashion asked the auditor, Ms. Alicia Markyna, CPA, to shorten the time frame for completing the audit. The letter now says the audit will start in August with an expected completion in November, with the exception that she may ask for an extension since the Library received so many grants during this fiscal year. Ms. Fashion is willing to assist her if needed to complete the next audit following her retirement. The audit price has increased but so have the audit requirements from GPLS.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the Engagement Audit Letter.

F. ARCPLS Constitution and Bylaws

There was a part of the Constitution that said a retired library staff member cannot be a part of the BoT if they have been out of position for two years or more. In 2014, Ms. Fashion remembers there was a request to remove a staff member from the BoT. However, she was not able to find the minutes for this meeting. The Board would have to make a decision to change this if they were interested in doing so.

Public Comment

There was a question about when the library quarterly would be sent. Ms. Fashion responded that it should be completed by the end of March.

Adjournment

It was moved, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 6:10pm.