

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Monday, October 17, 2022
4:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Members present: Anna Reeves, Board President; Morris Porter, Vice President; Brenda Garman, Treasurer; Kigwana Cherry; Kimberly Brown; Beverly Tarver; Cher Best. Members absent: Christopher Mulliens (excused); Thomas Gardiner (excused); Lillie Hamilton (excused); Ex-officio members present: Emanuel Mitchell, Library Director; Leon Maben, Friends of the Augusta Library President; Tina Monaco, recorder; Ex-officio members absent: Commissioner Catherine McKnight (excused).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Porter moved to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Brown seconded. All voted in favor.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Dr. Donna Marain (Expungement Program at the Library)

Dr. Marain referred to the *Record Restriction Proposal* included in the board packet, and reminded everyone that she gave a similar presentation during the June 2021 board meeting. Senate Bill 288, which was passed on August 5, 2020 now allows for up to two misdemeanors to be restricted and sealed from someone's record. Many Georgia counties are beginning to hold record restriction events in light of the new law. Richmond County put on a public informational session on records restriction and sealing at the headquarters library in 2018. Dr. Marain proposes ARCPLS serve as an ongoing host or source of public information on record restriction, and consider training library staff to provide record restriction services such as assisting with filling out and e-filing legal petitions. She also proposed that ARCPLS consider establishing relationships with local attorneys that agree to be on call to assist with the expungement process. Dr. Marain asked if the board had any questions.

Mr. Porter asked why there was no follow up after Dr. Marain's June 2021 board presentation. She suggested it was because the details of how the library would be involved needed to be clarified. She is flexible in terms of how her services could be of use: as a resource for staff, scheduled office hours in the library, etc.

Ms. Best asked how other libraries are implementing the program. Dr. Marain replied that usually it's library officials partnering with volunteer lawyers. Cobb County, Georgia has an expungement desk in their prosecutor's office.

Ms. Reeves asked if there was a financial cost, and Dr. Marain said no. Filing a petition can have a cost, but it's minimal.

The Board and Dr. Marain further discussed the details of such a partnership including her setting up a desk in the library on a regular basis; whether the law library should be involved; using law students from UGA as volunteers. Dr. Marain is looking for a partner organization, and wants the library to help her broadcast the message, but is also happy to set up office hours in the library. Programs and services could be promoted on the library website and throughout ARCPLS facilities.

The Board and Mr. Mitchell will discuss Dr. Marian's proposal further and be in touch.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Tarver moved to approve the September 2022 minutes. Ms. Brown seconded. All voted in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mitchell reported the following:

As of September 19th, ARCPLS owes Augusta-Richmond County \$1,463,817.60. On October 14th, the Library made a payment of \$60,846.41. The Library will make a payment to Richmond County for security, custodian, and misc. expenses for a total of \$30,910.14.

Included in the board packets were banking statements from Wells Fargo and South State Bank.

As of September 30th, the Library closed out the month with wages being the biggest expense; full-time \$64,638.90/part-time \$11,718.44.

Line item #45 on the Treasurer's Report (Receipts), the Library collected \$2,303.99, more than expected.

The ARCPLS budget was submitted to the Augusta-Richmond County Finance Department, with a requested increase of \$300,000.00. Over the course of twelve years (12), ARCPLS has received one (1) budget increase of \$150,000.00. The Director met with Interim Administrator Ms. Douse on Friday, October 14 to discuss the budget proposal. Ms. Douse informed Mr. Mitchell that the Library will receive a budget increase for FY2023. However, when Mr. Mitchell accessed the agenda for the Richmond County Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 18th, Ms. Douse's proposed increase for ARCPLS was not included. Mr. Mitchell will attend the commission meeting.

The 1.5% RPA increase for library staff was rejected due to a lack of funding. However, the increase was included in the FY2023 budget. Once the budget is approved by the Commission the RPA increase will go into effect.

The correction to the Friedman Library plaque will be paid for by Central Services.

Following his meeting with Ms. Douse, Mr. Mitchell spoke with Ms. Donna McNeil, the Worker's Compensation Assistant. Worker's compensation employees on "light duty" will begin temporarily filling staff positions where there are shortages at no cost to ARCPLS. Twenty (20) total. Mostly covering circulation.

REPORTS

President's Report

Ms. Reeves reported the following:

Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Reeves meet every Friday to discuss library business.

She participated with ARCPLS at Arts in the Heart, along with Ms. Garman and Ms. Brown.

Board members attended the Q&A during ARCPLS staff training day.

Director's Report

Mr. Mitchell reported the following:

Star Wars Reads Day was a success and the first in-person SWRD since 2019.

Two library employees are leaving the system; one is moving on to a librarian position in another state, and the other is retiring after 30 years of service. Paperwork has been submitted and processed by HR.

The person scheduled to interview for the substitute position did not show up, or call to cancel the interview. The candidate was driving from Auburn, Alabama, and Mr. Mitchell is concerned for her safety. He will reach out to make sure she is okay.

The GPLS audit was completed and shared with the Board for review.

The Library is in the process of securing funds for shelf installation in the book mobile; the asset tag has been installed and will be linked to the library gas card. Mr. Mitchell has applied for an additional gas card. He will work with Ms. Erin Prentiss to develop a route that includes senior centers in rural area, then working in elementary schools, festivals, and community events.

Circulation continues to increase. A side by side comparison with 2021 (21,574) 2222 (23,270). Computer and Wi-Fi usage has substantially increase. Website hits have gone up by 2,000. All indications that the Library is moving towards pre-COVID conditions. Need additional staff and an increase in programming.

A draft of the updated gun policy will be handed out at next board meeting per the new Georgia gun laws.

Mr. Mitchell plans to post the Assistant Director position following the Augusta-Richmond County Commission meeting on Tuesday, October 18th. Mr. Porter asked whether a hiring committee will be formed. Mr. Mitchell replied that one board member will be selected to serve on the hiring committee.

Ms. Reeves asked if more children's programming will be scheduled during after school hours now that children are back in school. She remarked that most of the programming she sees going into fall is during the morning. Mr. Mitchell said there would be, but limited staffing has created scheduling problems. Working with limited staff was a cost saving measure implemented to address the library debt, but as we move out of the pandemic, hiring more staff is integral to a fully functioning library, but we have to make sure we are good stewards of the library's financials.

Mr. Maben thanked Mr. Mitchell for attending the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History monthly luncheon. Mr. Mitchell would like to partner with the Museum, and the Wallace Branch Library, and suggested a trip to the Auburn Avenue Research Library in Atlanta.

Committee Reports

Ms. Tarver chairs a committee with board members Mr. Cherry and Mr. Porter tasked with investigating both the YMLA investment account, and the two (2) Community Foundation accounts. Ms. Tarver received and forwarded the establishment documents from the two (2) Community Foundation accounts to Mr. Cherry and Mr. Porter. Mr. Mitchell provided the committee members with information on a third investment account. The YMLA investment account is with South State Bank. Ms. Reeves is currently the primary account holder, and recommends the Board discuss how those funds can be used. Ms. Tarver stated that the Board needs to check with the bank to determine the if there are stipulations guiding how the money is used. The South State banking statements are sent directly to the Library. Ms.

Tarver said two (2) signatures need to be on the account. The committee and Board discussed library donations, and what decided which account the donations go into, when the donor did not designate a particular fund. The board also

discussed fundraising by the Friends of the Augusta Library and how that money differed from donations, how those funds are used, and where they are deposited.

Friends of the Library Report

Mr. Maben reported the following:

FOAL continues to meet the fourth Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m. in the ARCPLS auditorium.

The bookstore is open Tuesday – Saturday, and hours are posted on FOAL Facebook page once volunteer schedules are known.

FOAL members attended the Q & A session during ARCPLS staff training day.

Fall book sale is Friday, November 4th – Saturday, November 5th in the ARCPLS auditorium.

FOAL members are updating their bylaws.

Ms. Best offered to run spots on the November book sale.

Ms. Tarver asked if the book store's hours were listed on the ARCPLS website. Ms. Maben said the hours are listed only on the FOAL Facebook page, but will post them to the ARCPLS website.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Incident Reports

B. Library Staff Day (October 10, 2022)

Due to technical difficulties staff day was not recorded.

C. Headquarters Library Flooring Replacement (Update)

Pre-bid meeting on October 31st from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Mr. Mitchell will email the meeting link to Mr. Cherry.

D. Update on Friedman Branch Renovation

Mr. Acree was emailed, waiting to hear when the corrected plaque will be installed.

E. Bookmobile

i. Tags: Tags are here, gas card will be applied for.

ii. Shelving: The Library received a quote of approximately \$28,000 from Matthew's Specialty Vehicle. The return time is ten (10) to twelve (12) weeks. Ms. Garman moved to accept the quote, and send the bookmobile to Matthew's Specialty Vehicle for shelf installation. Ms. Tarver seconded. All voted in favor.

F. Removal of Key Executive from Wells Fargo Bank Account (Mashell Fashion)

Ms. Fashion was removed from Wells Fargo Account. Mr. Mitchell is working on securing a South State credit that doesn't require underwriting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Library Request to Close on December 31, 2022

Ms. Tarver moved that the Library be closed Saturday, December 31, 2022. Ms. Brown seconded. All voted in favor.

B. Holiday Closure Schedule

Mr. Mitchell explained this is the holiday schedule for 2023, which was emailed to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Cherry moved to accept the holiday schedule for 2023. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. Ms. Tarver opened the vote for discussion, and asked for clarification on the holidays where headquarters is listed as the only location closed. Mr. Mitchell stated that those holidays fall on Sundays, and headquarters is the only location regularly open on Sundays. Ms. Brown pointed out that July 3, 2023 is on a Monday, but the schedule lists only headquarters as being closed. Mr. Mitchell acknowledged the mistake by saying he thought it was a Sunday. Mr. Cherry amended the motion to show the corrections for July 3rd all locations closed, and January 1, 2023, changed to 2024. Ms. Garman seconded. The motion carried.

C. Children's Librarian Position

See Director's Report.

D. Appleby Renovation

Mr. Mitchell reported that most of the state funding is in place, but has a meeting with Mr. Lumpkin on Wednesday, October 19th to see if Richmond County will pay the \$80,000 that will be matched by GPLS. According to GPLS project manager Nathan Rall, ARCPLS can reallocate some of the funds.

E. Director Meeting at Hall County Public Library

Mr. Mitchell provided an overview of the Director's meeting.

F. Diamond Lakes Light Replacement Project (November 21-23, 2022)

The lighting is scheduled for upgrade November 21-23. The Library will be closed due to hazardous chemical use.

Ms. Tarver moved to amend the Agenda to correct typos in New Business item F (Dimond to Diamond) and item G (Evolution to Evaluation). Ms. Best seconded. The motion carried.

G. Library Director Evaluation Committee

Three board members must serve on the evaluation committee; a staff evaluation of the Director will be sent out electronically via email (Google Form), and the Board complete a state evaluation of the Director. Ms. Garman will chair the committee. Ms. Best and Ms. Tarver will also serve. The Google Form, once completed by select library staff, will go directly to the Board.

H. Having Board Meeting at the Library Branches in 2023

Mr. Mitchell requests to rotate the board meetings among the branches to familiarize the members with those facilities. The Board discussed the details. Ms. Tarver recommended an annual calendar be created, listing where each board meeting will take place. She also stated that the location must be posted for public knowledge, and the branch must have a space that is appropriate for a public meeting.

I. Library Retreat 2023

Ms. Tarver moved to approve the 2023 one-day board retreat on a Saturday. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor.

Ms. Tarver moved to amend the Agenda to add Staff and Board Holiday Mixer to New Business. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor.

J. Staff and Board Holiday Mixer

Ms. Best moved that the Board host a holiday mixer for library staff in December. Ms. Brown seconded. All voted in favor. The date and plan will be detailed during the November board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Alison Cawley discussed her experience assisting library patrons with the record expungement process, and what benefits the program proposed by Dr. Donna Marain will have for the library. She believes there is a need for it at ARCPLS.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Garman moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Tarver seconded. All voted in favor. The board meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.