

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Monday, July 17, 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; Anita Rookard. Members absent: Kimberly Brown (excused); Carletta McGruder (excused); Cher Best (excused). Ex-officio members present: Dennis Garman (Friends of the Augusta Library); Emanuel Mitchell, Library Director; Tina Monaco, transcriber. Ex-officio members absent: Commissioner Bobby Williams (excused); Leon Maben (Friends of the Augusta Library President).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

**NEW BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTONS**

Mr. Mitchell welcomed new board member, Ms. Anita Rookard, who was appointed as Legislative Representative. She introduced herself and each board member did the same. Ms. Carletta McGruder was absent. Ms. McGruder represents District 6 and was appointed by Commissioner Tony Lewis.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

- As of July 17, 2023, ARCPLS has a balance of \$1,269,369.69. The last payment to Richmond County Commission was made Friday, July 7<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$59,094.26. Mr. Mitchell expects the debt relief check by early August.
- For June 2023, ARCPLS biggest expense was payroll; full-time salaries were \$85,424.33. For May 2023, salaries were \$62,108.22. Line 43, part-time totals for June 2023 were \$11,476.69 and May 2023 \$14,926.00.
- Cost saving measures continue to be implemented to lower overhead. Library Receipts on Line item 45 were projected at \$20,000 but YTD, ARCPLS has collected \$77,848.31.
- Ending the fiscal year, ARCPLS is in the green \$191,848.31.

**REPORTS**

**A. President's Report:**

- Ms. Reeves thanked everyone for supporting Evenings In The Appleby Garden.
- She also thanked ARCPLS staff, board members, and Friends for support of Summer Reading.
- She asked board members to be proactive in sharing social media information about upcoming library programs and events to increase participation.

## B. Director's Report:

- As of June 30, 2023, ARCPLS closed out fiscal year 2023 with the state. ARCPLS is now preparing for the state audit, submitting all the budget information and annual documents to GPLS to secure funding.
- Mr. Mitchell spoke with the contractor concerning the emergency door at Wallace Branch Library. The door will be installed the second week of August. Currently, Wallace Branch does not have an emergency exit off the computer lab.
- The LVT on the second floor is 87% complete. The cracks in the concrete have been repaired.
- According to the Richmond County Interim Administrator, the debt relief check is waiting on Mayor Johnson's signature.
- Evenings in the Appleby Garden concluded on July 11, 2023, extended due to inclement weather. Mr. Mitchell estimated 822 patrons in attendance. Given the interest, and with agreement from the Friends, next year he would like to see the concert series extended into July.
- Central Services repaired the lighting issues at Maxwell Branch Library, and currently is repairing the roof leak. The flag at Maxwell is down until repairs to the rope are made.
- Mr. Mitchell is compiling the local budget to be submitted to the Richmond County Interim Administrator.
- The strategic planning committees are meeting again.
- Friedman Branch Library is experiencing electrical problems.
- Library system visits totaled 20,032 for June 2023, surpassing May 2023 by 3000 visits. Circulation for June 2023 was 26,303. Computer usage was 4332. Wi-Fi usage at 1517. Website hits for June 2023 were 9786, slightly down from June 2022 at 9795. Programs are well attended at all the branches. Overall circulation for 2023 increased by 29,453.
- ARCPLS employs fifty-five staff; thirty-five full time, twenty part time.
- Open positions: Assistant Library Director; Fiscal Officer; Library Assistant I.

## C. Committee

- Accounts:** Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Cherry (finance committee) are scheduled to have a conference call with Bankers Life regarding the brokerage account.
- Personnel Committee:** N/A

## D. Friends of the Augusta Library Report

- The Friends assisted with Evenings in the Appleby Garden.
- The Fall book sale will be November 3 – November 4, 2023.
- A library patron has donated hand-made bags to the Friends to sell at a profit to the library. Books and swag will be added to the bags by the library.
- The Friends auctioned a drone during the Appleby concert series.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Incident Reports-** Mr. Mitchell discussed the ongoing vandalism by library patrons of the public restrooms, including the destruction of toilet paper and soap dispensers. They have been replaced multiple times. He suggests the reason is due to a need for these items among the homeless population. The custodians check the bathrooms every hour in an attempt to keep them supplied but the items are being stolen upon replacement. Mr. Mitchell will discuss his proposed solution under NEW BUSINESS.
- Bookmobile Update-** The bookmobile is back in service. Library Substitute Marty Duff is now assisting with bookmobile outreach until additional staff is hired. The damaged canopy will be replaced soon and an additional step will be installed.

- c) **Headquarters Carpet Update-** The second floor LVT installation should be complete in two to five weeks.
- d) **Debt to Augusta-Richmond County-** Mr. Mitchell is waiting on the debt relief check and working to keep the library debt below \$1.3 million. He thanked the Board for their support in helping to eliminate the library debt.
- e) **Appleby Concert Series-** This year's Evenings in the Appleby Garden was a success.
- f) **Summer Reading Update-** ARCPLS is 100 participants away from eclipsing last year's numbers.
- g) **Appleby Branch State Funding Application for Capital Outlay 2025-** Mr. Mitchell asks the Board to reach out to state representatives and let them know Appleby is going to be on the slate for funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 for necessary renovations. GPLS is 100% behind the project given the property's historic importance. Mr. Mitchell will email the Board the contact information for the four state representatives.

## NEW BUSINESS

- a) **Planning for Board Retreat in September-** Ms. Gibbons moved to schedule the board retreat for Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. Ms. Rookard seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.
- b) **Library Audit-** this is Mr. Mitchell's first audit.
- c) **Headquarters Library Public Restroom-** Due to ongoing destruction and vandalism of Headquarters public restrooms, Mr. Mitchell recommends locking the bathrooms and requiring patrons to check out the key from the marshal on duty. The board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of this option and decided in the short term to put together care packages containing toiletries for those in need. The board will determine if the care packages are a deterrent to the public bathroom vandalism at a later date.
- d) **Partnership with the Mosaic Center to host free adult literacy classes-** included in the board packet was a letter from Sara Masciola, Executive Director of The Mosaic Center requesting the use of a free meeting space at Headquarters for adult literacy classes. The classes would be on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9:00 am to noon. Ms. Gibbons moved to approve a meeting space (third floor) for The Mosaic Center literacy classes. Mr. Porter seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Porter informed the board about the upcoming CSRA Afro Caribbean Fest at the Augusta Commons on Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 pm – 10:00 pm. He asked the board to spread the word.

## ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Garman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cherry seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.