

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Monday, June 26, 2023
5:30 pm

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System (ARCPLS) Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:30 pm by Board President, Anna Reeves.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Anna Reeves (President); Morris Porter (Vice President); Brenda Garman (Treasurer); Kigwana Cherry; Tonia Gibbons; Christine Rhodes; Cher Best. Members absent: Kimberly Brown (excused); Anita Rookard (unexcused); Carletta McGruder (unexcused); Thomas Gardiner (unexcused). Ex-officio members present: Leon Maben, Friends of the Augusta Library President; Emanuel Mitchell, Library Director; Tina Monaco, recorder. Ex-officio members absent: Commissioner Bobby Williams (excused).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Garman moved to amend the agenda to include item **e) Thomas Gardiner Rebuttal Letter** under New Business. Mr. Porter seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

MINUTES

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

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

- a) Anita Rookard: absent
- b) Carletta W. McGruder: absent

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mitchell reported the following:

- ARCPLS owes the Augusta Commission \$1,267,565.53. The last payment made was on June 22, 2023 in the amount of \$55,915.18.
- Augusta Commission voted on June 6, 2023 to increase the budget with a one-time disbursement of \$1.3 million to eliminate ARCPLS debt. Once the MOU is signed by Richmond County Interim Administrator Ms. Takiyah Douse and Mr. Mitchell, the commission will cut the check.
- Referencing the Local Treasurer's Report, \$62,108.22 was paid in full-time salaries in May, compared to April at \$90,589.80; \$14,926.00 in part-time compared to April at \$12,784.20. Part-time positions were added in May. ARCPLS has surpassed projected fees (\$20,000), driven by meeting room rentals and has collected \$4,156.32 for May, bringing the YTD total to \$74,338.63. The balcony will be added next fiscal year as an available rental space. Ms. Best asked if there will be external expenses associated with the balcony and Mr. Mitchell said the area needs pressure washing but this might cause leaking. The board and Mr. Mitchell also discussed purchasing patio propane heaters.
- Appleby Library has been added to the 2025 GPLS Capital Outlay list. The application will be submitted this week, requesting \$1,000,000. If approved, no request for funds from Richmond County will be necessary. During renovations, a trailer will be added to the property to continue library services.

REPORTS

A. President's Report: Ms. Reeves noted upcoming summer programming.

B. Director's Report:

- As of June 26th, Mr. Mitchell has received all the signed contracts for Appleby.
- Over 300 attended the Summer Reading Kickoff on Saturday, June 3rd. Richmond County Parks and Recreation offered Brookfield Park again next year at no cost to ARCPLS. Mr. Mitchell thanked everyone involved. Mayor Garnett's office issued the first Summer Reading Program Proclamation.
- Appleby Concert Series is going well, though two (2) have been canceled due to weather. *Save the Best for Last* has been rescheduled for Tuesday, July 11th at 8:00 pm.
- The \$28,000 owed to Matthews Specialty Vehicle is being renegotiated due to failure to complete all jobs.
- On June 5, 2023, Mr. Mitchell and several board members attended a meeting with Jefferson County Library System to discuss forming a regional library system. State Librarian Julie Walker facilitated the meeting. The meeting also included the retiring director of Jefferson County Library System as well as members of their library board of trustees. During the meeting, it was expressed that Jefferson County Library System wishes to remain a single library system. The meeting concluded. Mr. Mitchell and the board discussed details of the meeting and how to move forward.
- On June 6, 2023, the Richmond County Commission approved a one-time increase to the ARCPLS budget of \$1.3 million to repay the debt to Richmond County. The commission vote fell 6 to 4. ARCPLS (bookmobile) participated in the Juneteenth Parade in downtown Augusta.
- Central Services has repaired the lighting system at Maxwell Branch.
- Mr. Mitchell created Ice Cream Fridays (last Friday of every month) for library staff.
- Mr. Mitchell worked the GMA exhibit booth and spoke with Commissioner Jordan Johnson, Mayor Johnson, Commissioner Garrett, and Commissioner Guilfoyle.
- The GPLS budget for ARCPLS has been submitted to the GPLS CPA Christopher Evans.
- Library circulation for May 2023: 17,735 visits; total of 47 meeting room reservations. Computer usage last year 3,300 and this year 3,600. Wi-Fi usage and website hits have increased as well. Ms. Garman asked if HQs circulation had decreased due to the flooring replacement on the second floor. Mr. Mitchell said it had not, and requested the board tour the area following the board meeting. He also informed the board that progress has been delayed by the stress cracks in the concrete flooring, too many for a newer building.
- ARCPLS has a total of 55 staff; 35 full-time, 20 part-time. The Library Assistant II position at Wallace Branch has been filled.
- The Senior Citizens Council of Greater Augusta requested a partnership with ARCPLS which will include the dissemination of Georgia State Health informational pamphlets and event, as well as providing a place for the council to meet.
- The United Way requests to renew their partnership with ARCPLS.

C. Committees

- i. **Accounts:** Mr. Mitchell updated the YMLA account information, renewed the 501 c (3) status. Board members discussed the YMLA account and the Community Foundation funds. The YMLA committee will meet to resolve how to use the funds in the account.

D. Friends of the Library Report

- FOAL meetings are on the fourth Monday of every month at 5:00 pm. Due to the Juneteenth holiday, the June meeting will be on Wednesday, June 28th at 5:00 pm in the third-floor board room.
- The Friends book shop is open Monday – Sunday. Hours of operation are contingent on volunteer schedules. Hours are posted to social media accounts.
- FOAL donated \$5,000.00 to the Summer Reading Program Kick-Off.
- FOAL members attend Richmond County Commission meetings when ARCPLS is on the agenda.
- FOAL now has a QR code so individuals can donate or become members
- VP Dennis Garman attended the Augusta University Book Swap.
- FOAL is giving away a drone to fundraise for ARCPLS. Cost is \$5.00 per ticket or 5 tickets for \$20.00. The winner will be announced at the last Appleby concert.
- FOAL membership stands at 42 members, 106 life members, and three honorary members.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Porter moved to close the meeting to discuss the library director's evaluation. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting went into closed session at 6:28 pm. The board came out of closed session at 6:37 pm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Incident Reports:** Mr. Mitchell reviewed the incident reports for the month of June including the harassment of a part-time staff member. Mr. Mitchell will press charges against the patron accused of the harassment. The part-time employee was moved to another department. The second incident involved a volunteer at the Appleby Concert on June 13th who tripped. It was determined to be the result of poor lighting. Improved lighting is already underway at all ARCPLS libraries.
- Bookmobile Update:** Matthews Specialty Vehicle installed the bookmobile wrap improperly so it's being redone and the bill will be sent to Matthews Specialty Vehicle. After the wrap is completed, stairs will be added for senior citizen accessibility. The canopy will also be replaced with the library logo added. Ms. Best asked how it's booked. Mr. Mitchell explained the process.
- Headquarters Carpet Update:** delayed by the poor condition of the concrete slab. The slab will have to be repaired.
- Debt to Augusta-Richmond County:** Mr. Mitchell is waiting on the check.
- Appleby Concert Series:** Mr. Mitchell gave an overview of the concerts. He noted the professionalism of the sound and stage crews, and the top-notch performers.
- Summer Reading Program Update:** ARCPLS is close to surpassing the numbers from 2022.
- Results from Meeting with Jefferson County Library System:** See Director's Report.

Ms. Best voiced concerns regarding low attendance at children's and young adult events. Mr. Mitchell said in terms of teens, ARCPLS is not providing programs that engage our young adult population, going on to say that teens are difficult to engage. He suggests this will be rectified by the new maker's space. In terms of children's attendance, he mentioned the numbers of kids attending Wallace Branch programs are high. Ms. Best recommended creating a teen advisory board.

NEW BUSINESS

- Appleby Branch:** See Treasurer's Report regarding the funding update for renovation.
- Wallace Branch:** the emergency door installation will begin in July.
- EMCOR Services Renewal:** included in the board packet for information purposes.

- d) **Diamond Lakes Trane HVAC Quote:** the quote includes new units and ongoing service. ARCPLS splits cost with Diamond Lakes Community Center. The total cost for ARCPLS \$8000.00 Mr. Porter moved to accept the Trane quote. Ms. Garman seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- e) **Thomas Gardiner Rebuttal Letter:** the board discussed a response letter written by board member Thomas Gardiner in answer to the letter from Mr. Mitchell notifying him of his unexcused absences and pending removal from the ARCPLS Board of Trustees. Mr. Gardiner stated he did not want to resign but other commitments limited his time to the board. Mr. Cherry motioned to remove Mr. Gardiner from the ARCPLS Board of Trustees. Ms. Gibbons seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT No comment

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Garman voted to adjourn the ARCPLS Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Porter seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.