

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 17, 2023  
4:30 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Anna Reeves (President); Morris Porter (Vice President); Brenda Garman (Treasurer); Lille Hamilton; Kimberly Brown; Cher Best; Kigwana Cherry. Members absent: Thomas Gardiner (excused). Ex-officio members present: Emanuel Mitchell, Library Director; Tracey Goldman-Busbee, Assistant Director; Tina Monaco, recorder. Ex-officio members absent: Commissioner Bobby Williams (excused); Leon Maben (excused), Friends of the Augusta Library President.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Garman moved to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Porter seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**MINUTES**

Ms. Best moved to approve the minutes from the Monday, March 20, 2023 board meeting. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

ARCPLS continues to owe the Augusta Commission. As of April 17, 2023, the balance is \$1,312,322.18. The last payment made was on Tuesday, April 10, 2023 in the amount of \$120,807.54. ARCPLS is scheduled to make two (2) payments each month to expedite a reduction to the pending balance.

Mr. Mitchell pointed out Line Item 31 (Full-Time Salaries) on the Local Treasurer's Report. The total amount spent on full-time salaries in March 2023 was \$122,297.04, compared \$97,343.06 for February 2023. Also, in March 2023, ARCPLS spent \$14,122.09 on part-time salaries (Line Item 43) compared to February \$13,661.82. Mr. Mitchell stressed that full-time salaries continue to be the library's highest expense.

Mr. Mitchell highlighted Line Item 45 (receipts) and explained that library administration anticipated collecting \$20,000 in fines and fees but instead made \$63,442.23, driven by fees collected from ARCPLS meeting room rentals.

The FY 2023 capital outlay requests were submitted to Central Services. The capital outlay requests mostly concern issues at Appleby, like the exterior and ceiling paint, the circulation desk location, and flooring. Also, the following:

- Request to replace rusted shelving at Wallace.
- Request to install an emergency exit at Wallace.
- New flooring for Headquarters Library main floor and second floor began today. Plans for shifting shelves on the second floor is being discussed.
- Diamond Lakes roof repair was completed on April 5, 2023; came in at \$5000.00 under the quote.

Ms. Reeves asked for clarification on Line Item 16 (Ground Maintenance). At the beginning of FY2023, the budget for ground maintenance was set at \$34,000.00. As of February 2023, \$28,305.57 has been spent, leaving \$5,694.43 to cover March – June 2023. Mr. Mitchell explained the budget was not adjusted for inflation by the previous library administration. He also detailed the expenses for each ARCPLS branch. Ms. Reeves requested an itemized account of what was done by the grounds company. Mr. Mitchell will provide this.

## REPORTS

- A. **Presidents Report:** Ms. Reeves discussed the Friedman Branch Library grant re-opening event; funding from the Augusta Women’s Club which has been approved for Appleby Library.
- B. **Directors Report:**
- From March 2023 to April 2023, the ARCPLS has been passionately pushing forward and striving to engage library patrons. As Director of ARCPLS, Mr. Mitchell is working diligently to lead the way.
  - ARCPLS received \$500,000.00 in ARPA funding from Augusta-Richmond County. The Board will vote to approve the ARPA Budget.
  - ARCPLS was one of ten (10) library systems in Georgia chosen to participate in the Department of Human Services benefits renewal kiosk pilot program. Waiting for GPLS to send kiosk.
  - Ms. Reeves, Mr. Porter, and Mr. Mitchell met with Augusta-Richmond County Finance Dept. before the last commission meeting to develop a plan to settle the library debt. Three proposals were developed. Will be discussed under New Business.
  - The Prime-Time Literacy Program was held on April 13, 2023 with ten (10) families in attendance.
  - Appleby Concert Series begins in June. A schedule of performances was included in the board packet.
  - Friedman Branch Library grand reopening occurred on April 14, 2023 and was very well attended.
  - ARCPLS had a total of 18,714 visits in March 2023 and 36 groups to use the meeting rooms. Circulation, computer and Wi-Fi usage, and Website hits are all up from March of 2022.
  - Mr. Mitchell started writing the Fiscal Officer Procedures Manual, the last to be completed.
  - Currently, ARCPLS employs 54 staff, 34 fulltime and 20 part-time. Two positions are currently posted; Fiscal Officer (will start May 1<sup>st</sup>) and Library Information.
- C. **Committees:**
- i. **Accounts:** the board discussed the Community Foundation and YMLA accounts. Mr. Mitchell informed the board about the Banker’s Life endowment which is currently generating money. Mr. Mitchell has contacted the account manager and is waiting for a response. He knows the endowment was a gift but is unaware of any restrictions on use. Details are unknown. Mr. Mitchell will determine the origin of the endowment.
- Mr. Porter moved to select Mr. Cherry to serve on the board of the YMLA non-profit. Ms. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- ii. **Personnel Committee (Board Statements):** Mr. Cherry moved to accept statement three (3). Mr. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- D. **Friends of the Library Report:**
- FOAL book sale will be Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Setting up on May 4<sup>th</sup> and breaking down on May 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - The FOAL bookstore is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday, alternating Monday and Friday depending on volunteer help.
  - The Friends will assist at the Appleby Concert Series and collect donations from attendees and will work to promote SRP and Friends membership.

- FOAL will possibly donate unwanted books to the Georgia prison system and to the Augusta Women’s Club.

Mr. Mitchell asked if the Friends if they considered hiring food vendors for the Appleby Concert Series. Ms. Garman said audience members historically bring a picnic. The board discussed different options for food vendors.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Incident Reports:** None
- Bookmobile Update:** will be delivered Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Moving Funds to Community Foundation:** see above
- Summer Reading Program:** kickoff on track for June 3, 2023 from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm at Brookfield Park. The billboards will go up next week.
- Appleby Concert Series:** discussed under Director’s Report and FOAL Report. Ms. Reeves called on the board to volunteer.
- Maxwell Branch Library Landscaping:** Grounds have been prepared and seeded. Irrigation wasn’t in the budget but Mr. Mitchell believes all the rain will be enough.
- Vote on ARPA Budget:** Mr. Mitchell discussed the budget with the board, including allocation of funds towards a Maker’s Space (Technology Hub) in the Young Adult area of HQs Library. He highlighted some of the equipment (Glow forge 3D Laser Printers, digital cameras, tripods, Adobe software, green screen, podcast equipment, digital mixers, keyboards, portable sound booth, etc.) that will be made available to patrons. \$100,000 added to materials budget; \$92,000 for program supplies. Mr. Porter voted to approve the ARPA budget. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- Diamond Lakes Roof Repair:** see Director’s Report
- ARCPLS and Augusta Richmond County Public School System:** Play cards are in place. Permission slips/data migration handled by Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS). Program will begin May 1, 2023. Once parent’s sign the permission slips, student accounts will be created.

## NEW BUSINESS

- FY 24 Proposed Library Budget:** Mr. Mitchell presented a draft of the budget for FY 2024 for amendment. Mr. Mitchell and the board discussed changes to the proposed budget. Mr. Mitchell will make amendments before the next board meeting, at which time the board will vote on the amended budget.
- Headquarters Carpet Update:** See Director’s Report
- Security Cameras Upgrade for Diamond Lakes (quote):** Mr. Mitchell recommends delaying the upgrade until FY24. The upgrade cost is \$7000.00.
- Library’s Debt to Augusta-Richmond County:** Richmond County proposes that if ARCPLS pays \$312,000.00 toward its debt, Richmond County will waive \$500,000. The additional \$500,000 of ARCPLS debt will then be split into two (2) payments. The first payment added to the FY24 budget and the second to the FY25 budget. Mr. Cherry voted to accept the proposal from Richmond County. Mr. Best seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

However, Ms. Reeves discussed the possibility of the Augusta Commission assisting ARCPLS with total debt forgiveness. Four of the commissioners have agreed to forgive the debt, but six (6) are needed for it to pass. The board will reach out to the Richmond County Commission before Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> to secure more support. The Commission meets on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.

The proposal presented by Richmond County government will serve as plan B, but the recommendation is to go with full debt forgiveness if possible.

Additionally, Mr. Mitchell and Richmond County discussed the budget moving forward. Mr. Mitchell recommended Richmond County cutting ARCPLS a check for \$47,000.00 per month instead of \$243,000.00, and pull payroll from the rest. They agreed which will prevent future debt.

The third option proposed was to remove ARCPLS from the Richmond County payroll, and go through ADP. The board is opposed to this option.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No Comment

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Best moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cherry seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Transcribed by Tina Monaco